Making a "Slowmation" on a PC using Windows Live Movie Maker

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See www.slowmation.com for free instructions and examples

These instructions suit a Windows 7 operating system using Windows Live Movie Maker. The software can be downloaded free for PCs by doing a google search on "Windows Live Movie Maker". In following these instructions, we assume that you have already completed the first three representations (i) *Research* (taking notes); (ii) *Storyboard* (planning the animation along with writing the narration); and (iii) *Models*. The final slowmation is a multimodal representation (combining the modes of moving images, narration, writing and/or music) of the content being represented. Make the purpose clear, too many modes can confuse the explanation or story.

Representation 4. Photographs
Taking the photographs
1. Make sure the students are aware that many small movements such as 1cm are best. Demonstrate a simple animation first on some post it notes and flip them. Start small by making a simple slowmation with 10-20 photos.
2. Lay down a project sheet or butcher's paper (which can be coloured) and build the models on a table or the floor with the camera mounted on a tripod looking down at the models. If you are using a table you can also use the camera in a hand held mobile phone eliminating the need for a tripod. Make sure the models are movable and not stuck to cardboard. Existing plastic models can stand up so position the camera at about 45 degrees to the models.
3. Make sure the image size of the camera is set on the **SMALLEST SIZE** such as 640 x 480 pixels or VGA or the lowest resolution possible. If you are using more than one camera make sure that they use the same photo size.
4. Move the models about 1cm at a time for each photo. A 30 sec slowmation needs about 50 photos.
5. Minimise text and only label key concepts taking one photo, which can be copied for a static image.

Representation 5: Making the Animation
### Downloading Photos, Uploading into Windows Live Movie Maker and Editing
1. You can download the photos in one of two ways: (i) Connect the camera to the PC computer and open "My Computer". The camera will come up on the desktop as a "Removeable Disk", click on this and copy to the desktop; or (ii) Right click and choose "new", then "folder", open the "Removeable Disk" icon and copy the photos into the folder and disconnect the camera;

2. Open Windows Live Movie Maker and go to "Add videos and photos" on the top

3. Locate folder on the desk top with digital images and click "Ctrl + A" to select them all or click on the first one and then hold "shift" and click on the last photo and click "open". The photos will download into the program and appear on the desktop.
4. Go to "Edit", then and in "Duration" write in 0.50 sec for the duration. You must do this step BEFORE any other as the default is 5 seconds/frame.
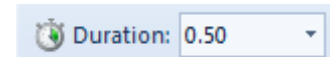

5. Go to page icon in the left and corner and save it. Do this regularly in case the program freezes.
6. Another way to change the duration is to click on each individual photo and change the duration of each one.

Making static images to suit a narration
1. Click on the relevant photo in the storyboard and then click "Ctrl + C" to copy and "Ctrl + V" and copy as many times as you need (.5 sec/photo) to keep the static image on the screen which is important for the narration to be recorded later.
2. You can delete any unwanted photos by clicking on them and pressing Delete.
3. You can add your own photos or photos from Google Images by copy and paste.
4. Make sure you practice with your narration that you have the right timing for your static images.

Adding a narration
1. Search the programs for "sound recorder" and the following icon should appear
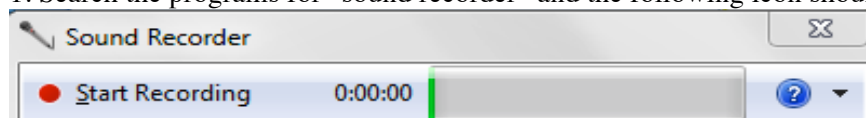
2. Make sure you check that the microphone is on so that the green line is illuminated. Otherwise go into the 'control panel" and select "hardware and sound" and click on "sound" and then "recordings". Check that the microphone is working by clicking on it and click "ok"and check it is turned on or use an external microphone if you do not have an internal one.

3. Click on "Start Recording" and also click on the arrow to start the animation playing at the same time and record your narration. You can delete it and do it again if you need to.

4. Make sure you name the sound file and save it.

5. Go to home and click on "add music" and then find the sound file with the narration and click "open"


4. If your narration did not record, make sure you have a microphone in the computer and that it is turned on. You may have to use an external microphone. To test that your microphone works go into "Control Panel", double click on "Sounds and Audio Devices", click on "Test Hardware", then "Next" and your Sound Hardware Test Wizard" should appear with a green line showing testing. The Microphone Test dialogue box will appear and should show movement on the scale if your microphone is working.

5. Once the narration is recorded, then adjust the images to suit by copying and pasting or deleting. It is easier to adjust the images to the narration rather than vice versa.

Saving the animation to the correct format (IMPORTANT)

While you are using Windows LiveMovie Maker, it is not a completed movie as the photos and narration need to be compressed into a finished movie.

1. When it is finished, you go to the icon in the top left hand corner like a "page", click it and click "save movie" and choose "standard definition"
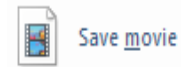
2. Give it a file name and click save. You should be able to see the coloured bar progressing. The movie saves automatically into the "My Video" folder.
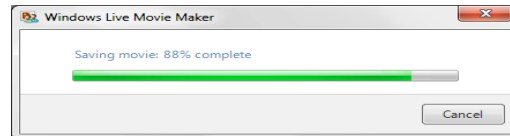
If you seen the green line this is good as it is compressing the photos and narration together. This saves the movie as a .wmv (window media video) file which allows it to be shared, and opened by other computers. It must be saved as a .wmv to copy to a CD, thumbdrive or uploaded to the web site. If you only "save" within Movie Maker software it stays within the software as a .WMMV file which cannot be transferred, copied or uploaded. The finished project should be a ".wmv" file which you can now copy it to a thumb drive, a CD or upload to the internet. An alternative is to use the PC version of SAM animation available from the SAM animation web site www.samanimation.com