

Lesson Plan: Character

Overview: Students will design an original villain character inspired by *SpongeBob Squarepants*, activities include:

"I AM" Poem:

Writing & Voice Recording

Character Sketch:

Artmaking

Villain Origin Story:

Writing



Vocabulary:

Character

Emotion

Villain

Exaggerate

Point of view

Expression

Voice Modulation

Organic Shapes

Geometric Shapes

Essential Questions:

- How does a character's design reflect his or her personality and traits?
- How can a character express emotion?
- How does a character's backstory impact his or her actions?

Videos from Paramount Professionals:

- Character Designer: David Colman
- Character Modeler: Paulette Emerson
- Casting Director: Monika Mikkelsen

Introduction:

Many colorful characters populate Bikini Bottom, each with a unique personality and point of view. SpongeBob Squarepants and his friends have been loved by fans for 20 years. Great characters make a big impression because artists thoughtfully design the way they look to evoke emotions in the viewer. Now it's your turn to join the action by creating your own villain character to join SpongeBob's story!

Lesson 1:

Video:

[*Trailer for SpongeBob Squarepants: Sponge On The Run*](#)

Discussion Question:

How does a character's design reflect his or her personality and traits?

Character Design Instruction:

How will your design reflect the villain's personality? Are they soft and round like goofy Patrick? Or lean and grumpy like wiry Squidward? Plankton's big red eye is bizarre and his heavy eyebrow makes him look devious. You can *exaggerate* certain features to create an expressive and engaging character.

Organic shapes have a curvy flow and remind us of nature, artists use these shapes to create a sense of calm and peace.

Geometric shapes are more precise, these are the shapes we can name like square, triangle, oval. Artists use these shapes to communicate a sense of anger, chaos or rigidity.

A character's design can reflect where they come from, for example Sandy Cheeks has to wear a helmet because she's from the surface and can't breathe underwater. When designing your character consider if they come from somewhere hot or cold? Warm tropical ocean or frigid arctic environment? What do other creatures from that environment look like? Do they have scales, feathers or fur?

Character designers spend a lot of time on this step. Experiment with a few versions of your character until you land on the design that is most exciting, silly and fun!

Video: Character Designer David Colman

“I Am” Poem and Character Sketch

Bring your villain characters to life by crafting an I AM Poem from their point of view:

I am _____ and _____
(SPACE OF NAME) (SURNAME, FAMILY, IDENTITY)

From _____
(DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTER'S BACKGROUND OR COUNTRY)

I am _____
(A SPECIFIC PLACE OR EVEN FROM THE CHARACTER'S APPEARANCE)

I am _____
(A VERB DETAIL ABOUT THE CHARACTER'S NAME - A SMILE, TIGHT, FROWNS, SOUND OR TASTE)

I am _____ and _____
(COMPARISON FROM THE CHARACTER'S OUTLOOK)

From _____
(SIMILE COMPARISON OR TRAIT)

I am " _____"
(CHARACTER'S NAME CHARACTER HAS TOLD AS A CIRCLE)

From " _____"
(A SONG OR SAYING YOUR CHARACTER LOANED AS A CIRCLE)

I am _____ and _____
(CHARACTER'S FEELING) (CHARACTER'S FEELING)

I am _____ and _____
(CONCEPTIONS OF FAMILY MEMBERS, PARENTS OR TEACHERS)

I am _____
(ONE OF FEELINGS THEY THOUGHT REPRESENTING BACK IN WHAT THEY'VE ALREADY METTER OR BY REFLECTING YOUR CHARACTER'S ONE FROM EARLIER IN THE STORY)

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Character Sketch
Consider how you will use your character's design to express her or his emotions, personality and story!

Consider:
Body Shape
Facial Features
Clothing
Hair
Posture
Color scheme

Tips to keep in mind:
Exaggerate
Organic vs. Geometric shapes
Origin Story

ArtsMatter LAUNCH

[Download here.](#)

- Writing activity to brainstorm character's backstory
- These drawings can be completed by hand and uploaded or digitally using Sketchpad, Adobe Spark or Google Drawings
- Encourage students to draw the character however they can

Lesson 2:

Video:

Character Modeler: Paulette Emerson

Discussion Question:

How can a character express emotion?

[Download the Create: Character Model Sheet here.](#)

Animation teams use character model sheets to standardize the appearance and expressions of their characters. Show the team what your villain looks like when expressing different emotions.



Lesson 3:

Discussion Question:

How does a character's backstory impact his or her actions?

[Download the Writing Activity: Origin Story here.](#)

Students will practice perspective and empathy by writing an origin story for an original character that reveals how they became a villain.

Lesson 4:

Discussion Question:

What do voices contribute to a character's personality?

Activity

Record your reading of the "I Am" Poem in your villain's voice!

Casting Director Monika Mikkelsen

Art Extension: Design a Color Scheme

What are the best color choices for your character? How can you enhance the emotional impact of your story? Add color to your model sheet to enhance the character's personality. How will the colors change to reflect your character's different emotions?

Standards:

Social Emotional Learning Competency:

Social Awareness.3A: Individual demonstrates empathy for other people's emotions, perspectives, cultures, languages and histories.

Media Arts:

MA:Cr1.1.1

Express and share ideas for media artworks through sketching and modeling.

MA:Cr1.1.2

Discover multiple ideas for media artworks through brainstorming and improvising

MA:Cr2.1.3

Form, share and test ideas, plans and models to prepare for media arts productions.

MA:Cr10.1.3b

Identify and show how media artworks form meanings, situations, and/or culture, such as popular media.

English Language Arts:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.3

Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.8

Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.5

With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.