Animation Class

DAY ONE

HELLO!

I’m Kieran.

Let me turn my camera on a second.

THIS WEEK, WE'LL BE ANIMATING!

But! What *is* animation, exactly?

Animation

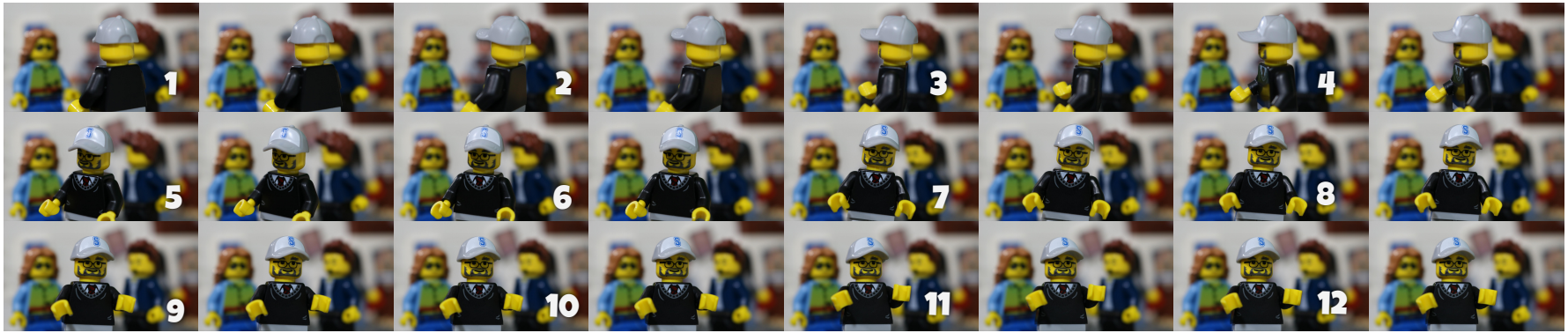
Basically..

- Animation is the very, very gradual movement of objects to create the illusion of movement and life!
- Every character's movement is meticulously planned, frame by frame...

To bring their characters to life, animators will capture

24

Frames of small, incremental movements for a **SECOND** of animation!



But that's quite a lot. So, instead, some (especially LEGO animators) will use

12

Different frames for every second, taking two photos for each movement. Still 24 photos, but it makes it a bit easier.

So... what are we going to do?

- We’re going to devise and animate a four shot animated story!
- Each shot should serve a purpose - an action? An emotion? A thought?
- A shot is a collection of images from the same camera position/angle
- Four may not sound like a lot, but you can tell a story in even the shortest amount of time if you plan it right!

What will you need?

- An idea!
- A character (or two!)
- A backdrop
- A filming set-up, which includes…
  - A camera/smartphone
  - Some lights

What will you use?

This is a LEGO workshop, so we'll primarily use that, but you're welcome to branch out and incorporate other things as well.

Some LEGO...

What will you use?

This is a LEGO workshop, so we'll primarily use that, but you're welcome to branch out and incorporate other things as well.

Some LEGO...

Some clay...

What will you use?

This is a LEGO workshop, so we'll primarily use that, but you're welcome to branch out and incorporate other things as well.

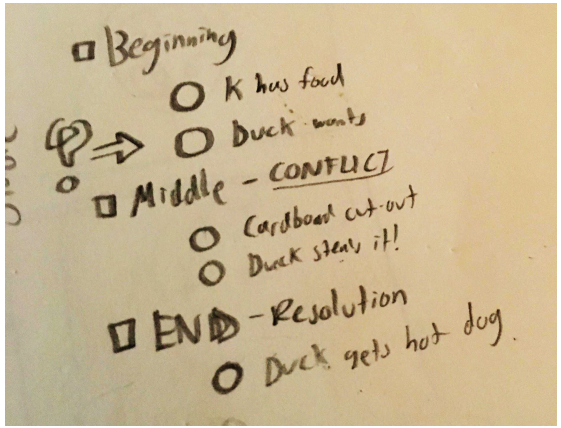
Some LEGO...

Some clay...

Anything!

Examples

First I planned out my four shots. I started with a list, so I could break my story down into a beginning, middle and an end.



Every story, no matter how short, has a beginning, a middle and an end!

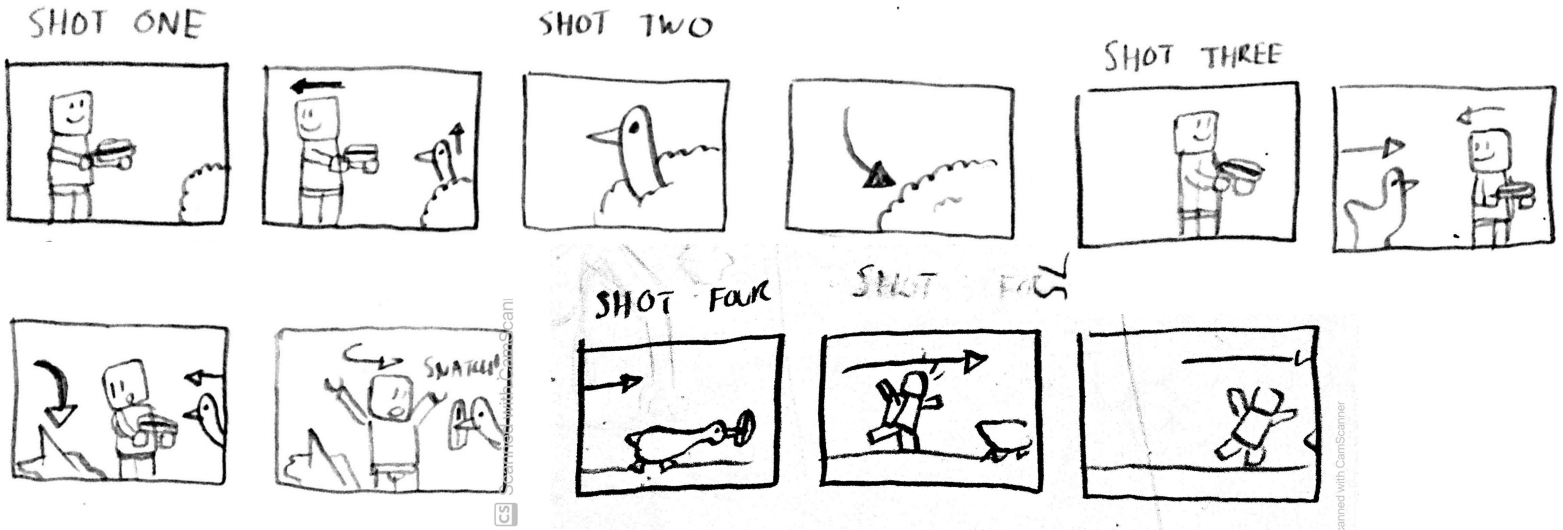
Examples

Then, I did some rough storyboards. A **storyboard** almost looks like a comic book, but without speech bubbles, and it allows filmmakers to come into their animation with a plan, so they know what to do!

On big, proper film productions, they might look like this..

Examples

...but it's okay if they look a bit rougher, like mine. Rougher storyboards are called **thumbnails**.

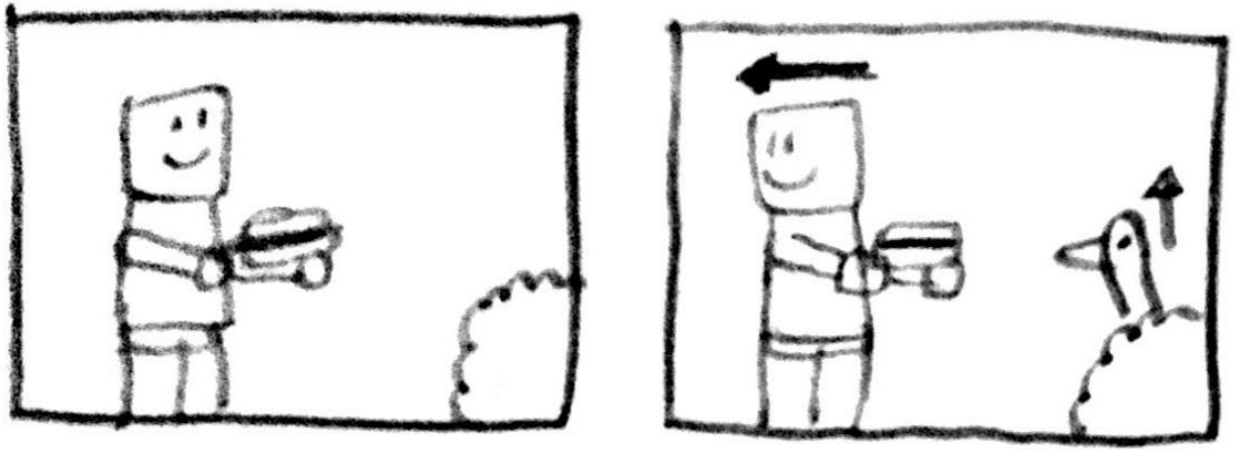


They don't have to look perfect! So long as they make sense to you, so you can look back on them later. These will be your 'road map' for the week.

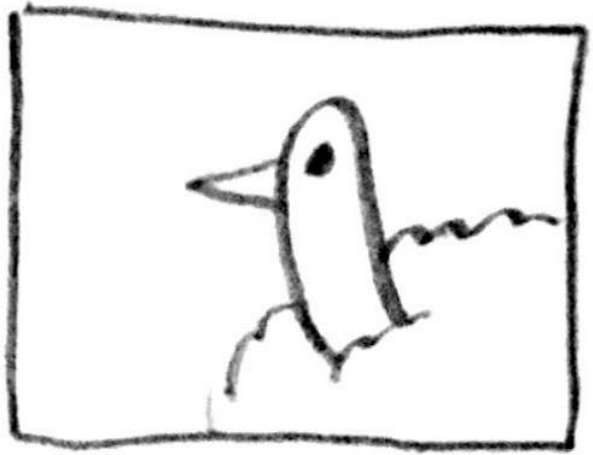
Again, we want four different camera shots

So, let’s see how I utilized that in my example.

SHOT ONE



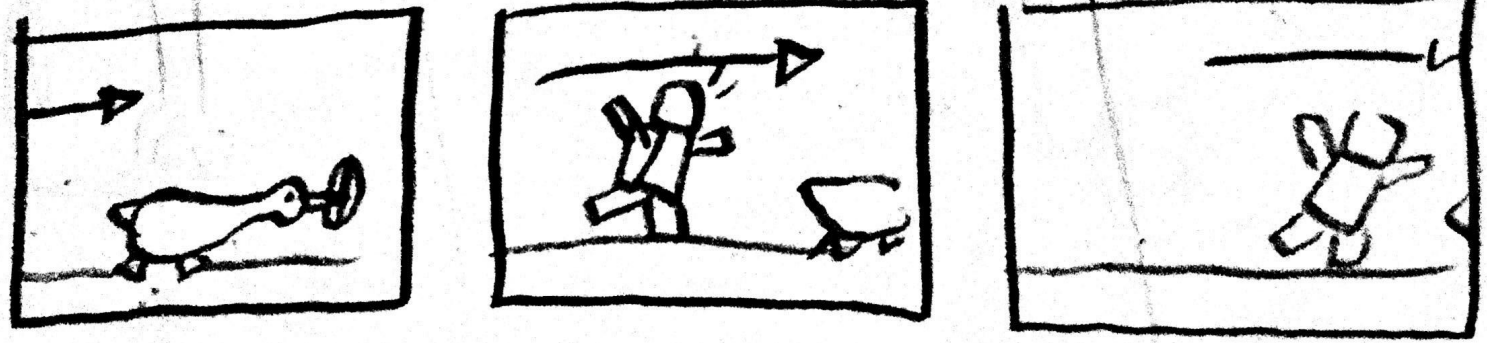
SHOT TWO



SHOT THREE

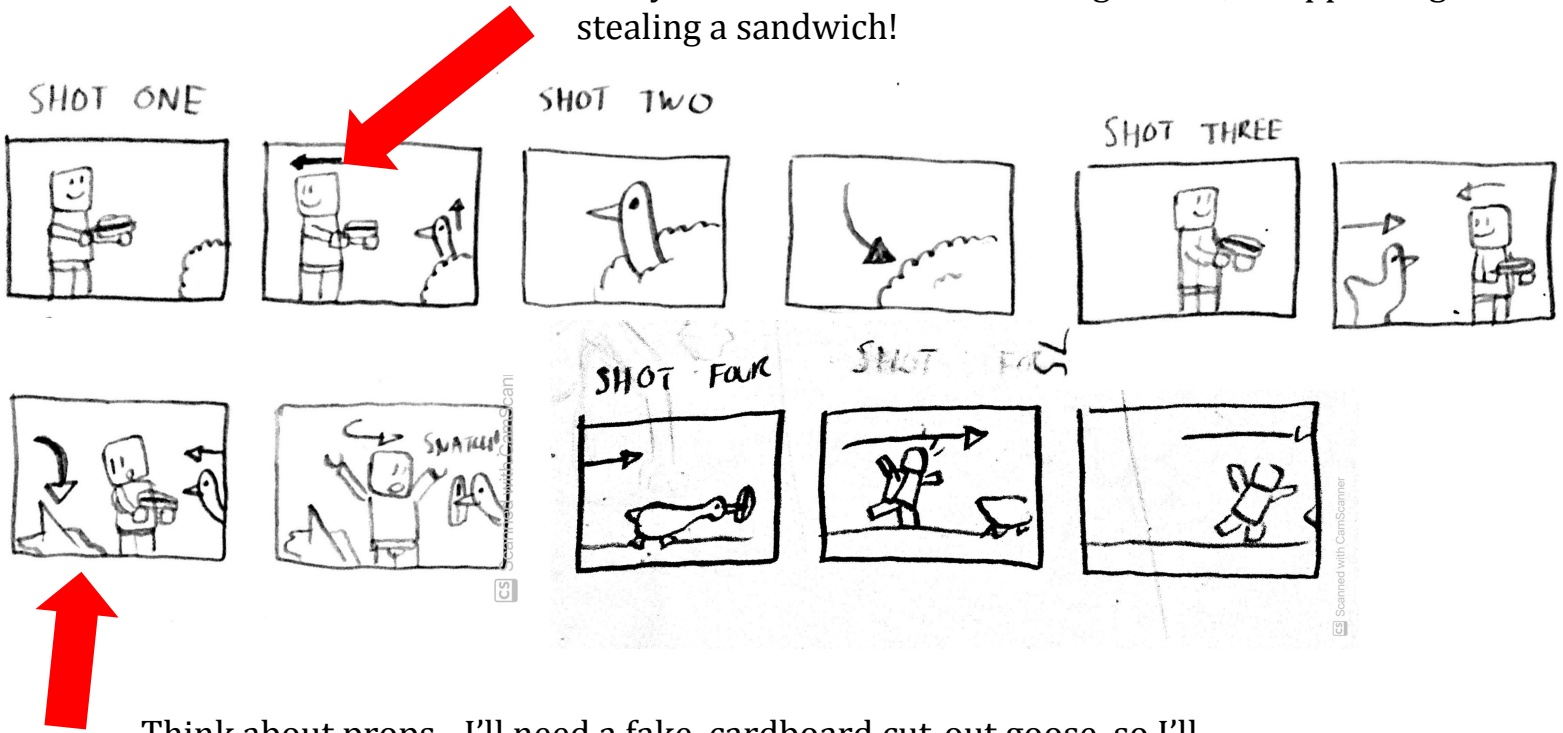
SL

SHOT FOUR



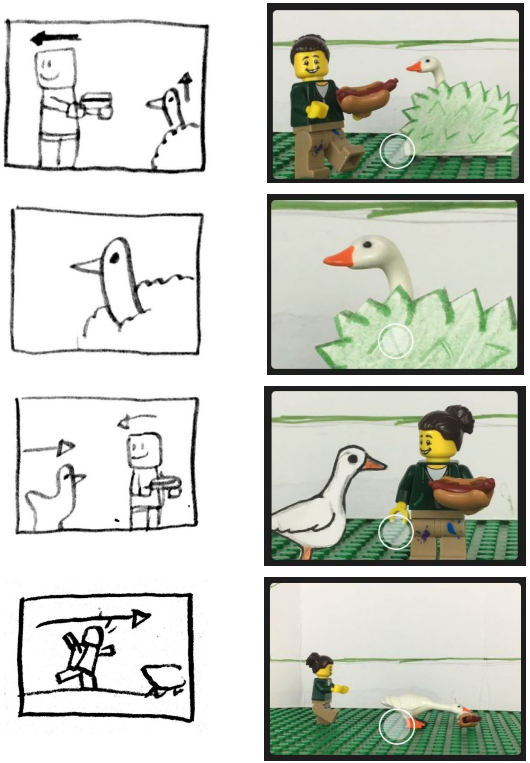
Examples

Every shot has an action - turning a head, disappearing into a bush, or stealing a sandwich!



Think about props - I'll need a fake, cardboard cut-out goose, so I'll need to make that!

Examples

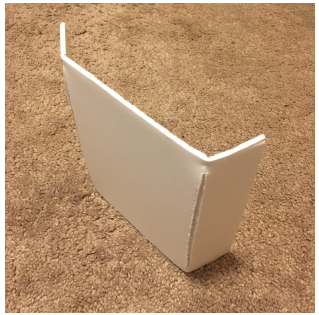


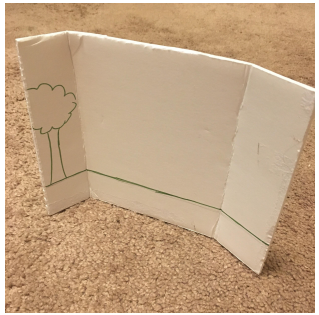
- Work through each shot you planned out, taking photos for each little movement!

Examples

Examples

Then, you're ready to animate! You'll want to think of a backdrop too. You may have a particular set you'll want to use as a backdrop, of you can design a trifold backdrop, like this!





We'll talk more animation tomorrow, as today after class, your main focus will be coming up with an idea (that's the hardest part of any film).

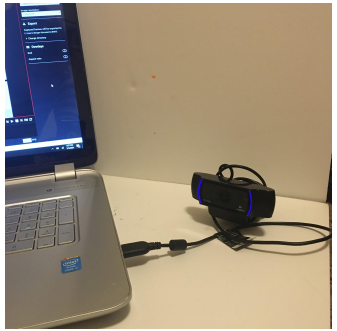
But, the other hardest part is setting all of this up, so let's review our options now.

What will you use to animate?

You have a wide array of options regarding how you can go about shooting your film. Here are three I recommend!

A smartphone! (recommended)

A webcam and a computer



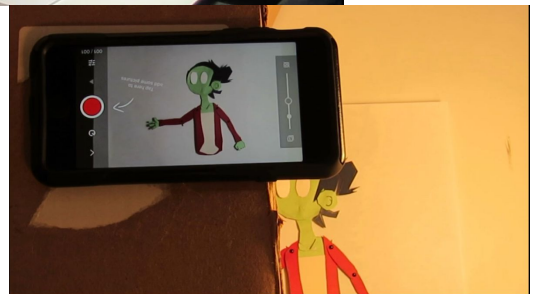
A DSLR camera

smartphone

Stop Motion Studio
(iPhone/iPad/Android)

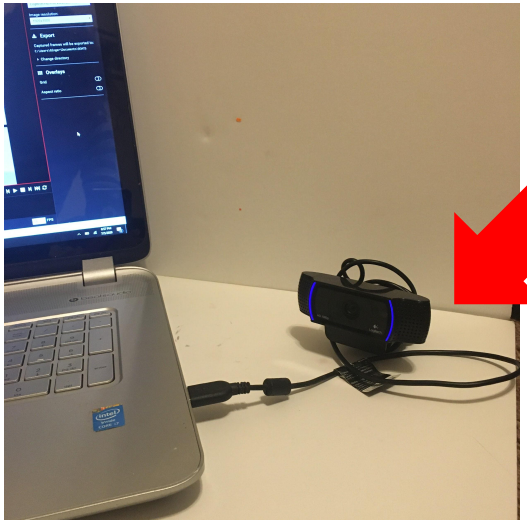
- Isn’t it crazy that we all literally have film production studios in our pockets now? Technology is wild.
- If you have a phone, there is a free app available on Android and iPhone you can use - I have special guides to using each!
- If you don’t have your own phone, ask permission first!

smartphone



- You can find small tripods to hold your phone in place while you work - I made my own with the top part of a selfie stick - but if you don't have one, that's okay!
- You can always do your animation as a **downshoot** - that means having the camera pointing down at your characters, laid flat on their back.
- All you need for this is cardboard box, with one of the flaps cut off, and some tape to hold your phone in place - you don't want it shaking around too much!

Webcam and computer



One with a Cable, so it can stretch to your set!

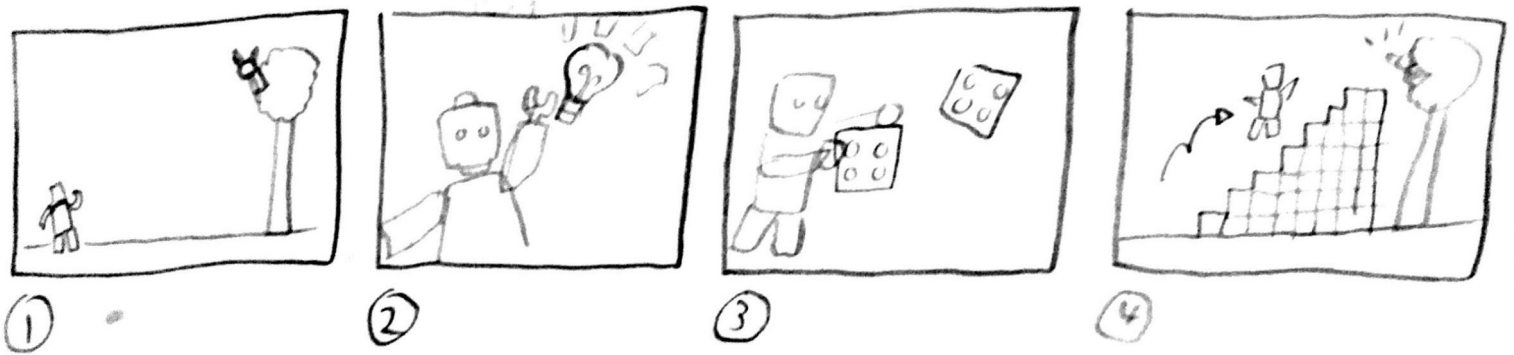
- You'll need an external webcam for this (i.e. one with a cable)
- No matter if you use Mac or PC, it's no issue! There's free online software that works with both!
- BOATS Animation software is very easy to use - we'll take a look at that tomorrow!

DSLR camera

- This is the trickiest option, because you'd be working without direct connection to animation software.
- It will work, but it makes it difficult to be able to play back your animation as you go!
- It also helps to be able to see your previous frames as you work, which most cameras don't have built in.

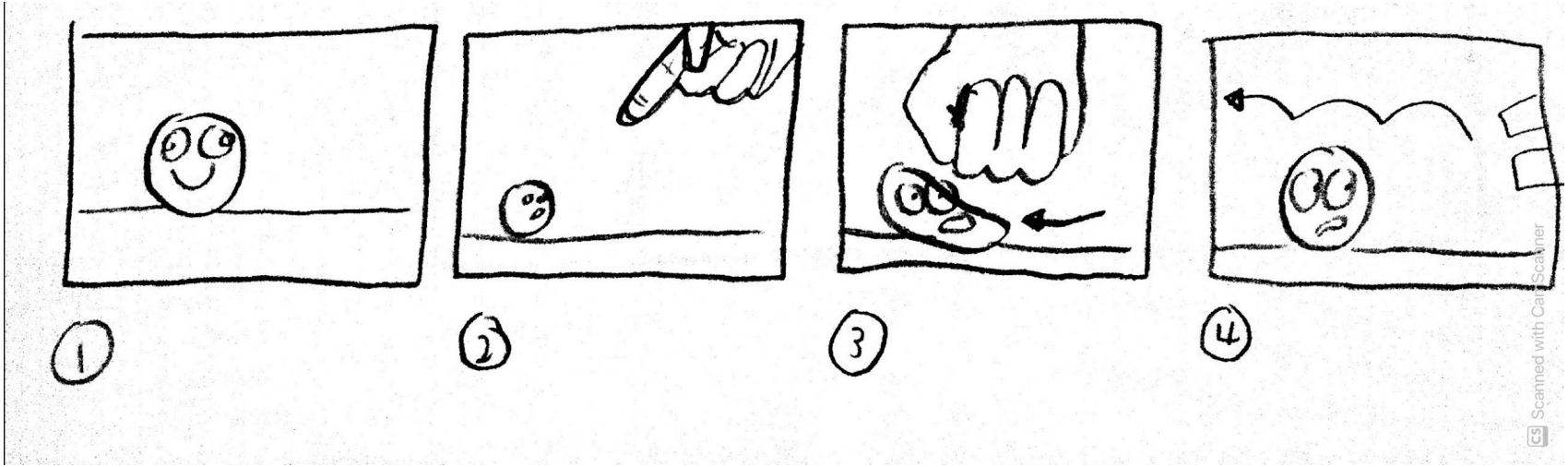
Take some time to dream up your idea!

If you're having some trouble, here are some other short prompts you can borrow from and make your own!



A character uses tools to overcome an obstacle - here, a Lego man using blocks to get his cat out of a tree.

An interaction between a clay lump and a Lego man! Are they friends? Foes?



Clay interacts with a human. If you did this, you'd have to animate someone's hand like a character - 24 frames a second. Ask a very patient friend or relative.

Remember! Keep it short, keep it simple!

The shorter our story is, the more time we'll have to make the animation itself look fantastic!

THAT'S ABOUT IT! (FOR TODAY)

So, remember, your next steps are…

- Develop your idea, so it has a beginning, middle and end.
  - Think about your background, and any props you'll need, like my goose cut-out - will you need to make some props?
- Draw out some rough thumbnails, to act as your road map.
  - We want four shots!
- Plan your animation set-up! Feel free to ask any questions.