

Animating Hands!

By Paula Briggs

The Making of: “Animated Hands to Reveal Letters”

In this resource we share how teenagers from the [#BeACreativeProducer](#) team animated hands to reveal letters, which were then used to convey messages as part of a larger scene in the final animation.

This method is slightly more time consuming than some of the animation methods we used, though it is not complicated. And it does result in animations with a wonderful quirky feel, which combine digital and physical techniques.

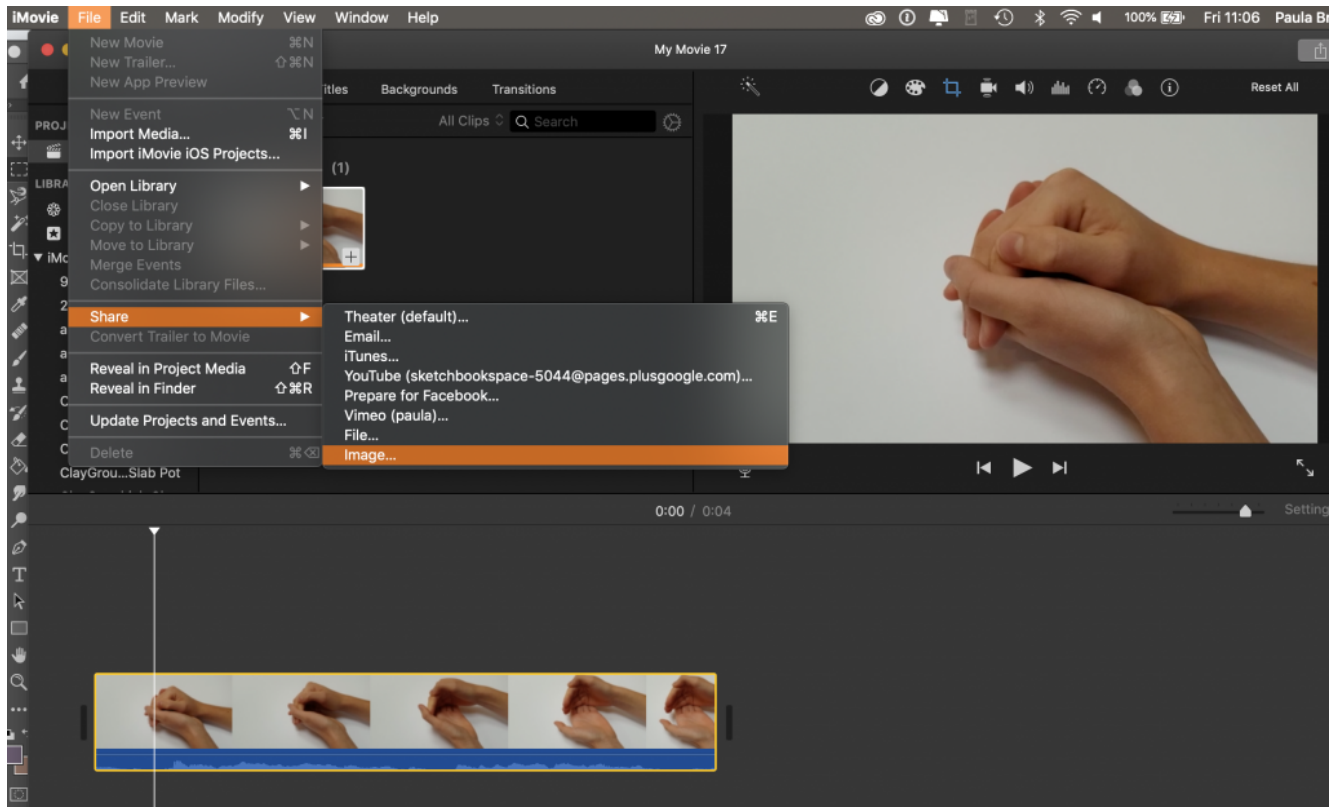
You will Need:

- Phone or tablet to take videos
- iMovie or other video editing software
- Printer, paper and scissors
- [Stop Motion App](#) (on phone or tablet)

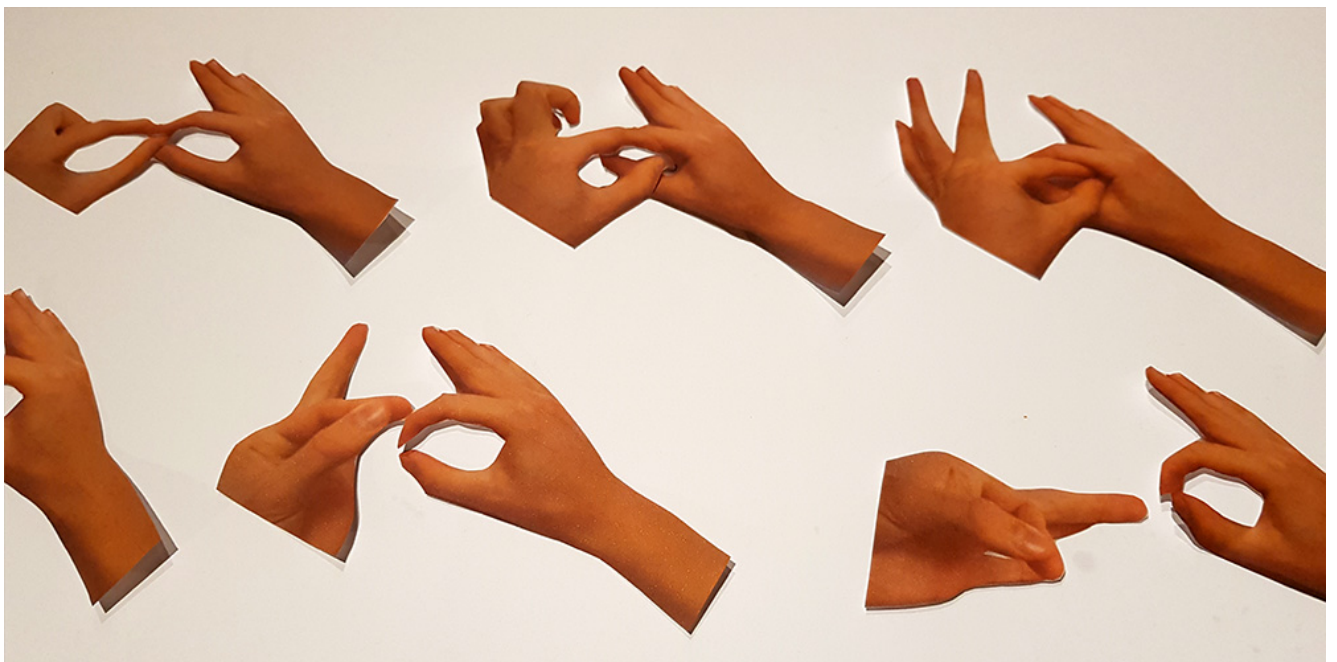
To Begin

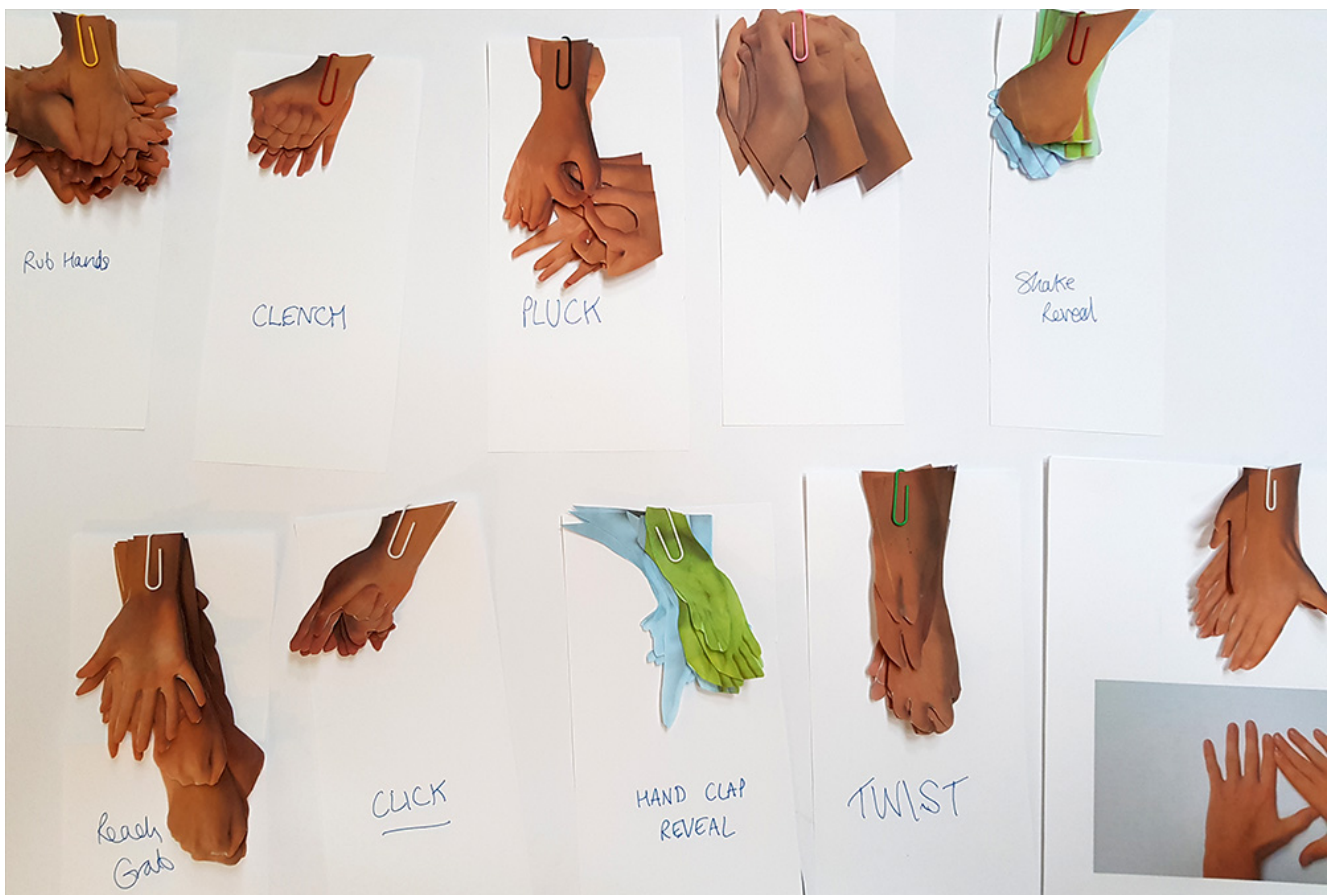
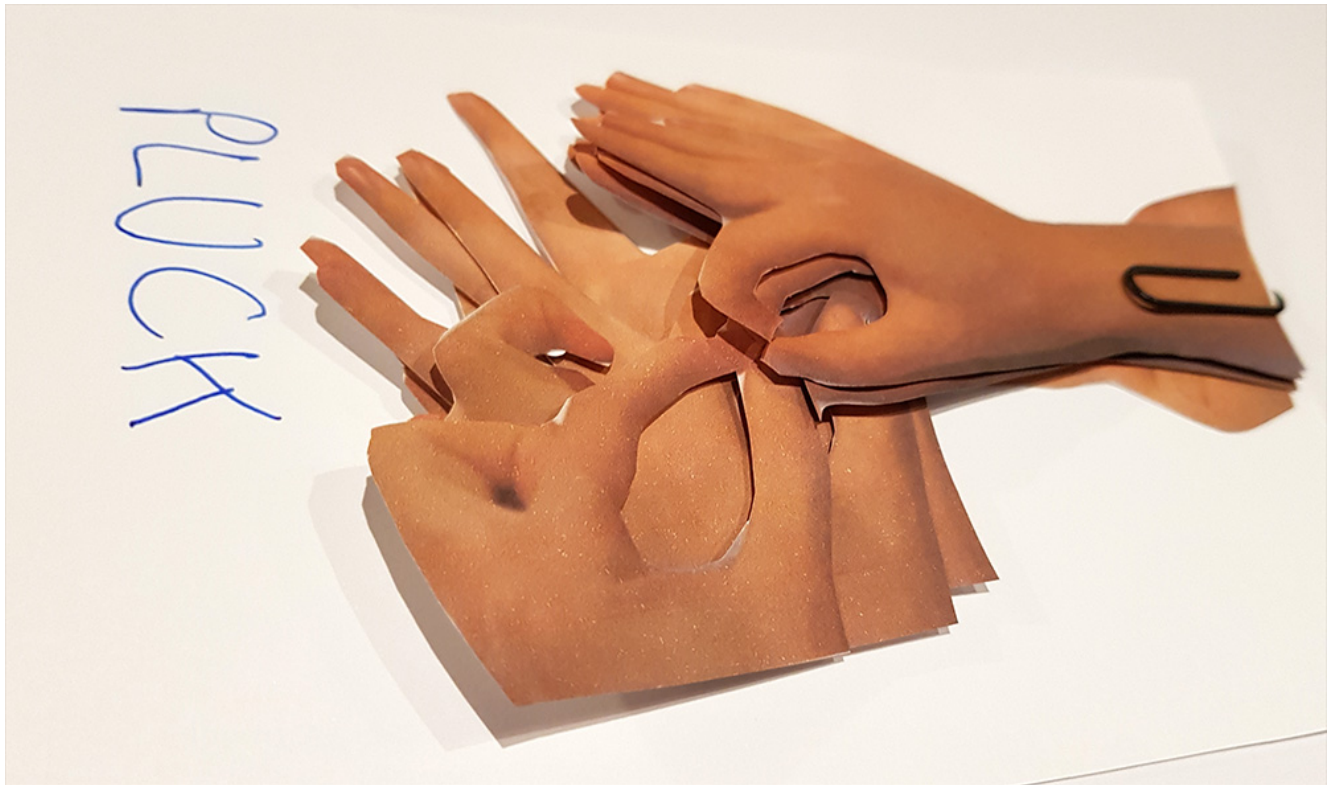
We started by taking short videos (2 to 5 seconds long) of hands making various gestures. We took our inspirations from the kinds of gestures we might use whilst creating things, or interacting with the physical world, and also from the kind of hand gestures which might be used in magic tricks. The hands were filmed over a white background to make the cutting out stage easier.

The videos were then imported into iMovie. We then extracted a number of frames from each video – choosing our frames at points where the hand changed position. So for example we might extract 10 frames from a 2 second video to describe the gesture. These images were saved in sequential order in a folder describing the action, e.g. “clench” 1.jpg, 2.jpg



The saved images were then printed out, and the hands cut out. The images were kept in sequence order and their number written on the back of each hand. The hands were then clipped together with a paperclip and stored on a sheet of paper. We learnt from experience that being organised with the files helped greatly at all stages of the animation!





Each group of paper hands was then animated using the [Stop Motion app](#). At a chosen point a letter was introduced (either written on a piece of paper, or a Scrabble tile) on top of the hand (i.e. as a hand) to spell the chosen words.

Many thanks to [Alex and Rowan](#) for animating the hands, and Alex for the soundtrack.

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