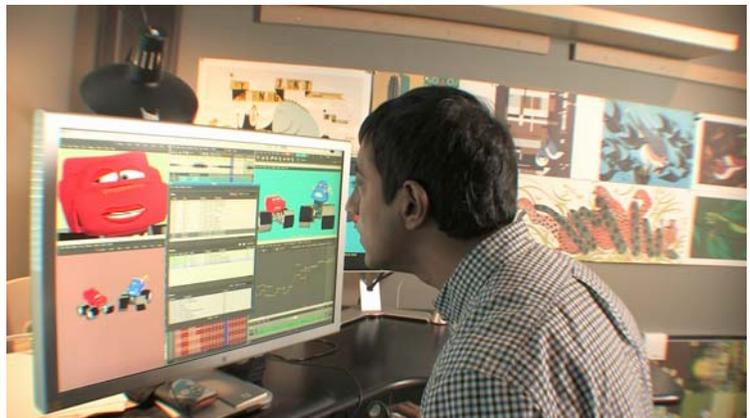


EDUCATOR GUIDE

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Discipline: Visual Art & Animation

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Still image from SPARK story, 2010.

SECTION I - OVERVIEW

SUBJECT

Sanjay Patel

GRADE RANGES

K-12 & Post-secondary

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Visual Arts & Language Arts

OBJECTIVE

- Understand the development of personal works of art and their relationship to broader social themes and ideas, abstract concepts, and the history of art.
- Develop basic observational drawing and/or painting skills.
- Develop visual, written, listening and speaking skills through looking at, creating and talking about visual artworks.
- Develop an expressive visual vocabulary with which to address personal and/or social themes and ideas.
- Develop observational and representational skills by looking at and reproducing images of people, places and things accurately and thoughtfully.

STORY SYNOPSIS

Sanjay Patel is a supervising animator and storyboard artist at Pixar, whose work includes *The Incredibles*, *Ratatouille* and *Toy Story 3*. He also has created a series of works that draw on his Indian background, illustrating adaptations of ancient Hindu epics. This week, Spark catches up with Patel on the occasion of the Oakland Museum of California's exhibit, "Pixar: 25 Years of Animation."

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Group oral discussion, review and analysis, including peer review and aesthetic valuing as a group

- Teacher-guided instruction, including demonstration and guidance
- Hands-on individual projects in which students work independently
- Hands-on group projects in which students assist and support one another
- Critical reflection on personal expressions and how they are seen and received by others

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- To introduce students to the animation and fine artwork of Sanjay Patel
- To provide context for the understanding of the history of animation
- To inspire students to develop their own art and animation projects and to be critical viewers of media

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Spark story about Sanjay Patel on VHS or DVD, or a computer with Internet access, streaming capability, navigation software, video projector, and speakers.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Access to libraries with up-to-date collections of periodicals, books, and research papers
- Pencils, pens, and paper
- Computer with internet access

INTELLIGENCES ADDRESSED

Interpersonal - awareness of others' feelings, emotions, goals, motivations

Intrapersonal - awareness of one's own feelings, emotions, goals, motivations

Spatial - ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems



See more information on [Multiple Intelligences](http://www.kqed.org/spark/education) at www.kqed.org/spark/education.

SECTION II – CONTENT/CONTEXT

CONTENT OVERVIEW

Pixar, the Bay Area’s Oscar Award–winning animation studio, is responsible for such modern classics as *A Bug’s Life*, *Monsters, Inc.*, and *Up*. S Sanjay Patel is a supervising animator and storyboard artist at Pixar and has worked on such films as *The Incredibles*, *Ratatouille*, and *Toy Story 3*. He also has created a series of works that draw upon his Indian heritage, illustrating adaptations of ancient Hindu epics. Spark catches up with Patel on the occasion of the Oakland Museum of California exhibit *Pixar: 25 Years of Animation*.

Patel was a student at CalArts’s renowned animation program, founded by Walt Disney to train his animators, when he was recruited by Pixar, not long after *Toy Story*’s 1995 release. Patel was amazed by how Pixar’s films were able to tell compelling, emotionally engaging stories through the use of computer animation and soon began working with them.

Pixar encourages its artists to grow creatively, offering classes in drawing, painting, and sculpture, and to pursue projects outside work. Since 2006, Patel has been illustrating retellings of ancient Hindu mythology. Under the brand name Ghee Happy (named for the clarified butter commonly used in Indian cooking), Patel has created a line of books, apparel, and other products that celebrate Indian traditions through his distinctly fun and modern design sensibility.

Ghee Happy finds its roots in Patel’s upbringing. Growing up in San Bernardino, California, in a Gujarati family, Patel found himself surrounded by two sets of compelling iconography: the Hindu gods and scenes that populated his family home and the Warner Bros. and Disney cartoons that he watched obsessively on television. Patel absorbed everything he could from these programs and started to draw his own comics, often spending hours at a time working

on them. Patel recounts that as he began to see himself as an artist, he felt in some ways a disconnection from both the broader Southern California culture and the Indian community in which he lived. His work with Ghee Happy reconciles these two iconographies that were so influential to his development, creating a unique and fresh expression of his experience.

Spark checks in with Patel as he develops his latest book, about the Hindu deity Ganesha and Ganesha’s legendary love of sweets. When creating these projects for Ghee Happy, Patel often finds himself drawing on the skills he acquired while working at Pixar. Important story points are reduced to single panels in the book format, so he takes into consideration animation concerns like acting, narrative arc, and the importance of illustrating moments that reveal character and transformations.

THE BIG PICTURE

Animation has been a crucial element in cinema since its advent in the mid-1880s. Any film is structurally an animation of 24 frames per second, creating the illusion of movement. Stop-motion, and soon after, hand-drawn animation, was featured in some of the earliest film experiments.

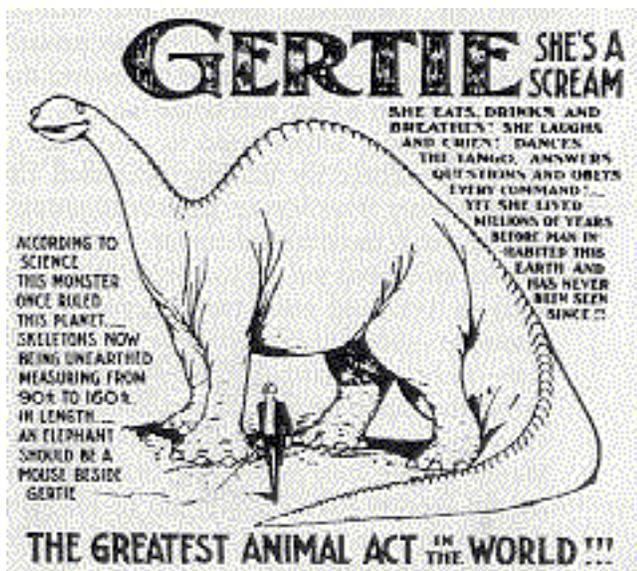
Stop-motion animation is a technique that makes a static object appear to move on its own. The affect is accomplished by taking a single frame of a static object, then physically moving the object slightly and taking another frame, until enough frames have been shot to make the object appear to move by its own accord. One of the earliest known stop-motion animations was an 1899 English advertisement made by Arthur Melbourne-Cooper for the Bryant and May Matchsticks Company.

J. Stuart Blackton is commonly considered the first true animator, a pioneer in both stop-motion and hand-drawn techniques. Introduced to filmmaking at

the turn of the century by Thomas Edison, Blackton made a series of animated shorts, the earliest of which date back to 1900. Some of his early works include [The Enchanted Drawing](#) (1900) and [Humorous Phases of Funny Faces](#) (1906), in which Blackton can be seen creating a drawing that then magically comes to life.

The narrative device of including the artist drawing in the animation itself became a trope in early hand-drawn animation, picked up by many animators that followed Blackton. A French artist named Émile Cohl, who began his career as a cartoon artist, featured himself drawing at the beginning of his short, [Fantasmagorie](#), of 1908. As with Blackton's work, the wondrous effect of animation is emphasized as the static drawing that the artist makes appears to move on its own.

Perhaps the most influential early animator was newspaper cartoonist Windsor McCay, whose *Little Nemo in Slumberland* (1911) continues to be referenced by current animators. A recent example of this can be found in an acclaimed episode of *The Simpsons*, wherein an overworked Homer falls asleep at the wheel and enters Nemo's dream world. McCay's charming [Gertie the Dinosaur](#) (1914) featured McCay directing his prehistoric creation, whose disobedience emphasizes Gertie's seemingly independent will.



Advertisement for Windsor McCay's *Gertie the Dinosaur*, c. 1914.

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/ggifs/Gertie.GIF>

Another significant pioneer of modern animation is Mary Blair, who began working for Walt Disney in 1940. While Disney had long been an innovator in animation, inventing new techniques to heighten the realism of the characters on screen, Blair brought an aesthetic to Disney films that was at once wildly imaginative and fiercely contemporary. Early productions Blair worked on include *Dumbo*, *The Lady and the Tramp*, and a second version of *Fantasia* that was only released in the 1990s.

During an extended visit to South America in 1941, Blair worked on concept art for a series of animated features, including *Saludos Amigos* and *The Three Caballeros*. After returning to the United States she went to work on such classics as *Cinderella*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and *Peter Pan*. Soon after, Blair left Disney to become a freelance designer, creating advertisement campaigns, illustrating several children's books, and designing sets for Radio City Music Hall. Working again for Disney in the early 1960s, Blair designed the "It's a Small World" attraction originally created for the 1964 World's Fair. The attraction was to become perhaps her most famous legacy, recreated at Disney theme parks in Anaheim, Orlando, Tokyo, Paris, and Hong Kong.



Illustration by Mary Blair

<http://www.animationarchive.org/>

RESOURCES – TEXTS

Amidi, Amid. *The Art of Pixar Short Films*. Chronicle Books, 2009.

Beckerman, Howard. *Animation: The WholeStory*. Allworth Press, 2003.

Bendazzi, Giannalberto. *Cartoons: One Hundred Years of Cinema Animation*. University of Indiana Press, 1995.

Doniger, Wendy (trans.) *Hindu Myths: A Sourcebook Translated from the Sanskrit*. Penguin Classics, 2004.

Paik, Karen, et al. *To Infinity and Beyond! The Story of Pixar Studios*. Chronicle Books, 2007

Patel, Sanjay. *Ramayana: Divine Loophole*. Chronicle Books, 2010.

Patel, Sanjay. *The Little Book of Hindu Deities: From the Goddess of Wealth to the Sacred Cow*. Chronicle Books, 2006.

Price, David A. *The Pixar Touch*. Vintage Books, 2009.

Solomon, Charles. *Enchanted Drawings: The History of Animation*. Random House, 1994.

RESOURCES – WEB SITES

Sanjay Patel's website for Ghee Happy:
<http://www.gheehappy.com/>

Press info on "Pixar: 25 years of Animation" from the OMoC website:
<http://museumca.org/exhibit/pixar-25-years-animation>

Interview with Patel about his artwork and upbringing on SFGate:
http://articles.sfgate.com/2007-01-15/news/17225053_1_hindu-deities-diwali-patel

Pixar's official site:
<http://www.pixar.com/>

A helpful site about Indian mythology:
<http://www.webonautics.com/mythology/>

Wikipedia article on the history of animation:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_animation

Teacher's guide to using animation in the classroom:
<http://www.fi.edu/fellows/fellow5/may99/index.html>

VIDEO RESOURCES

The Enchanted Drawing:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYDmH2B9XJw>

Humorous Phases of Funny Faces:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGh6maN4I2I>

Fantasmagorie:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEAObel8yIE>

Gertie the Dinosaur:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UY40DHS9vc4>

BAY AREA FIELD TRIPS

Cartoon Art Museum
655 Mission St.
San Francisco, CA 94105
415-CAR-TOON
<http://cartoonart.org/>

Zeum (Offers Stop Motion Classes for Children)
221 Fourth St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
415.820.3320
<http://www.zeum.com/>

Oakland Museum of California
1000 Oak St.
Oakland, CA 94607
510-238-2200

Pixar: 25 Years of Animation is on view at the Oakland Museum through January 9, 2011
<http://museumca.org/>

SECTION IV – VOCABULARY

DISCIPLINE-BASED VOCABULARY & CONCEPTS IN THE SPARK STORY

Animation

The process in motion pictures of taking a series of individual pictures or frames and simulating movement by putting them together in a timed sequence to give the appearance of continuous motion.

The traditional animation process called cel animation or hand-drawn animation was used for most animated films of the 20th century, but this method became obsolete by the beginning of the 21st century and today drawings are either scanned or drawn directly into a computer system using various software programs.

2D animation involves creating moving pictures in a two-dimensional environment whereas **3D animation** simulates moving pictures in a three-dimensional digital environment.

Anime

An animation style, both hand-drawn and computer-animated, which originated in Japan, and which is often characterized by its menacing and dark sensibility

Comic

From the Greek word *kōmikos*, of or pertaining to "comedy". This is a graphic medium which constructs the narrative through sequential images; pictures rather than words tell the story. Speech often appears in word balloons and captions which expand upon the images.

Composition

An arrangement of visual elements

Deity

Divine being, god or idol

Fine Art

Any of the art forms, such as sculpture, painting, or music, used to create art which appeals to aesthetic sensibilities as well as expressing the artist's vision or feelings.

Graphic design

The term "graphic design" refers to artistic and professional skills that focus on visual communication and the presentation of ideas, often using computer software programs. A graphic designer may use typography, artwork and page layout techniques to produce the final result.

Karma

Fate, destiny, fortune drawn from Hindu and Buddhist philosophy

Manga

A Japanese style of comic book or animated cartoons

Storyboard

Sketches or drawings arranged in sequence, outlining scenes that will make up a film, television show, or advertisement.

Stop motion

Stop-motion animation refers to animation created by photographing objects one frame at a time to create the illusion of movement. It is also known as **stop action** or **frame-by-frame** since it creates the effect of objects moving on their own. Clay figures are often used in stop and motion animation. Motion animation using clay is called clay animation or claymation. LEGO toys are also used to create this effect.

Surrealism

Early 20th-century movement in art and literature that sought to represent the subconscious mind by creating fantastic imagery, juxtaposing contradictory ideas and images, and exploring ways to free the imagination.

Treatment

Refers to a blueprint or outline of a screenplay

Typography

Font, typeface, lettering, style

SECTION V – ENGAGING WITH SPARK

STANDARDS-BASED ACTIVITIES & DISCUSSION POINTS

Animation

Stream a trailer or teaser from a Pixar feature at <http://www.pixar.com/featurefilms/index.html> or the trailer from Toy Story/Toy Story 2 at <http://www.imdb.com/video/imdb/vi2052129305/> Alternatively play a short clip from a DVD of one of Pixar’s celebrated features films.

Ask students to think about the appeal of animation and motion graphics. Working in small groups, ask them to respond to the sample clip and identify the different elements in the creative design:

- What is the creative overarching idea?
- Describe the characters and the landscape.
- How does animation add to the impact of the narrative, characters, idea?
- Comment on the motion graphics – typography, moving text, shape, texture, voice and sound, etc.
- Is animation most conducive to science fiction or fantasy?
- Is the appeal cross-generational?
- What factors make 3D animation different from the traditional 2D cel animation?

Writing assignments for 9-12th grades

1. *Are animation and motion graphics all about imagination?* Free write in response to this question.
2. Review a Pixar feature film addressing some of the points listed above, but also include a personal response to the film.

As an extension activity, suggest that students view the short clip they have selected with their parents or grandparents or both. Similarly, encourage them to view the clip with younger children. Ask them to draw upon their observations to compare responses across age ranges and generations.

Share responses with the whole group and discuss observations.

SPARKLER* (more activities to extend learning)

*Introduce students to The Toon Institute's Free Animation Course and suggest that they choose from the list of activities to experiment with the basic steps involved in animation.

<http://www.awn.com/tooninstitute/lessonplan/lesson.htm>

*For animation activities using clay, they can visit <http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/clay-connie.htm>.

Field Trips

Consider visiting the Cartoon Art Museum in San Francisco if it is reasonably close to your school and a visit can be organized. The museum offers an educational program which includes classes in cartooning, illustration, and animation as well as School Group Tours and Field Trips, Classroom Outreach, After-School Programs, Camps, and Internships. For information, visit <http://cartoonart.org/education/>.

Similarly, depending upon accessibility, students would enjoy a visit to the Animator’s Studio at Zeum:

<http://www.zeum.org/exhibits/animatorsStudio.html>

This hands-on arts and technology museum in San Francisco offers younger students the opportunity to explore animation, sound & video production, live performance, and visual arts. “Dream up a story, create your own clay characters, and bring them to life in an animated movie! You’ll sculpt your characters from wire and clay, choose a stage set, and film your clay animation with a video camera and a computer in a process called stop-motion animation.”

Pixar's Process

The Pixar film production process involves four stages which are outlined at:

<http://www.pixar.com/howwedoit/index.html>

The stages include:

1. Development, creating the story line
 2. Pre-production, addressing technical challenges
 3. Production, making the film
 4. Post production, "polishing" the final product
- Working in groups or development teams, encourage students to try the first two stages; to pitch a story idea and write a treatment. Advise them to keep their ideas simple. Detail is not needed at this stage. Allocate sufficient time for students to brainstorm their story idea and think through how they will present/pitch it. They should be sure to talk about possibilities and their vision when they write up their treatment, which in this instance should be limited to 500 words at most.

For guidance on how to write a treatment, visit <http://www.writingtreatments.com/html/home.html>.

If some students are more visual in their approach and prefer to draw, after the initial idea is conceived, suggest that they confer with their development team and draw sample characters, and the visual look or background set. Invite all the groups to pitch their ideas to the class and ask the whole group to select the best idea – that is, the most imaginative, inspirational, and feasible to realize.

As a further activity to provide context and background for Pixar as a company, ask students to research the history of the company and its relation to Disney and George Lucas Studios.

- How did the company evolve from 1986 to where it is today?
- How has the technology changed and developed from the early animations to films today.

Ask students to write up responses to these questions (500 words at least). They should visit the Pixar website at

<http://www.pixar.com/companyinfo/history/index.html>, but also draw upon other sources, referencing them carefully as they work.

SPARKLER*

Direct students to the interview with Sanjay Patel, an animator at Pixar, to gain insight into his process at

<http://www.pixar.com/artistscorner/sanjay/interview.html>.

Sanjay Patel: Fine Artist

Play the **SPARK** episode which follows the work of Sanjay Patel who is featured in the exhibit **Pixar: 25 Years of Animation** at Oakland Museum of California. Sanjay is an animator, but also a fine artist and has created two books that explore and animate his ancestry as the child of Indian immigrants.

"Ramayana: Divine Loophole" is based on the Hindu epic, and is composed of more than 200 detailed, vividly colored illustrations created from pencil drawings, which are scanned into a computer and colored and manipulated with Adobe Illustrator in the distinctive style he developed as an animator at Pixar. Through his art he explores Hindu mythology and the cultures he experienced growing up as a child in California.

Ask students to look closely at images on Sanjay Patel's website at <http://gheehappy.com/>. Working in pairs or groups, ask students to specify and reference the piece they are viewing and respond to the following questions taking notes as they work.

- What do you see? What images do you see and what is the subject matter? How is it represented?
- What shapes dominate the artwork? (geometric, organic etc.)
- What lines dominate the art work? (straight, curvy, other)
"The vector style drawings (known for straight lines and smooth curves) are unique, especially when used to tell mythical tales" (review at the amazon.com URL above).
- What colors are used? Are they strong, vibrant and joyous or pastel and low key?
- Describe the patterns and textures

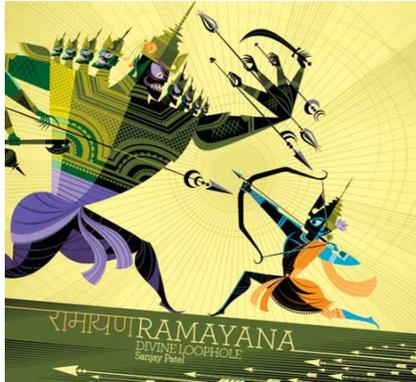
Share responses in the whole group and explore students' ideas about the work. Do they find it exciting? Does cartoon and animation add to the effect? Is the work symbolic or resonant to them in any way?

SPARKLER*

Stream the NPR **The World** / audio interview with Sanjay Patel about his fine artwork at <http://gheehappy.com/about.html>.

He talks about his books and the background of his visual take on Hindu mythology:

[The Little Book of Hindu Deities: From the Goddess of Wealth to the Sacred Cow](#) and [Ramayana: Divine Loophole](#)



For more information about SPARK and its educational content, including the Visual & Performing Arts Standards, visit the Web site at <http://www.kqed.org/spark/education>.



For more information about the California Visual & Performing Arts Standards, visit the CA Dept. of Education at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/standards/vpa>.

RELATED STANDARDS VISUAL ARTS

Grade 4

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

1.5 Describe and analyze the elements of art (color, shape/form, line, texture, space and value), emphasizing form, as they are used in works of art and found in the environment.

Grade 6

2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION

2.1 Use various observational drawing skills to depict a variety of subject matter.

Grade 8

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

1.1 Use artistic terms when describing the intent and content of works of art.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

4.3 Construct an interpretation of a work of art based on the form and content of the work

Grade 9-12 – Proficient

1.0 Artistic Perception

1.3 Research and analyze the work of an artist and write about the artist's distinctive style and its contribution to the meaning of the work.

1.5 Analyze the material used by a given artist and describe how its use influences the meaning of the work.

Grades 9-12 – Advanced

1.0 Artistic Perception

1.6 Describe the use of the elements of art to express mood in one or more of their works of art.

2.0 Creative Production

2.4 Demonstrate in their own works of art a personal style and an advanced proficiency in communicating an idea, theme, or emotion.

2.5 Use innovative visual metaphors in creating works of art.