

Thumbnails to Animatics

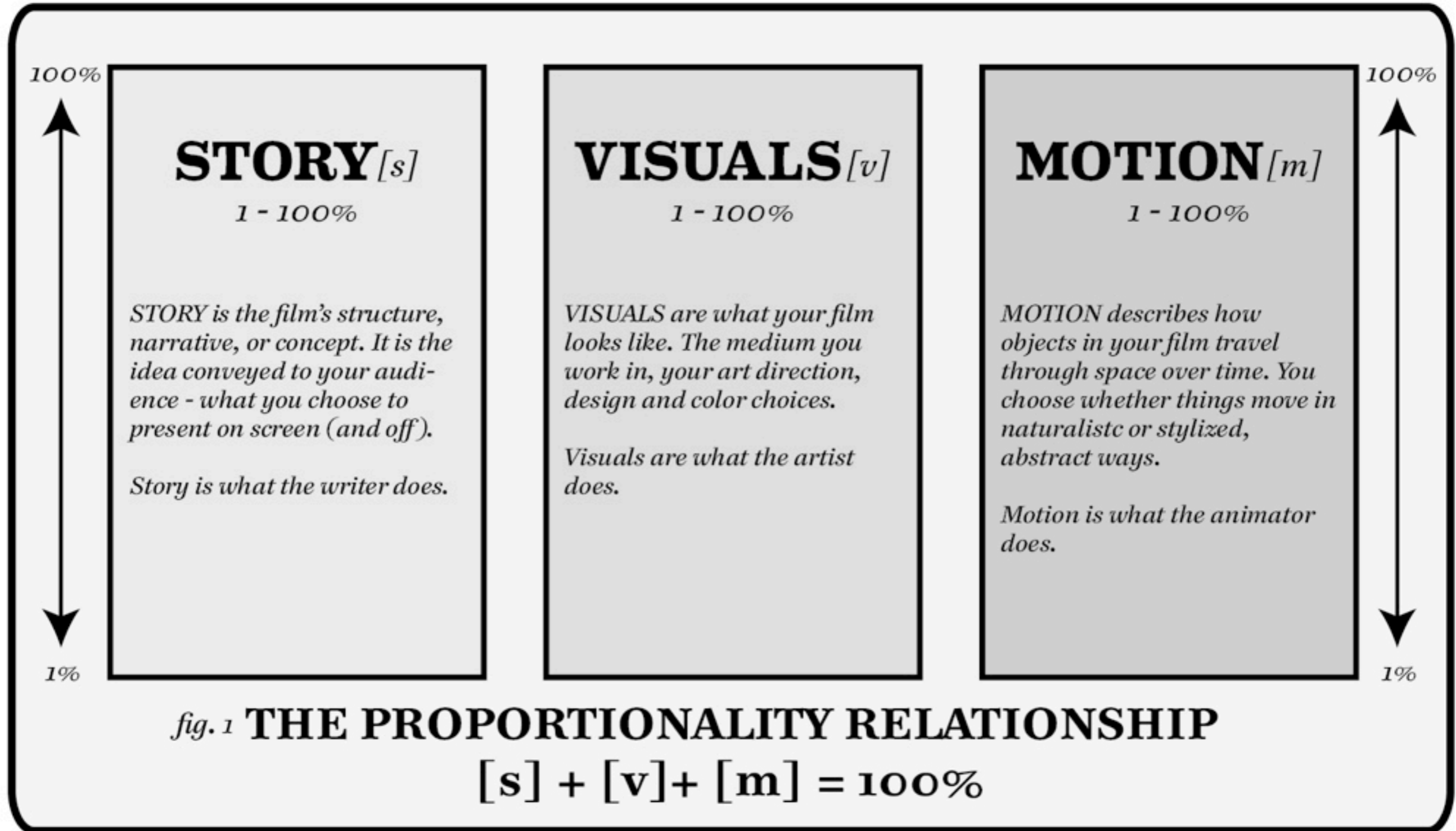
Planning and executing efficient storyboards.

Preliminary Thoughts:

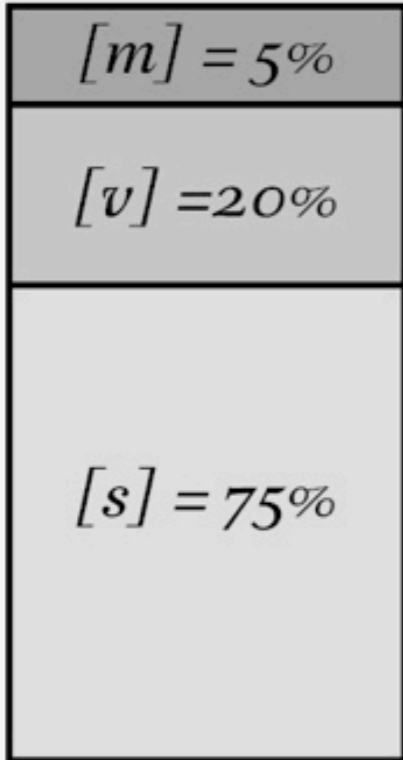
- *Address overall complexity early on.*
- *Consider what your film is about & how you want to execute it.*
- *Once production begins, how you plan where to allocate complexity can help you guide your choices.*

ALLOCATING YOUR FILM'S COMPLEXITY

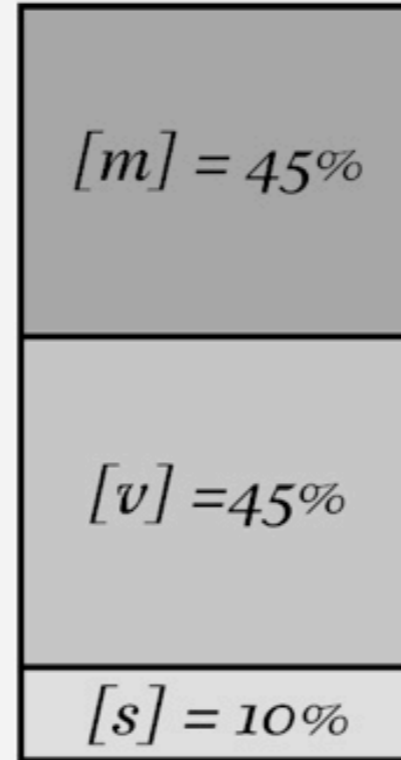
(an animation student's formula for success)



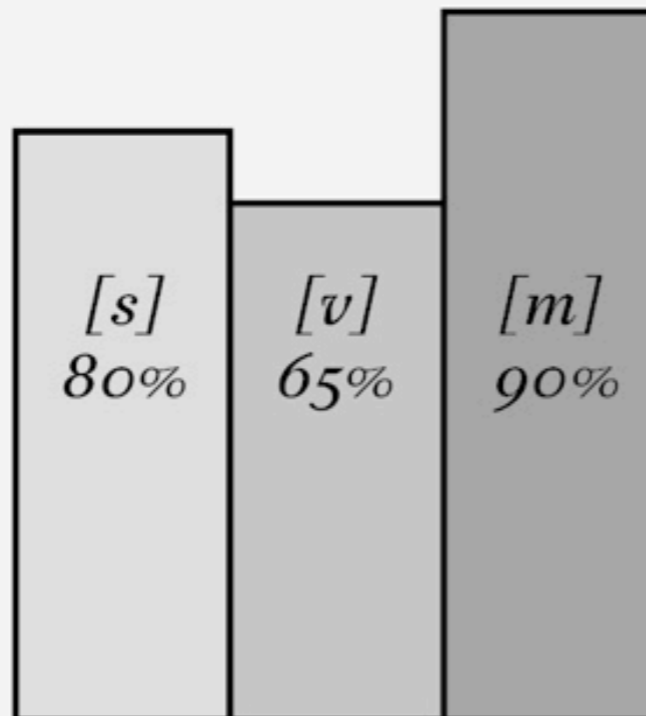
The complexity of each of the elements STORY, VISUALS, and MOTION have a proportional relationship to the others. The sum total of these must not exceed 100%.



For example, if you have a very complex story, you may consider simplifying your visuals and motion.



If you choose to make your visuals and motion relatively complex, consider telling a simple story.



A production with high levels of complexity in story, visuals, and motion may meet with difficulty achieving completion.

Start with Thumbnails

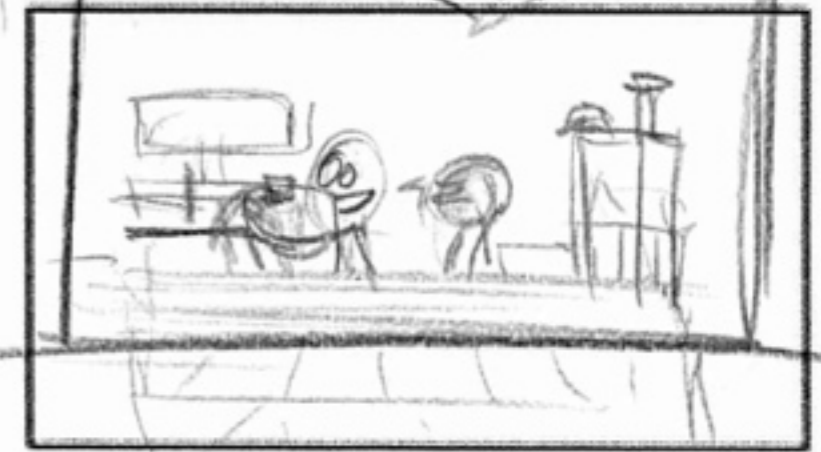
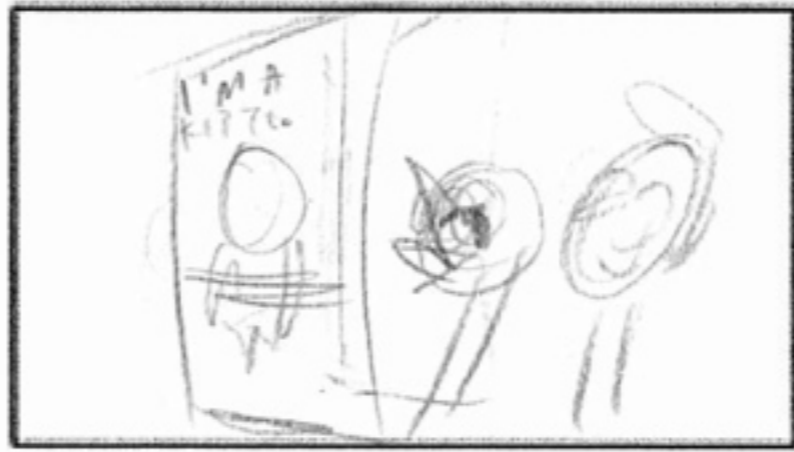
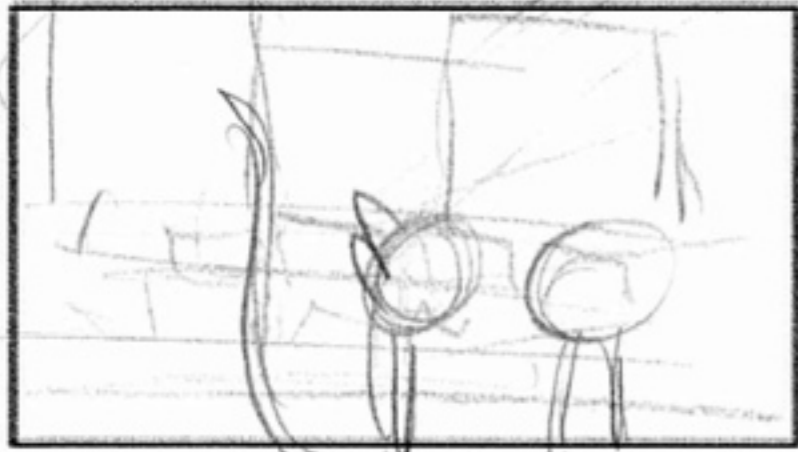
Keep Loose

- Visual shorthand. Stick figures OK.
- You may throw out/redo entire sequences. Don't overwork it.
- Priority is on CHARACTERS and relevant OBJECTS.
- Keep BGs minimal (horizon line) unless crucial in the shot.

Start with Thumbnails

Work Small & Quick

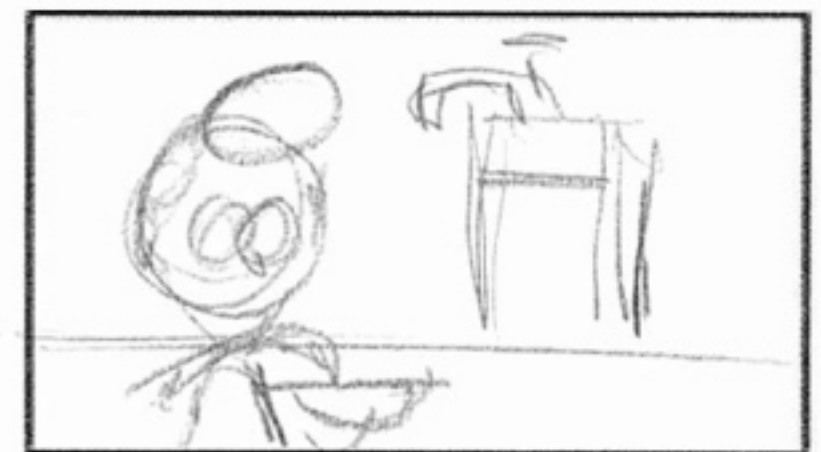
- GET IDEAS DOWN NOW and move forward. REFINE LATER.
- Panels should “read” at any size.
- If it works as a thumb, it will work in the board.



ALL SHOPPERS - IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT
ALL SHOPPERS!



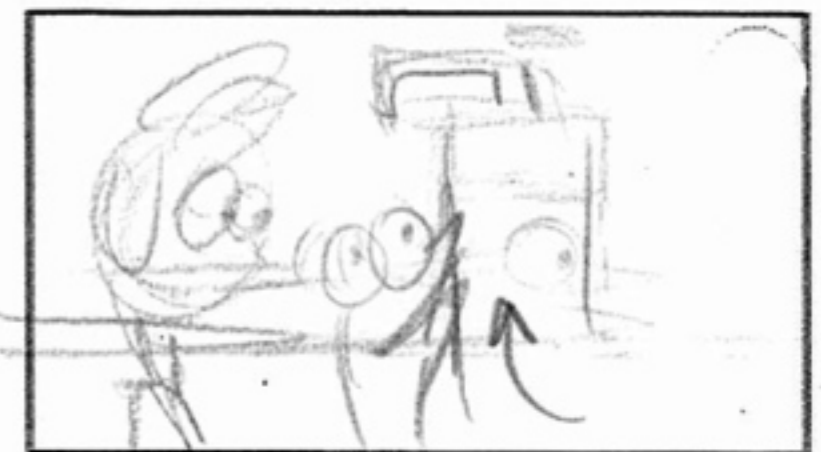
NACHO DADDY'S NACHOS

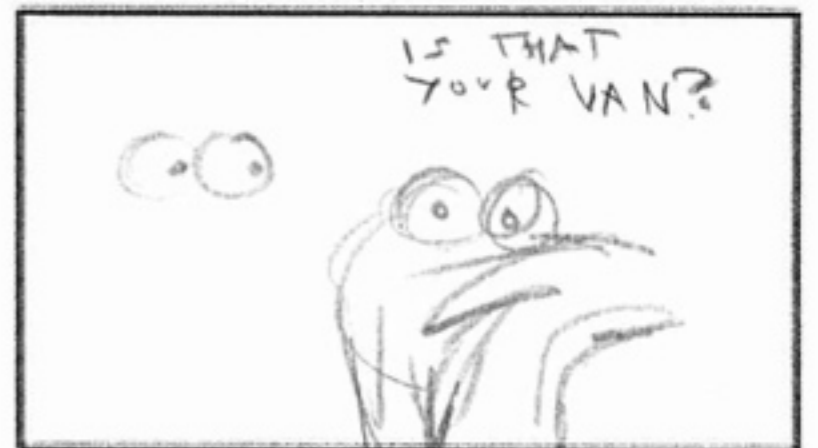
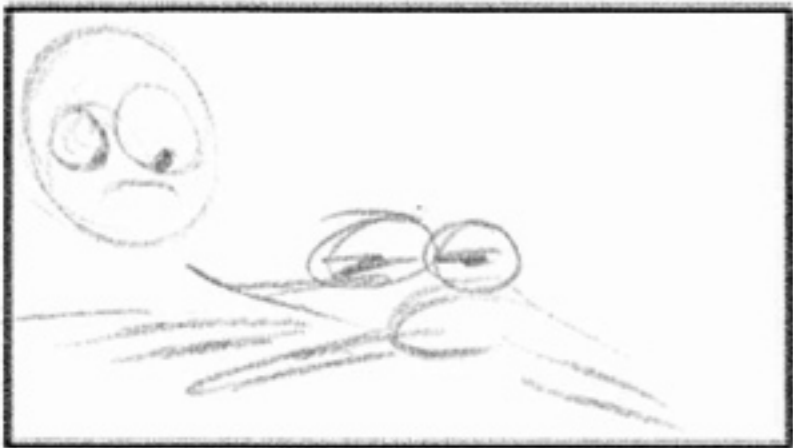
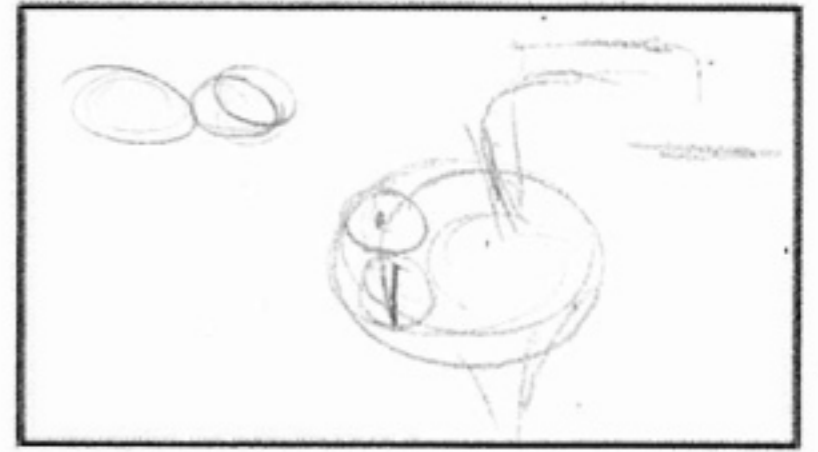
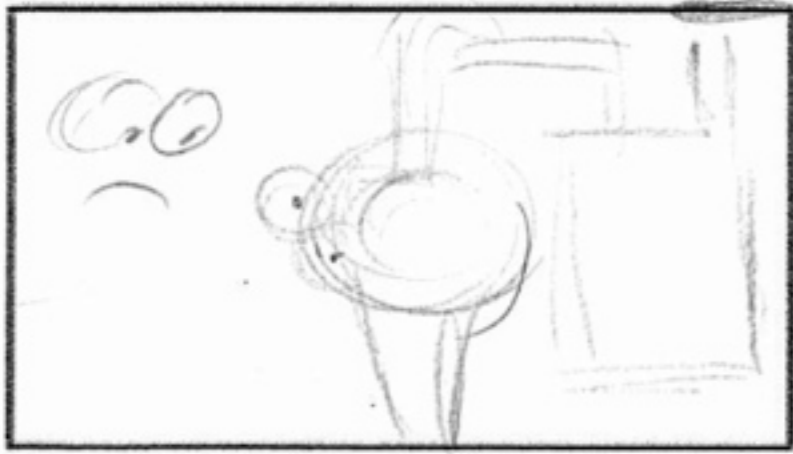


SKIP THE CHIPS, FLIP

WOW

POINTLESS FIBER





Start with Thumbnails

As you get sequences of shots thumbed out, you can start to evaluate how well they are working.

The things you want to be thinking about as you do this are...

The Three C's

- *Continuity*
- *Clarity*
- *Cutting*

Continuity

Technical Fundamentals

- Camera Direction
- Axis of Action / 180° Rule
- Blocking and character placement
- If camera changes location, characters and objects maintain relative orientation and position to each other.

Clarity

Sequences comprised of readable shots

- What is the point of your scene?
- Distill it down to **THE ONE SHOT** that conveys your point in the most efficient way.
- Keep compositions balanced and simple.

Clarity

Readability - simple compositions

- Value: Light/Dark
- Space: Positive/Negative
- Shape: Silhouettes & Strong Poses.
- Scale: Large/Small.

Clarity

Readability - simple compositions

- Value: Light/Dark
- Space: Positive/Negative
- Shape: Silhouettes & Strong Poses.
- Scale: Large/Small.
- Hitchcock's Rule: The size of an object in frame should equal its importance in the story at that time.

Clarity

Framing (In Boards)

- Awareness of frame cutoff
- Headroom/Footroom
- Noseroom
- Don't crop characters at joints (hips/knees/ankles)
- Action safe / 4:3 safe

Clarity

Lines of Action

- Board panels are **STATIC**, but a storyboard is a blueprint for **MOTION**.
- You are not composing for shapes of **OBJECTS** in frame, but shapes of **MOTIONS** through the frame.

Cutting

Shot choices reveal WHAT is important as well as WHEN it is important.

You engage the viewer through how you sequence your shot choices. (e.g) Two-shot, Over the Shoulder, Close-Up, etc.

Cutting

Always cut for a reason

- Decide what motivates the cut
 - reveal information
 - control pacing or tension
 - change focus of attention
 - emphasize an emotional beat

Cutting

Your script or dialogue may not be final, but you can still thumb/board out a scene if you know what mark you need to hit at the end.

For example, your shot selection can take characters through a scene leading up to an emotional payoff through intercutting their poses and expressions in response to one another.

Thumbs to Boards

The Rough Pass

- Go all the way through on first pass.
- Don't finely render panels.
- Purpose is to tighten up blocking & framing.
- Watch relative Char sizes & proportions.
- If a thumb panel reads as-is, blow it up and drop it in.

Thumbs to Boards

Refinement

- Pitch sequences to yourself to see how well they are working.
- Evaluate more frequently than in the thumbs pass.
- Rework and tweak problem sections until they flow.

Thumbs to Boards

Efficiency

- Be mindful that everything you board must be created by someone - probably yourself.
- Re-use assets when possible.
- Multiple BG angles = OK
- Several different BGs for same setting = production killer.
- If it won't be in the shot, don't make it.

Thumbs to Boards

The Cleanup Pass

- How clean should it be?
 - Clean enough that staging and expressions are sufficiently clear.
 - Does a thumb panel work? Keep it.
- Err on the extreme.
 - Better/easier to dial back an extreme pose/expression than to push a weak one.

Boards to Animatics

Editorial choices

- Purpose is to lock timing and pacing to exactly how you want it.
- Don't need every last animation pose, but important beats need to hit at the right places.
- Cutting for efficiency - no coverage in animation. Editing happens now.

Boards to Animatics

Cutting to Sound

- If your film is dialogue driven, cut to the dialogue. Scratch dialogue is OK.
- Films or sequences without dialogue can be cut to music. Select/compose something that reflects the emotional state of your scene and cut to that soundtrack.

Miscellaneous Tips

- 16x is minimum amount of time for something on screen to register visually.
- Cushion dialogue cuts with a few frames before cueing the audio. Dialogue on the cut is jarring.
- “Banana-banana-banana-banana” is 24 letters & takes about a second to say aloud. When timing boards, repeat “banana” for the duration of action you want. However many letters you stop at = number of frames.