

# Sec One's Quick Guide to HCI

## Category 5

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## **Objective**

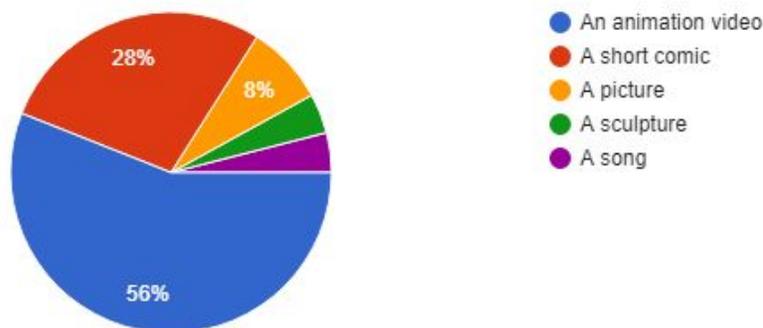
The main idea of this project is to create a product that would be informative to future batches.

## **Main Idea**

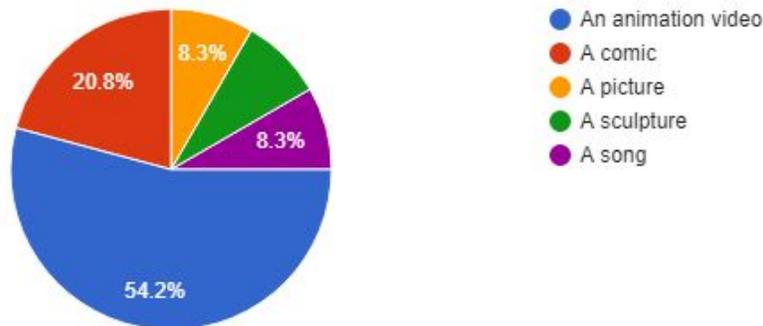
We have decided to create an animation that would tell people more about Hwa Chong, namely Secondary one student, to equip them with the necessary knowledge about Hwa Chong and our culture. We proceeded to create a questionnaire to gain more statistics from our peers in HCI with regards to what our schoolmates would have wanted to see that could have better prepared them for their Hwa Chong journey.

The results are as follows:

1) What would you have wanted to see that could have better prepared you for your Hwa Chong journey when you were in Sec 1?



2)What do you think future freshmen would want to see that will better prepare them for Hwa Chong?



As the results clearly states, an animation video was they wanted the most and thus we have decided on the main product of this project.

### Artist References

1)



TheOdd1sOut

James Rallison (born May 14, 1996) is an American webcomic artist from Arizona, known for his YouTube channel TheOdd1sOut.

Rallison uploaded the first strip of his webcomic *TheOdd1sOut* on June 14, 2012, on Tumblr and later on iFunny. Throughout his first year of making comics, he experimented a lot with his style before settling on his current bubbly styled character.

We took inspiration from his stylistic choice in character design: a marshmallow man who instantly appeals viewers, earning him millions of views. We also wanted to create an animation that immediately captures the attention of the Sec Ones.

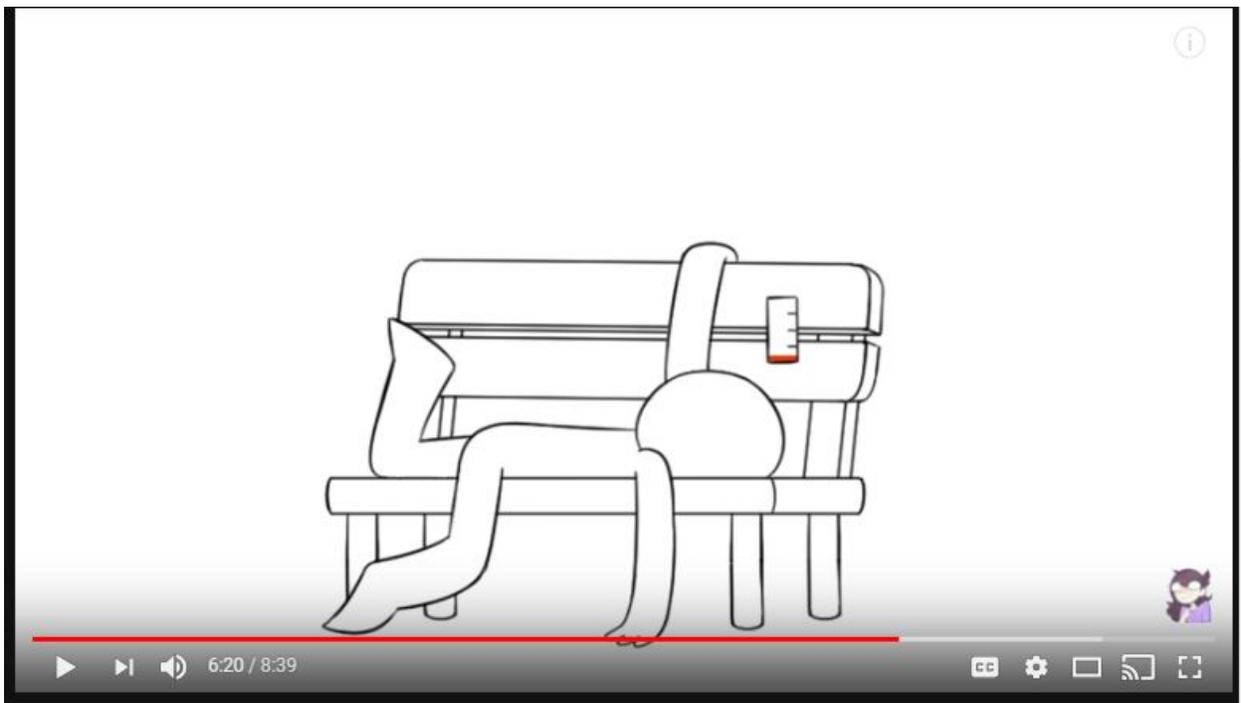
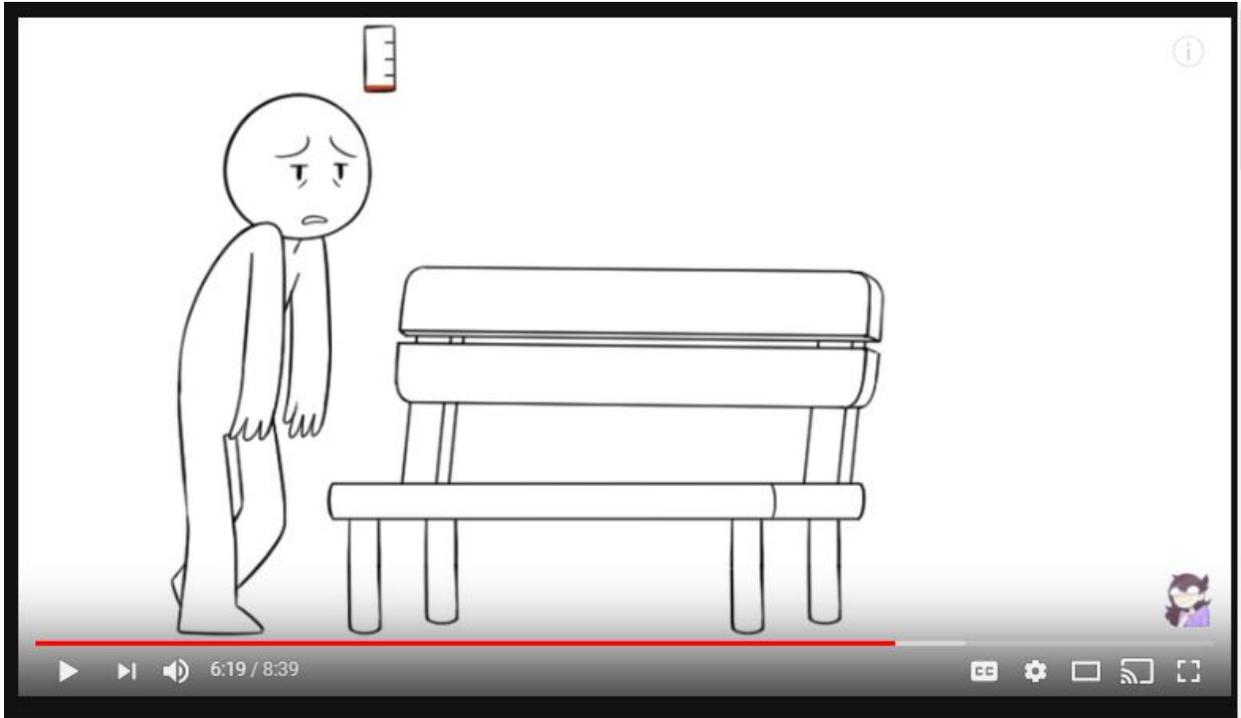


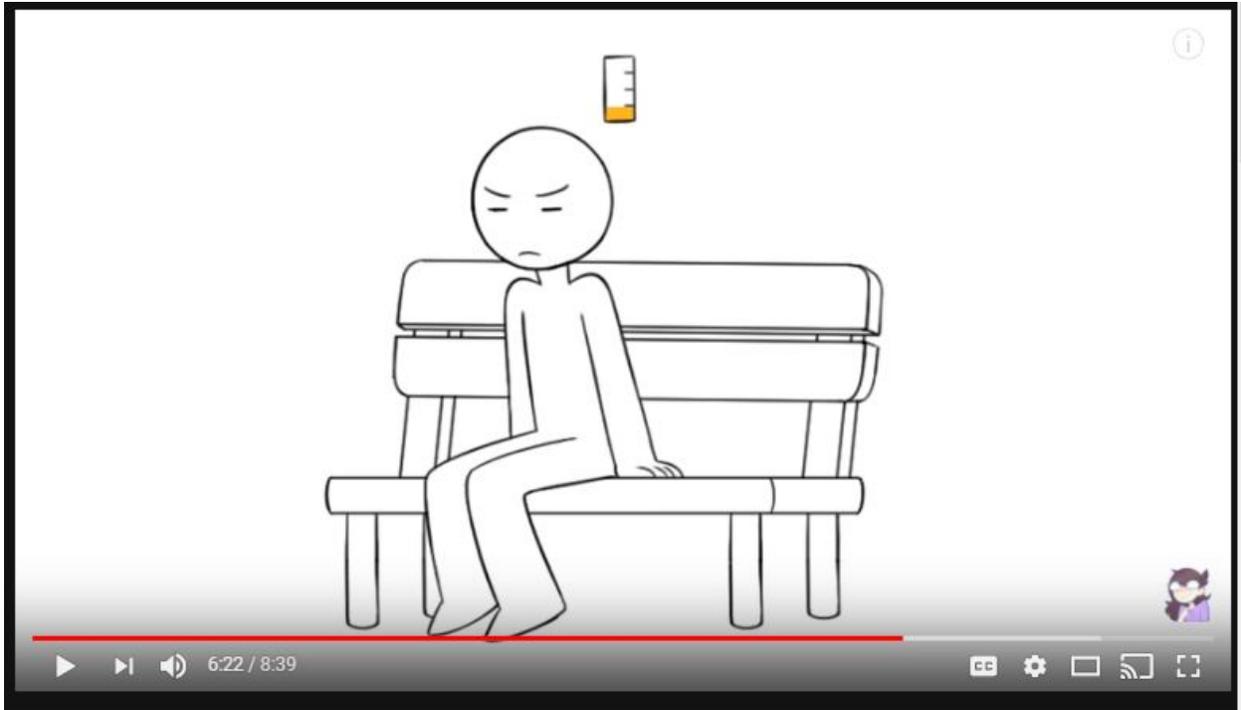
He usually starts off with his character speaking about the topic straightaway. In parts of the animation, he switches back and forth between the character speaking and his character doing the actions of his story, and thus we also decided to incorporate it into our animation by using two styles, one for the character talking while the other for doing funny and foolish actions.

2)



Jaiden Animations is an American YouTuber and animator who does storytimes and creates animations about her life. We drew inspiration from her animation style which includes quick poses to make her animation seem smooth and less stiff.





For example, her animations make use of multiple exaggerated actions just for a scene. While impractical in reality, in cartoon animations, it adds on to the light-heartedness and multiple exaggerated actions allow viewers to easily absorb the actions. We tried to incorporate those into both our anime-looking character as well as our cartoonish character.

## Medium

For animating, we used wacom intuos, a drawing tablet that is of good quality to draw out our animation. For the animating programme, we went with Adobe Flash cs 5.5. Finally, for our audio, we recorded it with our iphones as the results were much clearer. We then edited it on Audacity, a free sound editing software.

## Character designs

We had many different ideas for our character, ranging from a taller, lankier model to a shorter, stubbier and neckless model.

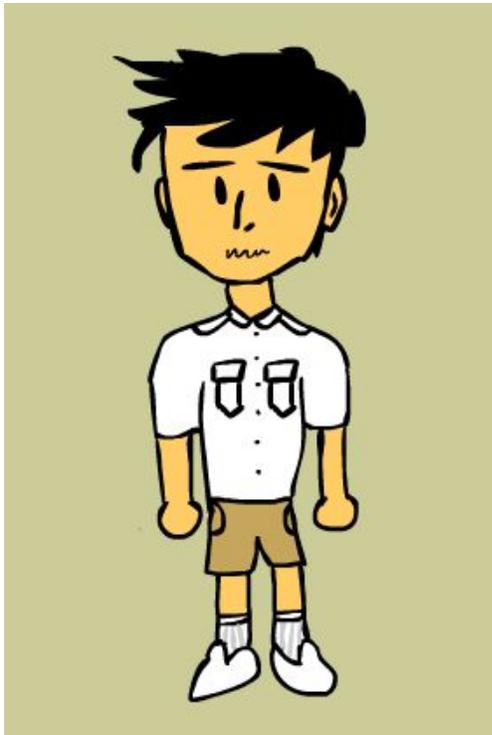


At first, we wanted an easy to animate marshmallow man just like our inspiration the odd 1 out. However, we found it to be dull and unappealing compared to a more relatable hwa chong character, as well as the fact that it was unoriginal.

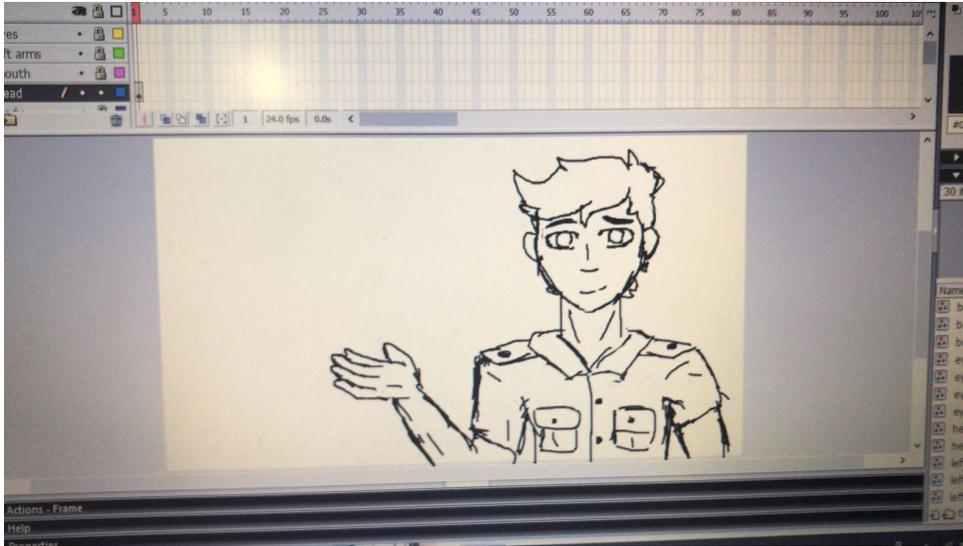
In the end, we decided on a model that would be more distinctive to Hwa Chong students:



We decided to go with a boy with short stubby legs and limbs with no elbows. This was a simple sketch of the character, while the final is below:



In addition to the cartoonish character, we also wanted a more realistic character to animate for the character speaking directly to the audience as it would clearly differentiate the light-hearted side of the animation to the more personal side of it.

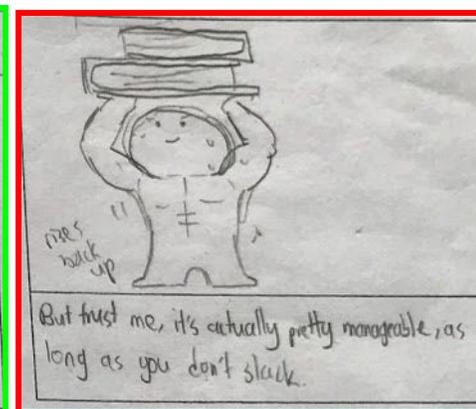
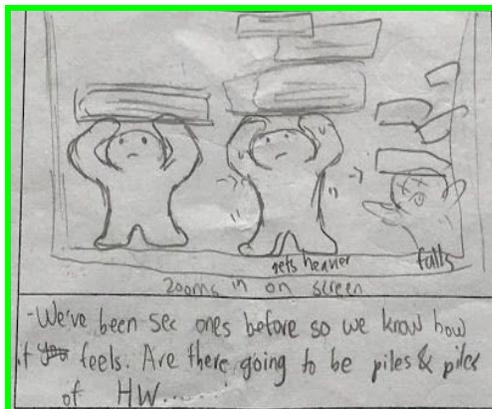
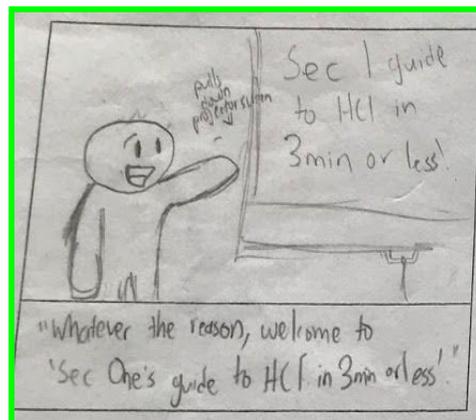
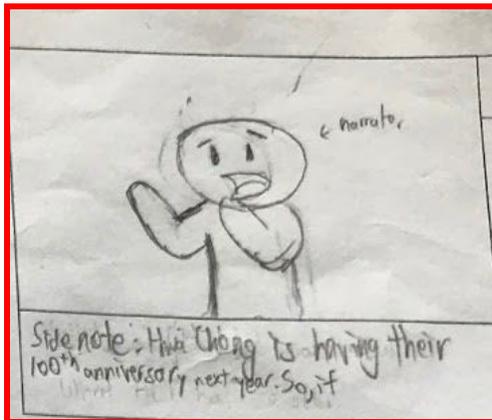
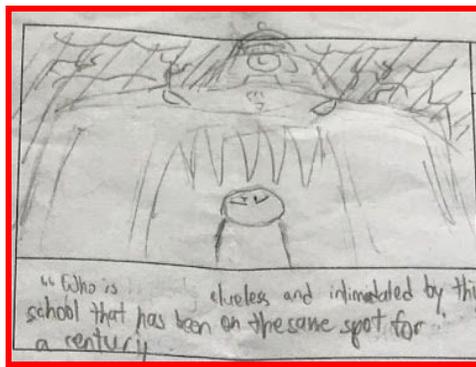
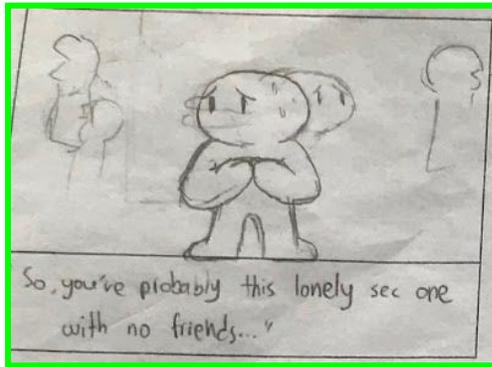


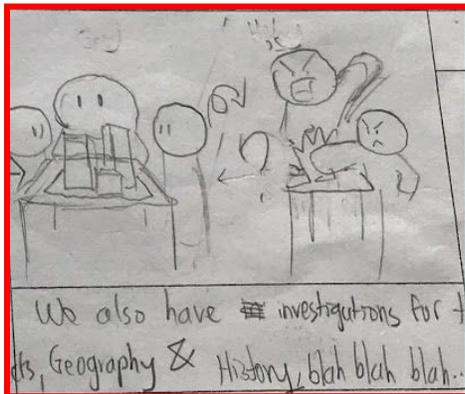
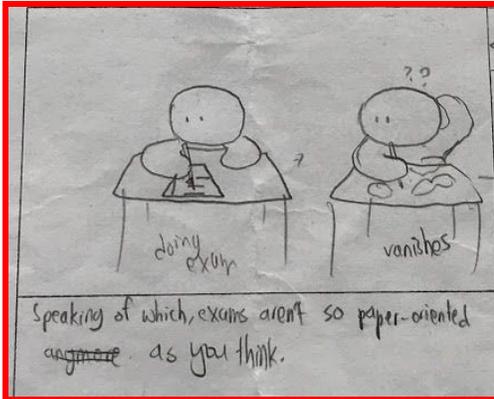
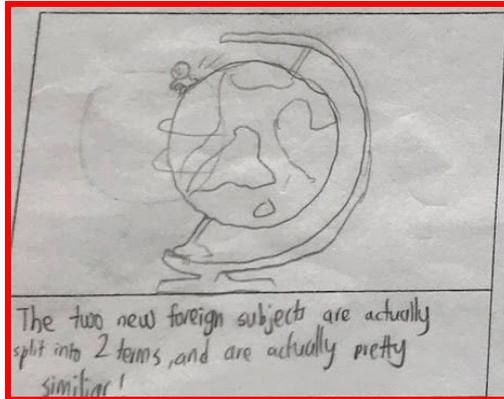
We rejected the other models as well because we wanted the video to be more realistic and at the same time appeal to everyone in Hwa Chong. It gave us a more friendly feel and at the same time our model looks more matured, fitting the theme, yet find it humorous and funny.

## Process

### 1) Storyboarding

First off we started by storyboarding our ideas and how we wanted the whole video to flow. We also used the storyboards to plan our character designs and planned the different transitioning scenes.





While we mostly kept to the storyboard, we also improvised on the spot on certain occasions and went with different scenes instead due to changes in script as well as character designs.

## 2) Recording

We originally decided to do the recording at Jun Feng's house. We started recording the full speech that the cartoon would be saying during the animation. We then proceeded to animating the mouth of the cartoon to make it look like the character was the one speaking. However, we also met with many challenges throughout the whole process.

## Challenges:



We realised that the audio had too much background noise even after we have filtered the audio and that the audio is very soft and it is really hard for our viewers to hear it.

After much discussion and consideration, we finally decided to re-record our audio.

However, we still decided the audio felt unclear even though it was better than the first, and thus we thought that a voice actor with a clearer, louder and more energetic voice would suit better.

## Solutions:

We asked our friend, YiKai, who has a much more clear and concise voice which cuts through all the noise, to help us with the recording. Thankfully, he agreed.

## Animating

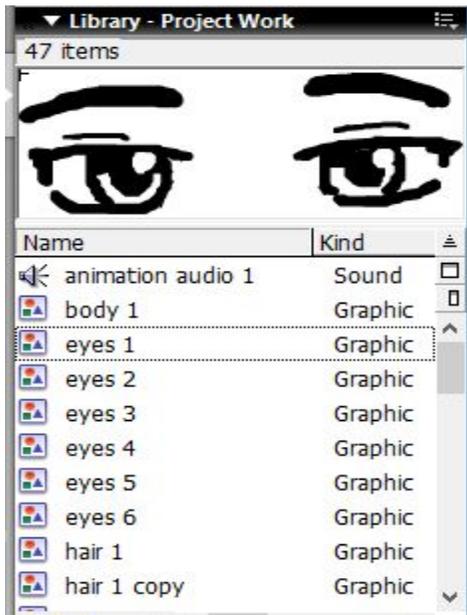
In the midst of creating and executing, we took more time to think of our final product in order to ensure our unique style that we would develop in the animation.



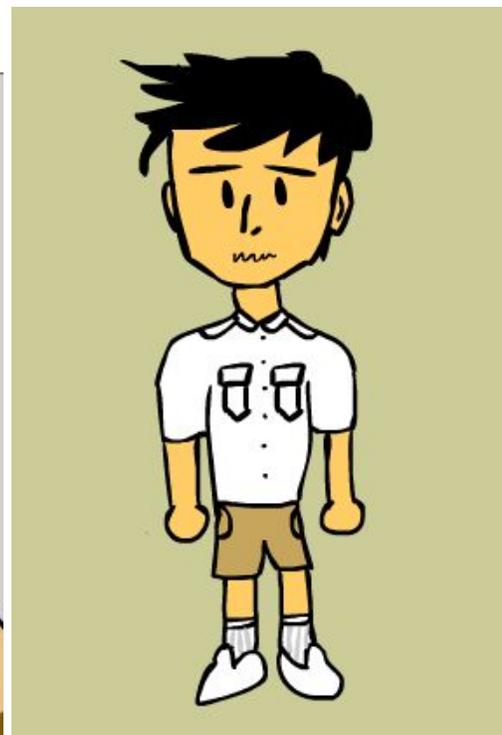
### Animation Process:

1. Draw out the character with its body parts in different layers
2. Draw possible actions the character might have and save them
3. Draw any background pictures or anything we might use later on
4. Insert the drawings every frame, listening to the audio repeatedly to sync animation with audio

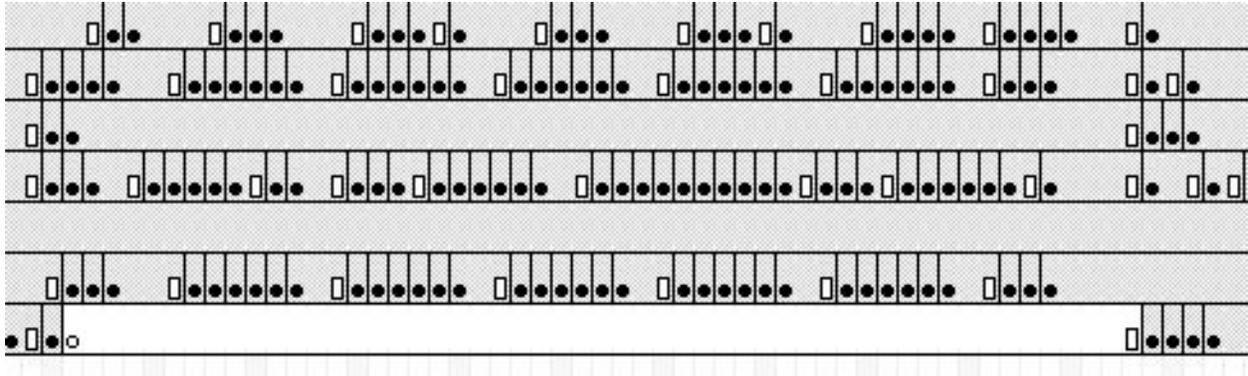
We had many different takes, ranging from the background colour of our animation to the tiny character details, such as the eyes of the characters.



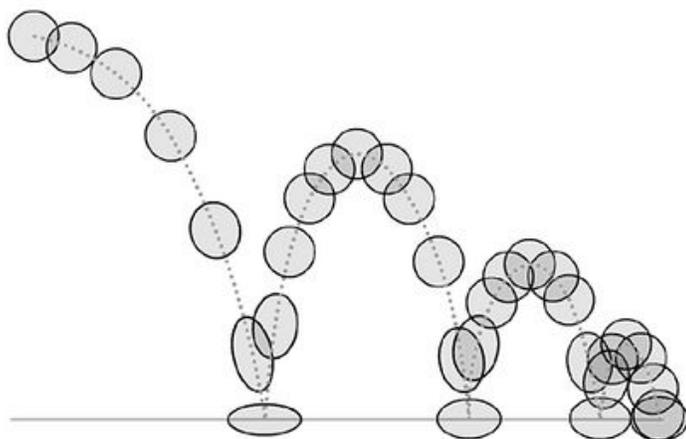
When the character becomes excited, we would have a different set of eyes for the character. We can tell that the character is experiencing a change in emotions not just by the audio, but also by the looks of the character.



Animating the character's looks were only beginning. The hard part was when we proceeded to animate the mouth of the cartoon in order to make it look like the character was the one speaking.

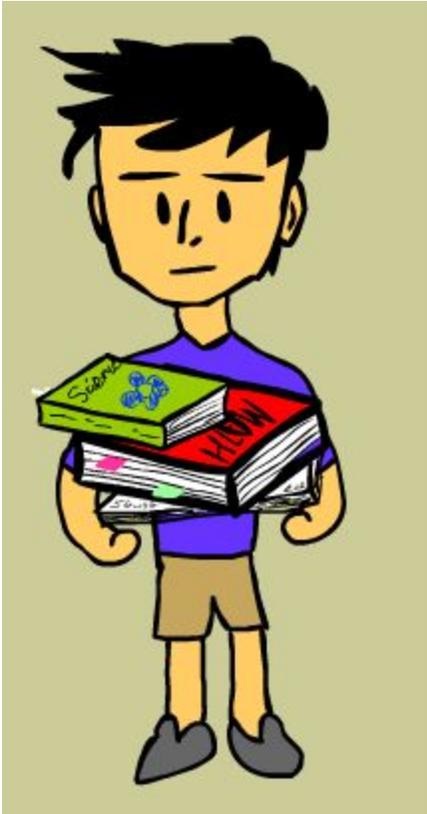
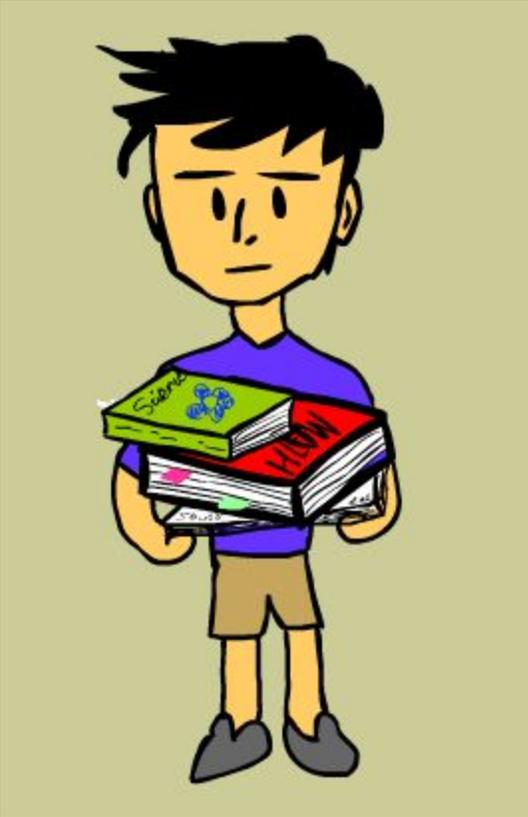
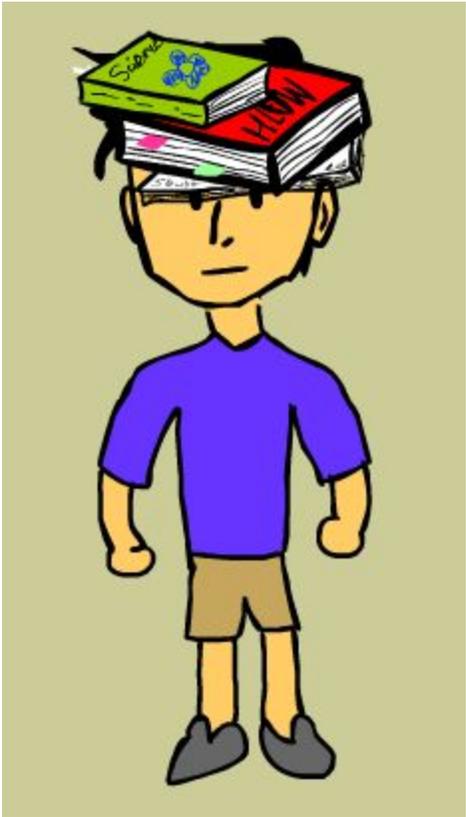


We also focused on the 12 principles of animation, mainly squash-and-stretch, exaggeration and timing to animate our characters.



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The following shows an example of a short clip:



The above shows a pile of books dropping into the arms of the character. Although it is a simple scene, it requires multiple layers of animating such as the eyes and books which are animated individually. A little bounce is also added after the book drops to not make the character seem too stiff.

Next we moved on to the animation process. We decided to break down the video into three main parts.

## **Product**

### **Academics**

In this part of the video, we decided to explain to our viewers how exams and tests work in Hwa Chong. We also wanted to tell them more about our homework load so as to help our viewers understand Hwa Chong better, making it more simple and at the same time realistic for our viewers.

### **CCA**

In this part of the video we explained that there are many different kinds of CCAs and the different benefits of each one. We created pictures of the various CCAs to be able to give the audience a clearer picture of what we are talking about.

### **Out of school activities**

In this part of the video we explained the various out of school activities that are in store for the Secondary Ones, predominantly their SOAC. We also talked about what sets Hwa Chong apart from other schools and that is the opportunities that are provided for us such as sabbaticals, exchange programmes and special programmes.

## **Reflections**

As a group, we worked through the thick and thin and managed to produce our animation on time. Though we encountered many different challenges such as finding the time to come together to do the project, or trying to solve technical issues or find different resources for our work, every one of us have put in the time and effort to solve these issues. Each of us had different takeaways from this project, but all of us have also learnt new skills and values together, such as teamwork, time management, adaptability, perseverance and of course, presentation skills.

## **Citations**

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