

MAKING CLAYMATION CHARCTERS ACTIVITY GUIDE



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Duration: 3 x 1 hour

Lesson overview:

1. View animated films
2. Build your armatures
3. Build your characters

Resources:

- Pens and paper
- Aluminum wire
- Clay – oil-based and non-hardening
- Masking tape and aluminum foil
- Colour board and paint for backgrounds
- Internet connection



To animate means to make something move. Claymation is a form of stop motion animation which is all about making characters made from clay appear to move on their own. The intention behind any film is to tell an engaging story so as an animator, you need to consider characters, their intentions, and their interactions with one another. Claymation films feature characters which are considered caricature. This means their features are exaggerated to create a dramatic effect. The sets that the characters perform in front of are often exaggerated also. The purpose of this guide is to take you through the simple process of gaining inspiration from existing content, creating your own armatures (wire skeletons) and then building your characters. Have fun!

View claymations

Begin by viewing as many short animations as you can. These do not necessarily need to be claymations. There are many films that will provide you with some great ideas. After viewing the films, work with your team to decide upon a simple story inspired by dreaming stories from the country on which you are based. If you don't know the country you are on, you might be able to ask your teacher to download the [Welcome to Country app](#). Make sure that you consult with your school's AIEO or local Aboriginal Corporation to get some ideas and to ensure you are following the correct storytelling protocols. Even better, see if you can find a local Elder and invite them to come to your classroom to work with you. Here are some examples:

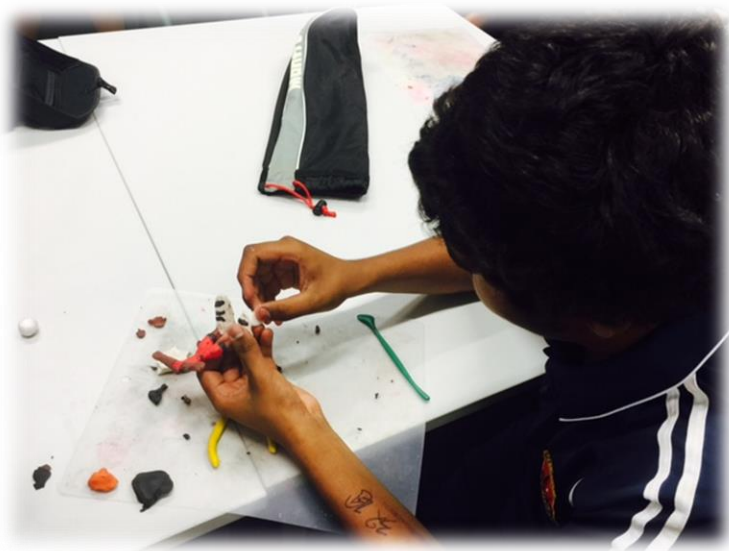
[Aboriginal Dreamtime Story](#)

[The Mimis](#)

[The Dreaming: The Story of Spirit Fingers](#)

[Mermaid Story](#)

[The Bat and the Butterfly](#)



Build your armatures

Armatures are hand-made skeletons made from wire that allow your character to move freely and to stabilise them. To make an armature, you will need a roll of aluminium wire and plenty of space!

1. Measure and cut as length of wire approximately 1 metre in length
2. Take a look at [this 4 min video](#) to show you how to measure up your character and how to manipulate the wire.
3. Be careful not to poke anyone in the eye!
4. You can also sketch out animals such as snakes, eagles, and horses.



Build your characters



There are plenty more online resources to help you with the animating phase of this process. Find out what technologies your school has and then set aside a few lessons to shoot and edit!

The next step is to build your characters. This means you must apply aluminium foil and masking tape to the wire to act as an adhesive for the clay. Then you will 'dress' the character in their costume. A costume could be feathers, skin, clothing etc... You should consider your colour scheme and ways to exaggerate your character's appearance. For example, you could make the eyes exceptionally large or create a very long tail! Here is a [great video resource](#) to help you with this! For your set, all you need is some colour board and a great imagination.

