

LEGOLAND DISCOVERY CENTRE

Filmmaking Teacher Guide



Introduction

Filmmaking with LEGO is a great classroom activity or class project resource created by LEGOLAND Discovery Centre Melbourne to spark creativity and imagination in any classroom, while having fun and learning with LEGO!

This resource is designed to be a cross curricular activity covering literacy, art and design and technology.

Students will create a short film, using LEGO to create their set and Minifigures as actors!

Students are encouraged to explore filming using a wide range of apps to add special effects and bring their story to life.

All you need

Teachers:

- Filmmaking with LEGO Teacher Guide
- Filmmaking with LEGO Student Worksheets
- Model Master Builder Demonstration Videos
- Filmmaking with LEGO Tip Sheets

Students:

- Ipad or a device with a camera that is easy to move.
- A large box of LEGO bricks.
- Stop Motion app (see page 10) or cartoon filming app or special effects app depending on their story idea and script.

Short Film Festival

Once the students have completed the project, a short film festival at school is a great way to showcase the students movies to the rest of the school, parents and school community. Hosting a short film festival is also a great way for students to fundraise money for the school by selling admission to watch and selling snacks- who knows you just might have the next famous movie maker/director at your school.



Film Genre Summary

There are lots of different types of movies: some are scary, some are funny, some have lots of chase scenes or light sabre battles!

The starting point for thinking about making a film is to think about what movies students enjoy: what do they find inspiring or interesting and what would they like to make?

Students are encouraged to talk about different types of movies, and to think of examples of some of the genres on their worksheet.

FILM GENRE DESCRIPTIONS

Action

In an action movie, the main character usually takes a risky turn, which leads to desperate situations, including explosions, fight scenes, daring escapes, etc.

Comedy

Comedy is a story that tells about a series of funny, or comical events, intended to make the audience laugh.

Drama

Drama is more serious, focusing characters who must deal with emotional struggles.

Mystery

A mystery story follows an investigator as they attempt to solve a puzzle – often a crime. The details and clues are presented as the story continues and the main character discovers them and by the end of the story the mystery is solved.

Science fiction

Science fiction uses a scientific understanding to explain the universe that it takes place in. It explores the role computers or machines has in our lives and can involve travel through space, time or alternate universes.

Fantasy

A fantasy story is about magic or supernatural forces, rather than technology (as science fiction) if it happens to take place in a modern or future era.



Writing a script

Once students have decided what kind of genres they're going to make, they need to think about what kind of elements to think about when developing the story and writing the script.

Students are asked to think about the elements of a story which are:

- Setting
- Character
- Point-of-view
- Plot
- Conflict

Where is the story set? (Setting)

Prompts: where and when is the story set? Setting represents both the physical location but also the time (i.e. past, present, future) and the social and cultural conditions in which the characters exist.

Who are the main characters? (Character)

Prompts: A person or animal or really anything personified. There can be one main character or many, and often there are secondary characters, but not always.

Who is telling the story? (Point-of-view)

"Who" is telling the story? First person ("I") or third person ("he/she/it"). Limited (one character's perspective), multiple (many characters' perspectives) or omniscient (all knowing narrator). Second person ("you") is not often used for writing stories.

What happens in the story? (Plot)

The plot consists of the events that happen in the story. In a plot you typically find an introduction, rising action, a climax, the falling action, and a resolution. Plot is often represented as an arc.

Is there a challenge or problem for the main character(s) to overcome? (Conflict)
Every story must have a conflict, i.e. a challenge or problem around which the plot is based. Without conflict, the story will have no purpose or trajectory.



Designing your set

Students can create a film set using a variety of backgrounds.

First students need to consider what kind of movie they are making – drama, space, fantasy, adventure.

Students are encouraged to think about what they can use as a background for their set – a homework opportunity could be to look around their house to see what you think would work well.

There are lots of backgrounds that you can download from lego.com/en-au/themes/letsbuildtogether/backgrounds



Suggestions:

- Building from LEGO
- Using the playground as a set
- Using the box from a LEGO set
- Designing your own background on paper
- Printing a background
- Using arts and crafts in the classroom

Creating a storyboard

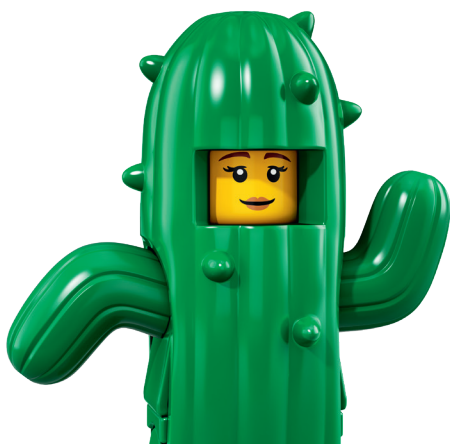
Now that you students written a script, they need to decide what that will actually look like on screen. The best way to do this is to draw a storyboard. Just as the script tells the story in words, the storyboard does the same thing in pictures.

Students can then follow the sequence of shots when making the movie. To make a storyboard, students can draw each scene on paper with short notes. The finished item will look like a comic strip.

Class activity: finish the storyboard

Teacher to draw the following on a whiteboard and encourage the following discussion: a story needs three things: a beginning, middle and an end. These stories have a beginning and an end, but the middle is missing! Discuss what could happen in the middle frames.

Draw a stick figure of a kid looking bored		Draw a stick figure of a kid in suit sitting behind desk
"Nothing exciting ever happens around here..."		"Wow! I'm a millionaire"
Draw a stick figure of a kid looking through telescope.		Draw stick figure of a kid looking friendly with aliens
"Hang on! What's that?"		"You wanna get a slurpee?"



Directing Tips

Once students have created their stories and designed their set, they can test different types of camera angles and investigate how they can change the mood and intensity of a scene.

Encourage students to test the difference between:

- Wide shots
- Mid shot
- Close-up

Wide Shot



The wide shot is used to establish each scene in a movie.

For example, this wide shot tells us we are in a town square.

The audience instantly knows where the movie is located from this shot.

Mid Shot



The mid shot takes the audience closer. Move closer again, and pick out characters and objects using either the close-up or the big close-up.

These are the shots used to show close-up action and conversation.

Close Up



The close-up is a shot often taken at relatively close range.

The benefit of the close up is that it gives us a detailed and intimate look we might normally miss.

A close up can focus on a Minifigure's expression or dramatic movement.

OTHER TIPS

Using tracks

The camera does not have to remain still while shooting. It can move around. The most popular camera movement is "tracking". This is when the camera moves forwards, backwards or side to side. All students have to do is mount the camera on the track and push it slowly in any chosen direction as they take shots.

Students can vary the tracking speed according to the mood of the scene. If they want the hero to enter the cave of a dangerous dragon, they can try to build up the tension and mystery by tracking slowly into the cave.

Pans and tilts

A pan is when the camera lens moves across from left to right or vice versa. For example, two minifigures face each other across a table and the camera pans between them as they speak. Students can achieve pans by turning the mounted tablet or phone on its turntable.

Film Set Up Tricks

To create an awesome LEGO film set, you only need a handful of resources

A BACKGROUND

this can be a picture, a LEGO build, a print out (see Designing Your Set)

BASE PLATE OR COLOURED PAPER

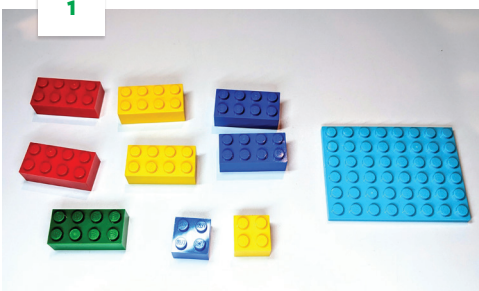
PROPS & MINIFIGURES

A IPAD OR PHONE STAND

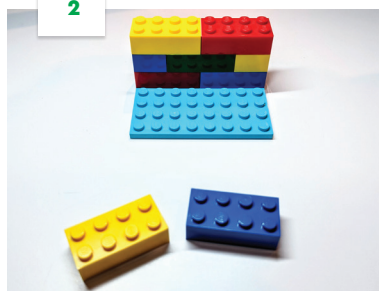


HOW TO BUILD A PHONE STAND

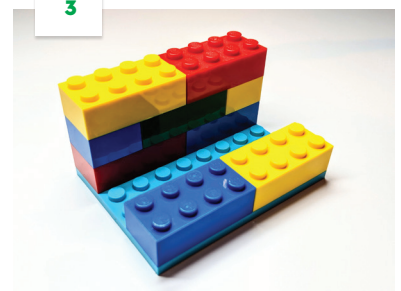
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Recommended filmmaking app

There are lots of different ipad and phone apps for stop motion movie making. We recommend using the Stop Motion Studio app which is simple and intuitive for students

Download Stop Motion Studio

Apple: <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/stop-motion-studio/id441651297>

Google Play: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.cateater.stopmotionstudio&hl=en_AU&gl=US

5 minute introduction to using Stop Motion Studio

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzerBLnDvVo>

Once downloaded, the app can operate in a standalone/unsupervised manner, which means that they are not connected to WiFi or any other network.

If you have an iPad, they have been configured to operate in 'Guided Access Mode', to avoid guests being able to do anything other than use the Stop Motion app.

To launch Guided Access and the Stop Motion app:

1. Open the BouncePad case so that you can access the home button.
Ensure that the iPad is switched on
2. Press the home button and ensure you are on the home screen.
Open Stop Motion Studio:
3. Once the app has launched, triple click the home button so that the
Guided Access screen appears
4. Press Start
5. Guided Access mode will begin and the iPad will be locked down into the Stop Motion Studio Pro app

