

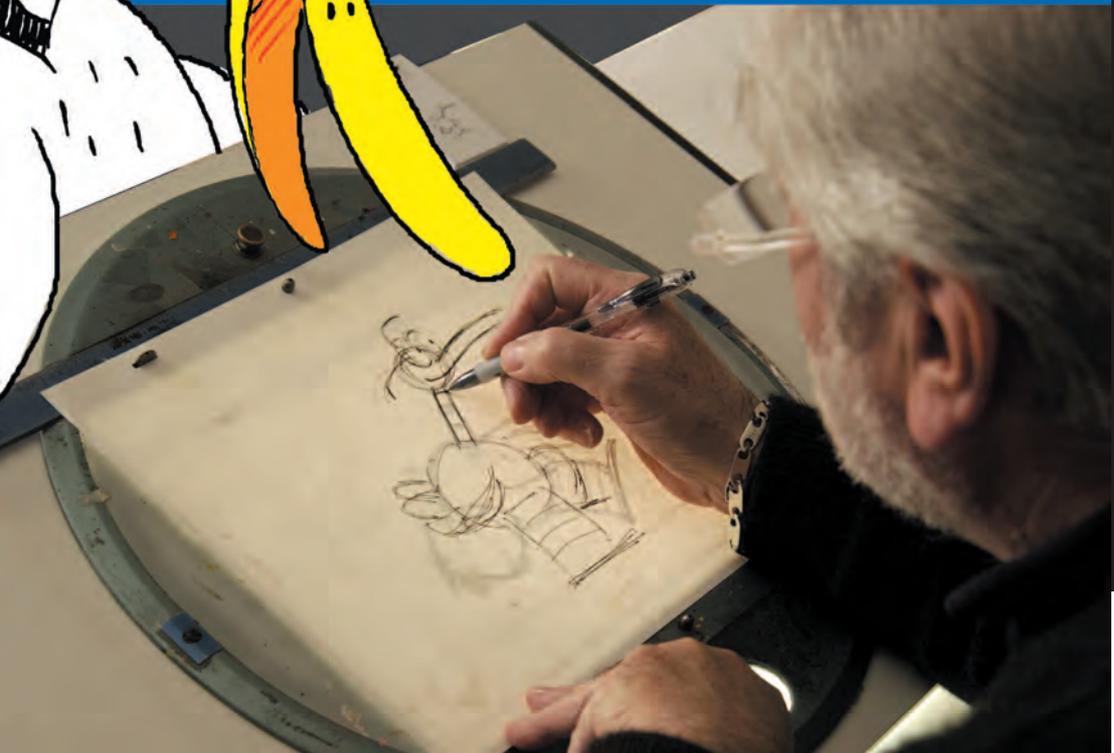
Teacher Edition

Making an Animated Cartoon



alphakids

Written and illustrated by Alex Stitt
Photography by Michael Curtain



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How to use this book

The Alphakids Plus teacher editions support teachers as they guide children's reading and thinking during one or more guided reading sessions. Teachers can observe children as they read and choose from the given suggestions to suit individual needs.

Before reading

Setting the context, front cover and title page:

The suggestions help teachers to set the scene and prepare children for reading the book. Prompts help to determine children's prior knowledge. Where necessary, background information is provided. Teachers are encouraged to check that children understand the vocabulary listed and to discuss the meanings and/or the structures of these words. Previous experiences with similar text types may also be discussed.

During reading

Predict, Read, Reflect:

Questions encourage children to engage with the text by making predictions. They then read a section of the text and reflect on what they have read. The focus is on the content, language and text features of the book.

Observe and support:

Prompts help teachers to focus on the strategies children use as they read. Teachers can then select from and adapt the suggestions according to the needs of the individual child. The suggestions aim to develop a child's reading abilities. Interruptions to the child's reading should be minimal.

After reading

A selection of reading and writing activities:

The last pages of the teacher edition provide follow-up activities and include the assessment focus.

Selected text features

- Step by step drawings showing the movements of cartoon characters are provided
- A storyboard is shown
- Technical language is used throughout: animation, cels, storyboard
- A flow chart of the process is provided

Vocabulary

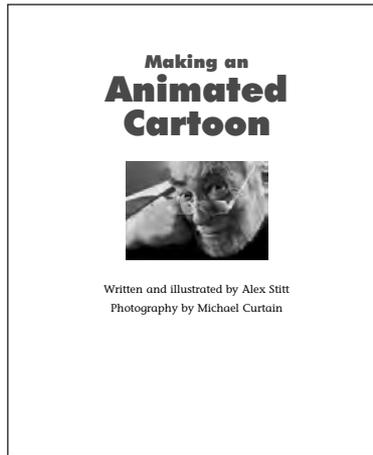
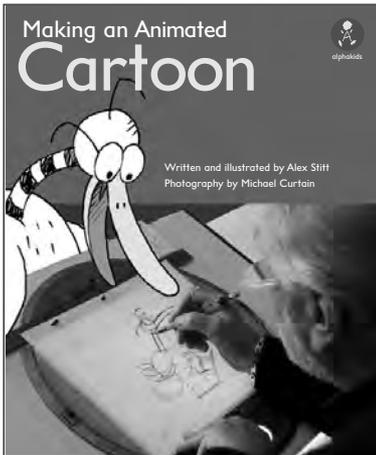
actors, adventures, animated, animation, background, cartoon, cels, character, computer, drawing, drawing board, film, flipbooks, movement, movies, photographed, picture, recording, scanned, screen, sketch, soundtrack, sound effects, still images, stories, storyboard, studio, television, videotape

Setting the context

Do you like to watch cartoons? What do you like about them?

How are cartoons made?

You might like to supply the children with some cartoons to look at.



Front cover

Read the title of the book to the children and show the front cover.

What do you think 'animated' means?

What sort of information do you think you will find in this book?

Title page

Read out the names of the author, illustrator and photographer.

Who do you think is in the photograph?

Predict

This is the contents page. How is a table of contents organised? How does it help you read the book?

Read the headings listed in the contents.

Look at the pictures and photographs on pages 4 and 5.

What do you think the man in the photograph is doing?

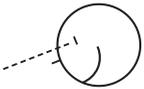
Have you seen this cartoon character before?

Read to the end of page 5.

Reflect

Why do you think these chapters are in this order?

What is the first thing that Alex does when he begins a cartoon? Where on the page does it tell us this?



Observe and support

Can the child recognise the purpose of the text?

Can the child support their understanding of the text with direct evidence from the page?

What is this book trying to teach us? How do you know this?

Who is telling us about making animated cartoons?

Where does it tell us this?

What is an animated cartoon?

What is the name of the character has Alex created?

What steps does Alex take when he is drawing Sebastian? Where on the page did you find this out?



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Thinking of a character

My name is Alex. I make up cartoon characters and write stories about them.

Sometimes I make the stories into cartoons for television.

Making a cartoon character walk and talk is called 'animation'.



Most cartoons are about the adventures of a funny character.

One of my favourite characters is Sebastian. I have drawn Sebastian for story books, but now I want to make him into a cartoon that can be shown on TV.



4

First I make a rough sketch of Sebastian.



The finished drawing goes over the rough sketch.



Then I colour in the finished drawing.



5

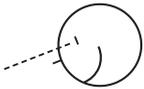
● **Predict**

*What do you think Alex is doing here?
What characters can you see in Alex's drawings?
What is the cartoon about?*

● **Read** pages 6 and 7.

● **Reflect**

*What does Alex do before he starts drawing?
Why is it important for Alex to know what is going to
happen in the story before he starts drawing?
What are the names of the characters in this storyboard?*



Observe and support

Can the child monitor their own reading and self correct when required?
*I noticed that you stopped reading when you made an error. How did you know that you had made an error?
What do you check for? What do you do to help you work out the correct word?
I noticed that you re-read the whole sentence when you corrected yourself. Why did you do that?*

Writing the story

Before I start drawing, I have to think of a story. I work out what is going to happen to Sebastian in the cartoon.

I have decided that in my cartoon story, Sebastian and his friend Storky will have a race. The cartoon will be called 'Sebastian Wins the Race'.

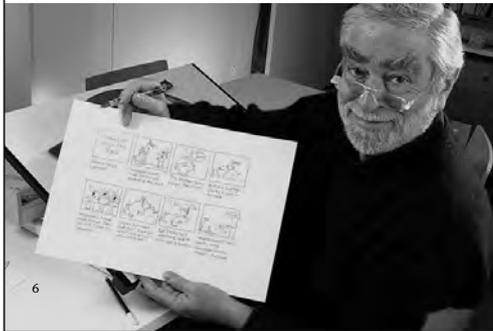


Storky

I draw a storyboard to show how the cartoon will work.

A storyboard is like a comic strip. I draw rough pictures of each stage of the story.

Under each picture, I write what is happening and what the characters will say.



Predict

Look at the photos on pages 8 and 9. What do you think these people might be doing?

Why are there people playing musical instruments?

Look at the drawings of Sebastian on pages 10 and 11.

What is Sebastian doing in these pictures?

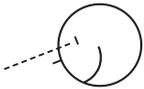
Read to the end of page 11.

Reflect

What has happened so far in the making of this animated cartoon?

What happens at the recording studio?

How does the animation drawing board help Alex when he is drawing the characters?



Observe and support

Can the child use contextual information to understand new vocabulary such as ‘recording studio’ and ‘animation drawing board’?

What is a recording studio? What happens in a recording studio? How do you know this?

What is a drawing animation board? Where in the text did it tell you this? Where else on the page are we given information about drawing on an animation drawing board?

Recording the soundtrack

Once the story is finished, I go to a recording studio. At the studio, actors record the lines said by the characters. They make up funny voices to suit the characters.

Music and sound effects are recorded in the studio too.



8

Come on, Sebastian!



You might as well give up.
You'll never catch me!



9

Drawing the characters

Now it is time to start drawing.

To make the cartoon come to life, I have to draw every single movement the characters make.

I draw each movement on a separate sheet of paper. Later these rough drawings will be traced neatly onto sheets of clear plastic.

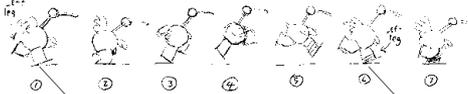
I use an animation drawing board to help me when I am drawing the characters.

The top of the drawing board is made of glass. There is a light behind the glass.



I put the pictures on top of each other on the drawing board. Because I can see through them, I can check that the characters are the same size and shape in each drawing.

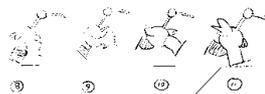
Here are some of my rough drawings of Sebastian running. See if you can follow his legs.



In drawing number 1 Sebastian's right heel is on the ground.

By drawing number 6 his left heel has hit the ground.

10



By drawing number 11 his right heel is on the ground again!



11

● **Predict**

What is Alex drawing on?

How does this help Alex to make the cartoon?

What does the labelled diagram show us?

● **Read** pages 12 and 13.

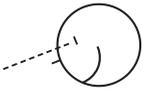
● **Reflect**

What is Alex doing in this step?

What does Alex draw the background on?

What about the characters?

What might the next step be?



Observe and support

Can the child read the text fluently?

Well done. You read the text very clearly. I could hear everything you were reading. This made it easy for me to understand the information.

If the child is having difficulty you could model the reading of the text in a fluent manner.



Drawing the background

I also need to draw a background. The background shows where the story takes place.

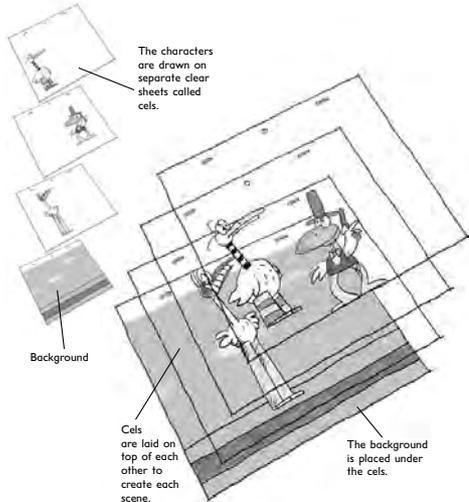
I draw the background on a separate sheet of paper.



When I have drawn the background, I put the pictures of the characters on top. The background can be seen through the clear plastic.



12



The characters are drawn on separate clear sheets called cels.

Background

Cels are laid on top of each other to create each scene.

The background is placed under the cels.

13

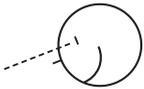
● **Predict**

*Why would Alex need to draw so many pictures of Sebastian and Storky?
What do you think the chart on page 16 shows?*

● **Read** to the end of page 16.

● **Reflect**

*How does Alex make it look like Sebastian and Storky are moving?
What happens to the finished drawings?
Can you explain what the chart tells us?*



Observe and support

Can the child use their knowledge of phonics to decode difficult words such as ‘photographed’? Point out the word ‘photographed’.

How did you know this said ‘photographed’? What did you check?

At the point of need you might say: Look at the first two letters. What sound do they make when they are together? Can you see these letters anywhere else in the word?

Check the ending of the word. Can you break the word up? What would make sense here?



Drawings that seem to move

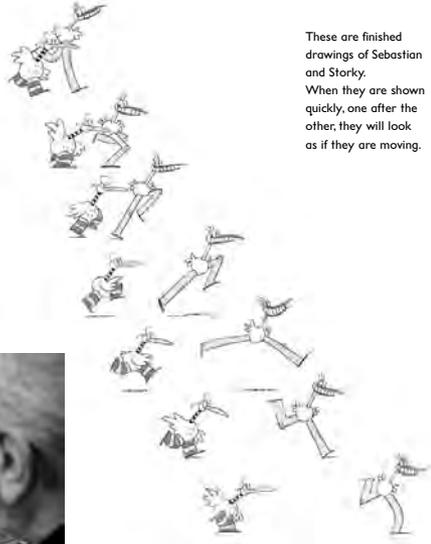
When different still images are shown very quickly, one after the other, they look as if they are moving.

Cartoons, movies, TV and flipbooks all use this trick to make us think that the pictures they show are moving.

Animation drawings used to be photographed on movie film, but now they are usually scanned into a computer and then put on film or videotape.

Then they are shown quickly, one after the other... and Sebastian and Storky look as if they are running across your TV screen!

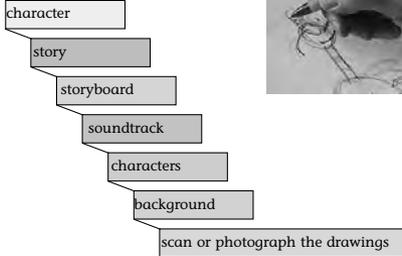
14



These are finished drawings of Sebastian and Storky. When they are shown quickly, one after the other, they will look as if they are moving.

15

Flow Chart



watch Sebastian win the race!



16

After reading

Being a meaning maker

Encourage the children to support their answers with evidence from the book as they discuss these questions:

What is an animated cartoon?

What things need to happen to make an animated cartoon?

How are still pictures made to look as if they are moving?

Being a code breaker

Children may like to explore the following language feature:

- the sound /c/: cartoon, character, make, walk, called, can, think, work, Storky, comic, pictures, recording, actors, music, come, clear, plastic, background, takes, trick, computer

Being a text user

What information is contained in the words?

What information is in the illustrations and photographs?

What information is found in the captions?

Would this book work without illustrations and photographs? Why?

What did you learn by reading this book?

Being a text critic

Is this the way all animated cartoons are made? How could you find out?

Responding to text



Children could make their own comic story and then present it as a storyboard. Encourage the children to use the text as a reference, particularly pages 6 and 7.



Have children think of their own character that could be used in animated cartoons. They could draw the character and write a description of what the character is like.



Have children look through the book and write a list of all the words associated with making an animated cartoon. Children could then quiz each other on the meanings of these words.

Writing links

Shared writing

Have children work together in small groups to list, in order, the steps involved in making an animated cartoon. They could write a short description outlining each step. Encourage the children to use labelled diagrams to help explain their writing.

Independent writing

Children could read other stories about Sebastian from the Alphakids series. These are: 'Sebastian' (level 9), 'Sebastian gets the Hiccups' (level 13), 'Sebastian's Special Present' (level 15), 'Sebastian Tidies Up' (level 18), 'The Great Sebastian' (level 19). They could also read the following Alphakids Plus books: 'Sebastian Learns to Fly' (level 5), 'Sebastian's New Sister' (level 10). The children could then write and illustrate their own Sebastian story.

Possible assessment focus

Can the child:

- use the information in the illustrations to explain how Alex makes Sebastian walk in an animated cartoon?
- apply knowledge from the book to present their own story as a storyboard?



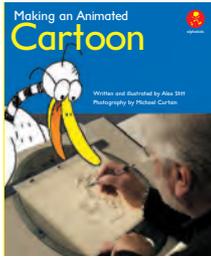
whole text activity



sentence activity



word activity



Teacher Edition

Topic: Cartoons

Curriculum link: Art, Technology

Text type: Explanation

Reading level: 23

Word count: 455

Vocabulary: actors, adventures, animated, animation, background, cartoon, cels, character, computer, drawing, drawing board, film, flipbooks, movement, movies, photographed, picture, recording, scanned, screen, sketch, soundtrack, sound effects, still images, stories, storyboard, studio, television, videotape

Possible literacy focus

Understanding information presented in step by step illustrations.

Applying information presented in the text, such as how to make a storyboard

Summary

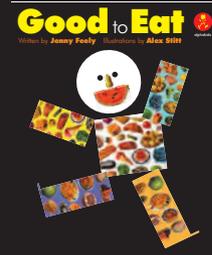
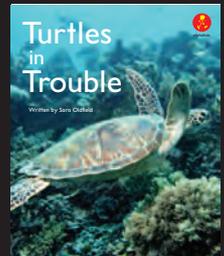
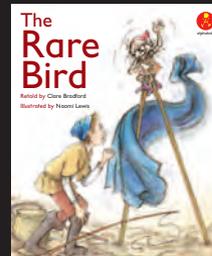
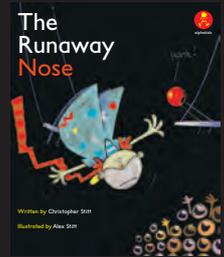
This book explains the process of making an animated cartoon. The text is written from the point of view of animator Alex Stitt.

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Other books at this level



alphakids