

# Project X – Project Plan

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**Class:** M2-03

**Coach:** Dirk Norg

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# Versioning

Version	Update	Date
1.0	First draft	02-06-2025
1.1	Updated Project Plan after feedback given	05-06-2025
1.2	Notes on research added	07-06-2025

## Contact & Team

**Project Leader:** Charlotte Mies

**Project Coach:** Dirk Norg

**Coach Availability:** Monday morning, Thursday afternoon

**Teachers:**

- **Paul Reekers** – Wednesday morning, Thursday afternoon
- **Chris Brunne** – Tuesday afternoon, Friday morning
- **Stan van Oers** – Thursday morning, Friday morning

**Online Availability:** All teachers are reachable via Teams, Monday–Friday.

## Research Questions

**What is the project?**

I am creating a short animation using Procreate. I aim to explore how animation works by trying out different techniques and styles, such as Disney animation and Japanese anime.

Specifically, I'm making a short animation (max 5 seconds) using traditional techniques like **rotoscoping** and **onion skinning** in Procreate. I plan to tell a small story using a few keyframes that I will animate.

**Why am I working on this?**

I want to develop my skills in Procreate and learn animation as a way to visually tell personal stories that I struggle to express in words. I mainly plan on learning animation techniques in Procreate, like **onion skinning** and **rotoscoping**.

**What am I trying to solve/do?**

I want to improve both my drawing and animation skills, while also learning how to use Procreate effectively to create emotionally expressive animated scenes. I plan to make low-detail animations that still tell a short but meaningful story.

The main focus of this project is on **learning traditional animation techniques** and applying them in Procreate. Storytelling plays a role, but my goal is mainly to improve my technical understanding of how animation works.

**What research is needed?**

- How to use Procreate for animation
- Key animation principles (timing, keyframes, movement)
- Style studies: Disney, Studio Ghibli, minimalist animation
- Techniques for storyboarding and visual storytelling

**Success Criteria:**

- I complete a finished animation of max 5 seconds using traditional techniques
- I collect feedback on my storyboard and animation at least twice and make improvements based on that feedback
- I can explain what techniques I used and why I chose them

# Deliverables

## Which tangible products are going to be delivered?

- Project Plan (this document)
- Research Reports (short write-ups on topics I will explore)
- Process Materials (sketches, storyboards, early animation drafts)
- Final Product: A short, animated video (approx. 5 seconds of animation) using traditional techniques like rotoscoping and onion skinning. I may create a few different keyframe sequences and play them in a loop to tell a longer story, but each individual animation will be no longer than 5 seconds. Feedback & Revisions: documented changes based on peer/teacher feedback

## Optional:

- A coded version with basic interactivity (only if time allows and it supports the final animation)

# Deliverables – Scope

## Must Have:

- Project plan
- Research documentation (in this project plan)
- Sketches/storyboard
- Final animation (max 5 seconds, functional, low fidelity, using traditional techniques)

## Should Have:

- Refined animation with smoother transitions and polish
- Clear narrative structure (beginning–middle–end)

## Could Have:

- An interactive digital version (for example, a simple coded navigation or viewer controls)

## Won't Have:

- A fully coded, feature-complete interactive experience (unless time permits)

# Planning

Total time remaining: 2 weeks + 2 days

<b>Day 1</b>	First draft of project plan (get early feedback if possible)
<b>Day 2–3</b>	Research animation techniques and styles (Disney, onion skinning, rotoscoping)
<b>Day 4–5</b>	Learn Procreate animation tools (onion skinning, timeline, exports)
<b>Week 1 (cont.)</b>	Begin sketching and creating storyboards (draft 1)
<b>Start of Week 2</b>	Create first animation prototype (keyframes only)
<b>Mid Week 2</b>	Collect feedback on animation prototype + storyboard
<b>Late Week 2</b>	Make revisions based on feedback (keyframe polish or timing)
<b>Final 2 Days</b>	Finalize animation (smoothing, polish) + complete documentation folder
<b>Last Day</b>	Final review + make sure all deliverables are in one clear folder

## Risks

### Realistic Risks:

- Difficulty concentrating due to external stress
- Sickness, lack of sleep, poor nutrition
- Home situations impacting focus
- Motivation issues from fatigue or overwhelming tasks
- Procreate crashes or technical problems
- Animation takes longer than expected (timing, detail, etc.)

### Coping Strategies:

- Use a physical planner to break tasks into small chunks
- Prioritize working during school hours
- Talk to study coach regularly (via Student+)
- Try to improve sleep and meal consistency
- Leave buffer time for animation and export
- Back up progress regularly in iCloud or to Files

# Research

## **Topics to Explore:**

- Animation principles (Disney, Japanese anime)
- Scene planning and storyboarding
- Procreate animation features
- Emotional storytelling in animation

## **Research Methods:**

- Online tutorials and articles
- Library resources and animation books
- Animation showreels (e.g., Disney, Ghibli)
- Possibly interviews or feedback from peers/teachers

## **Target Audience:**

Viewers interested in storytelling through animation, particularly themes of emotion, mental health, or self-expression.

# Notes

Library research > <https://cmdmethods.nl/>

**Benchmark creation** (looking up inspiration on other storyboards to know how its usually set up)

**Expert Interview** (asking an experienced digital artist for feedback on my storyboards/animations in procreate)

**Literature Study** (finding information about Disney animation and 12 principles of animation, plus the procreate handbook with basic interface and tools for animation guidance, rotoscoping)

## Research: Disney Animation

To start my research into animation, I looked into **Disney animation techniques**. My coach suggested this as a starting point — and honestly, it's a great one.

One of the first sources I found was this site:

<https://www.thedisneyclassics.com/blog/animation-styles>. It talks about all the different **animation styles** Disney has used over the years, starting with *Flowers and Trees* (a hand-drawn animation from 1932 using Technicolor) all the way to full-on CGI movies like *Tangled*.

Now, while animation *style* isn't directly relevant to my project — since I haven't really developed my own style yet — it was still super interesting to see how Disney evolved. What was most useful for me were the mentions of specific **animation techniques** like **cel animation** and **rotoscoping**, especially in their older hand-drawn work. Those are two methods I definitely want to dive deeper into, since they match my own approach for this project.

The article also mentions Pixar's CAPS system (Computer Animation Production System) and modern CGI techniques. While that's cool, my focus is on **hand-drawn animation**, so I won't be exploring CGI in-depth.

That said... two of my favorite Disney movies are *The Princess and the Frog* (hand-drawn) and *Tangled* (CGI), so I might still take some small inspiration from how *movement* and *emotion* are shown in those films — especially things like the fluidity of Tiana's expressions or the way Rapunzel's hair moves.

Another quick Google search brought me to something super useful: the **12 Principles of Animation**. These are the core rules Disney animators use to create more lifelike and dynamic animation. Things like **timing**, **squash & stretch**, **anticipation**, and **follow-through**. I think these principles will help a lot when I start animating my own scenes, especially since I'm focusing on **expressive movement** in a short timeframe.

So in short:

- I'll mainly be researching **cel animation** and **rotoscoping**,
- Looking into the **12 Principles of Animation**,
- And taking a bit of inspiration from older Disney techniques rather than newer CGI stuff.



**Research ProCreate:**

To create my short animations, I'm using Procreate. It's actually pretty straightforward to make simple animations in Procreate.

Procreate also has a separate app specifically for animation and After Effects-style work, called Procreate Dreams. It costs around €23 extra, but it doesn't have great reviews, so it's just not worth it. I also asked someone with a lot of Procreate experience, and they confirmed it: Procreate Dreams isn't worth it.

You can make perfectly good animations in the regular Procreate app, especially since I'm making low fidelity animations and focusing more on technique than on super polished visuals. So, there's really no need for the extra app.

Also, the reviews for Procreate Dreams mostly say the same thing:

- The app itself isn't bad, but it's missing features that the regular Procreate already has.
- For example, you can't edit brushes in Dreams, which is something you can do in the normal version. The developers did respond to this and said they're working on it, but still.
- Some reviews also mention crashing and lack of updates. People paid €22,99 and nothing has really improved.

In short: the app has a lot of potential, but paying more for something that's worse than the cheaper version? No thanks. I'll just stick with regular Procreate for now.

A teacher also pointed out the term onion skinning for animation. Using Animation Guidance in Procreate, you can activate onion skins to see the frames before and after your current one, which helps a lot when doing frame-by-frame animation.

**Procreate animation guide source:**

👉 <https://help.procreate.com/procreate/handbook/animation>

**Notes animation guide:**

- Animation foreground/background
- Onion skin frames
- Onion skin opacity
- Blend primary frame
- Onion skin colours
- One Shot/Loop/Ping Pong
- Page assist for storyboards/comics!!!

### **Nintendo DS FlipNote Studio:**

As a little kid, I had a Nintendo DS. A Nintendo DSi XL in Bordeaux Red, to be precise. I mainly played *Mario Kart DS* (the best *Mario Kart* in my opinion), but the DS also came with an application called **Flipnote Studio**.

With this, you could create your own animations and if you were able to connect to the internet (which I couldn't, because internet on the DS was *shit*) you could also access animations made by other people and shared online. As far as I remember, you could even add music somehow, but I don't think I ever figured that part out.

I *did* manage to go online once (a very rare event), and I downloaded a video someone else had made. It was this little animation of a few frogs in a row singing the Gummy Bear song. Now don't ask me why, but I watched that video on repeat. For a *very* long time. Somehow, that animation really stuck with me, I suppose.

Now I'll be honest, when I was little, my drawings were **bad**. They sometimes still are. But back then, they were worse. That didn't stop me from having fun in the app, though. Since there were only a few basic functions: a couple of brushes, the colors black, white, red, and blue, and an eraser, there weren't many options. I remember my brother making a little animation of a police car chase scene, where the police car ended up crashing. I, however, mostly drew names where the animation looked like someone was writing them out letter by letter.

Since I was little, and since it was on the DS, these animations were never very smooth. But they *did* use the basics of animation, mainly **onion skinning**. I obviously didn't know that term at the time, but little me understood the basic idea: draw a frame, add a new frame, and then draw over the last one with small changes. Repeat that enough times and you've got an animation.

This is a fun memory from my childhood that's come back to me while starting this project and doing research.

**Insert bit about rotoscoping**

**Insert bit about 12 principles of animation**

**Story of the Animation (rough draft):**

The idea behind the story I want to tell with my animation is about feeling sad or alone. Yeah, I know, that sounds super generic. But hear me out (or, well, let me ramble a bit).

I've been through a lot in my life, from when I was really little up to now. It's something that sticks with me, and while I don't want to go into all the details, I do want to express a small part of that experience in my animation. A simplified version, focused on loneliness and one of the small things that helps me feel better in those moments.

For me, that thing is skipping rocks.

When I lived in Northern Ireland, there were times when I would just lie in bed feeling down, not really doing anything. But eventually, I'd get up and head outside, mostly just to get out of my own head. One of the places I'd always go to was this little island on Strangford Lough. I'd walk through the fields and onto the island, where there was a rocky beach filled with stones.

I used to look for the perfect small, flat, round rocks, the best kind for skipping. I wasn't always great at it, but when I got a few good bounces across the water, I felt pure joy. It was this small, peaceful thing that made me feel calm, happy, and grounded. I could spend hours there, skipping stones, wading through the water in my boots, or just sitting and watching the waves.

This moment, that feeling of quiet comfort in nature, is what I want to turn into a short animation. Something simple, but emotional. A scene that shows a character feeling down, finding their way to a quiet place, and slowly reconnecting with something that brings them peace.

That's the core of my story. Not big or dramatic, just something small and real.

**User Test Storyboard Sketch:**