

## Make with The MERL – Toy Stories stop motion animation

*With a toy or two and a smart phone or iPad, everyone can be making movies in minutes.*

**Stop motion animation is a film making technique** - through a sequence of small movements and individually photographed frames, objects appear to move on their own (like your toys do anyway when no-one is looking).

To make it work, you place an object in front of a camera and take a photo. You then move the object a tiny bit and take another photo. Repeat this process several times, play back the sequence and the object appears to move fluidly across the screen.

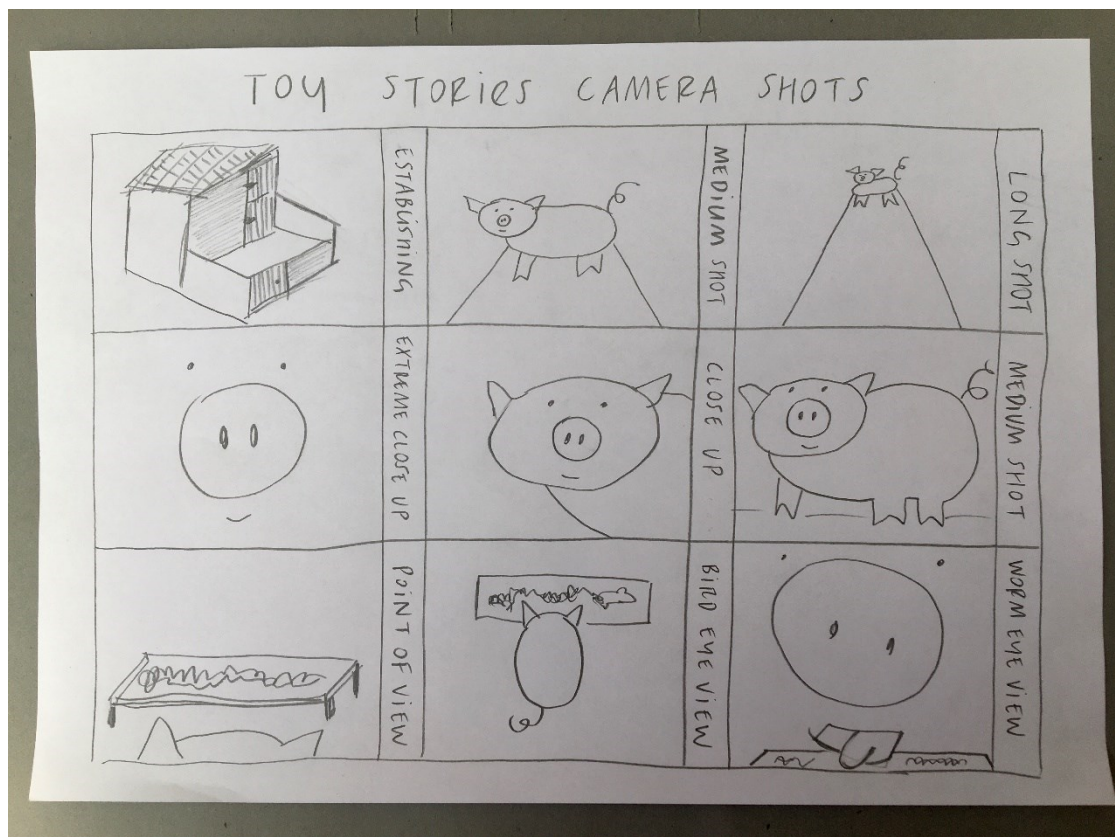
You will need:

- Your favourite toys, we prefer farm ones!
- Paper or material for backgrounds
- Smart phone/iPad (and a stand might help)
- Stop motion animation app – we used free to download STOP MOTION STUDIO
- Imagination and a steady hand...

Ella aged 10 made our very short example - from downloading app to sharing in about half an hour - with the very favourite fifty-year-old pigs, sty, trough and farmer belonging to one of The MERL team.

Before you start, you might like to storyboard the story of your toys – it really helps with the process and it's fun to get a bit of inspiration and share ideas before you commit to the filming. You can find loads of templates on the internet.

Before Ella started, she learnt about and experimented with different camera angles before starting filming.



Our top tip is to create a 'habitat' for your toy stories. Ella's was a simple green paper field, blue paper sky – but of course you can get as inventive as you want with drawings and other 'props'.

The free STOP MOTION STUDIO is really straightforward to use and has great (also free) features including filters, adding sound or voiceovers, title & credits and ways to share once you have created your animation.

