



Wonder Park

Teacher Guide | 8th Grade | Lesson 1

OBJECTIVE

Students will learn about different careers in animation and film, and be introduced to the task of the project both as a class and in their small groups. Optionally, students may write about their favorite amusement park memories.

INTRODUCTION

Give students synopsis of plot for Wonder Park to give context for this project. You may also show the movie trailer.

Wonder Park tells the story of a magnificent amusement park where the imagination of a wildly creative girl named June comes alive in the woods.

Explain to the class that like June, they will be given the opportunity to design an amusement park together. You will assign the class an overall theme to the amusement park, but break students into smaller groups to accomplish their tasks. This emphasizes teamwork while working under a bigger collaborative vision.

For additional context, remind students that for anything from the cell phones in their pockets to electric cars and public parks, teamwork and collaboration is at the heart of designing any innovation.

Each group will be responsible for designing a single ride based within the overall theme. Depending on time and needs, you may either allow students to choose their ride, or assign them yourselves. They will have four sessions to brainstorm and refine their designs.

ACTIVITY

After creating small groups for students based on the number that works best for your class, rearrange students to meet and sit with their groups. It is recommended that groups are made up of three or more students to increase practice of collaboration and compromise. If possible, each team should have a mix of students who are creative, logical, organized, and good communicators so that each student can bring individual strengths to the team.

Introduce the idea that it takes lots of people working together behind the scenes to make an animated movie. There

are animators, writers, engineers, art directors, marketing teams, etc.

Each week you will introduce to different careers in animation. This week, introduce the role of Producer using the resources provided on the Careers in Animation page. Show a video to the entire class or challenge students to research these careers independently. As a very basic definition, you can explain that producers plan and coordinate various aspects of film production, such as selecting the script, coordinating with writers and directors, and arranging financing.

Ask the class what producers do again to see if they learned anything new.

Go deeper: Ask the class why producers are important to the overall process and success of a project. What skills do you think producers need?

After class discussion wraps, introduce and assign the larger class amusement park theme. This can be a general theme like “Animals” or “Superheroes” with each small group/ride assigned to a specific animal or superhero. Or it can be something more specific to tie in to other classroom curriculum, like a book or unit of history you are currently studying.

For the sake of time, you may assign each small group their ride theme. If not, groups will be responsible for choosing their own ride theme to fit within the larger class theme by the end of Lesson 2.

Give students time to discuss in their groups the elements of a good amusement park or ride. Ask groups to make a list of emotions or experiences audiences should have when going to a successful amusement park and share out at least one idea they came up with that makes for a good amusement park or ride. You can list them on the board or large poster paper to help guide students throughout this series of lessons.

Let students know that next session, they will be working in their same groups to design their blueprints for their single ride.

WRITING EXTENSION

To give your students an opportunity to practice their writing skills, distribute copies of the Writing Extension for Lesson 1, also found on the curriculum page. Students will have an opportunity for individual work by responding to a freewrite about favorite amusement park memories, or reflecting on the amusement park of their dreams.

DURATION

1 hour

STANDARDS

National Core Arts Standards MA:Cn10.1.8
Next Generation Science Standards MS ETS1-1

VOCABULARY

Animator
Amusement park
Collaborate
Theme
Producer



Teacher Guide | 8th Grade | Lesson 2

OBJECTIVE

Students will start working in their groups to brainstorm and collaboratively design their ride. Emphasis in this lesson is on compromise and working as a team to accomplish a task or goal.

INTRODUCTION

Remind students of the class project, theme, and task at hand. They should be sitting in their small groups already. If students were assigned their ride theme in Lesson 1, you can ask each group to share out at this point with the class. If they were not assigned yet, let students know they will be deciding their group's single ride theme by the end of this session.

This session focuses on collaboration among small groups to accomplish their shared goal. Explain to the class that one of the most important parts of working as part of a larger team—whether to create an animated film, or in business, or as part of a sports team—is the idea of collaboration and compromise. Because teams are often made up of people with different skills and expertise, it is important to listen to everyone's perspective and hear their ideas when accomplishing group tasks.

Vocabulary check: Ask if anyone can share what collaboration means. Compromise? Perspective?

Ask the class why these are important when working in groups or teams? What would happen if everyone was working independently on a shared project?

In film and animation, an extremely important part of the team is the writer. They provide the words that the characters say, and create the plot or things that happen in the movie. Ask students to share out some of their favorite movies or TV shows. Without writers, all movies would be silent and nothing would happen for 90 minutes. What would those TV shows and movies be like without writers? Expand upon the role of writer using the resources provided on the Careers in Animation page. Show a video to the entire class or challenge students to research these careers independently.

ACTIVITY

Distribute and explain worksheet for Lesson 2.

In this session, small groups will first brainstorm individually and then work together as a group to combine all of their ideas into a single ride. The worksheet has space for both a written explanation and drawing or blueprint design. Students will have about 10 minutes to work individually to collect their own ideas. Give students a one minute warning to wrap up last thoughts before sharing with their groups. Each group will then have about 20 minutes to discuss their individual designs and patch together their ideas.

Ask groups to think about how their design ideas relate to their ride theme, and list what real world materials and resources they would need to build it. For example, would they choose steel or wood? What effect would either decision have on the ride experience and why? Although they don't need to write out a budget, ask groups to consider the effect of material choices on overall budget. If it will be too costly, it might not get approved to build. Is there another solution to their design problem?

Give each group one blank worksheet (same as individual), and let them know that this will be what they are submitting as a group. Their individual planning was great, but ultimately they will be turning in just the final group "blueprints" to you. Remind students the importance of working together on this, and what you talked about earlier in the intro. Their success will be based on how well they can work together and use each others' skills to get the task accomplished together. Ask students to each have a "title" for their role in this project. Offer examples: Writer, Producer, Marketer (enough roles for number of students in groups.)

Circulate around the room during this period to make sure groups are giving and sharing ideas, and step in to support groups where needed. Ask what each member's role is. Give class a 5 minute warning and reminder of the things they should have figured out by that time: ride theme, blueprint design, and ride name. Each group can present their idea to the class.

Collect each group's blueprints, and let class know that next session will focus on refining those ideas before constructing it.

WRITING EXTENSION

To give your students an opportunity to practice their writing skills, distribute copies of the Writing Extension for Lesson 2, also found on the curriculum page. Students will respond to a narrative prompt to write a short story about an amusement park.

DURATION

1 hour

STANDARDS

National Core Arts Standards MA:Cr1.1.8

National Core Arts Standards MA:Cr2.1.8

Next Generation Science Standards MS ETS1-4

VOCABULARY

Goal
Collaboration
Compromise
Skill

Perspective
Plot
Blueprint
Efficient



Wonder Park

Teacher Guide | 8th Grade | Lesson 3

OBJECTIVE

Students will practice giving and receiving constructive feedback on another group's blueprints for their ride. Modeled after the idea of market research, they will learn the process of reiteration and the importance of refining an initial idea when creating anything new.

INTRODUCTION

Refresh class on any details of the project in previous sessions. In this session, the focus is on refining the group blueprints and plans they had finished in the last session.

Explain that market research is the process of gathering information about potential customers for any business strategy, especially when attempting to innovate or create something new. Essentially, it is research to analyze decisions and gain insight into making something as good as possible. The bigger the project, the more complex this is to make sure all potential challenges are addressed and accounted for before making something available to the public.

That is what groups will be modeling in this session. Remind students that while sometimes having our initial ideas critiqued or questioned can feel not great, it's important to embrace this step in the process of making their rides. The process of refining an initial idea is often what makes inventions or new ideas great.

It is the job of a Creative Director to set the vision for what products and outputs will be introduced to the public. The Creative Director takes feedback from others, including through market research, to set a strategic creative vision. Introduce the role of Creative Director using the resources provided on the Careers in Animation page. Show a video to the entire class or challenge students to research these careers independently.

ACTIVITY

Ideally, groups turned in their blueprints from the previous session in a folder to you. After explaining the importance of market research, redistribute these folders so that each small group has another group's blueprints. Ask groups not to go through the folder you give them yet, but just make sure no group gets their own.

Distribute and explain "market research" worksheet for Lesson 3. In today's session, groups will be focused on helping another team in the class to refine the idea for their ride by looking through their blueprints and designs and offering

feedback as a group.

Remind students of the stakes: They are all creating an amusement park together, and each individual group's ride adds to the success of the whole. They want to support the creation of each other's rides, so it's important when giving feedback that it is constructive, or helpful. If we just attack someone else's idea or only list the things we don't like about it, that's doesn't often help a team figure out what edits to make to improve a product or design.

Walk through the different elements of the worksheet and offer an example of a constructive piece of feedback versus one that is not.

Not constructive: "We don't like how it's designed."

Constructive: "The design is creative, but all the loops could be dangerous. We recommend changing parts of it so that kids won't be afraid to ride it."

Students will first look through the materials in the folder they received to understand the group's concept and ride. Based on class list of what makes for a good ride (Lesson 1), they should discuss what they think the group was going for (intent) and brainstorm with each other three things they like about the ride and how each relates to their ride theme, three things they would improve based on their ride theme (execution), and three questions to give back to the original group to consider to help improve overall audience experience. Do all the separate pieces of the design come together as a whole? It's important that groups have enough time to give concrete feedback. 20 minutes is recommended.

Give students a 3 minute warning to make sure groups wrote this all down and then put all papers back into the folder with the "market research" worksheet on top. You can either collect them again, or ask students to hand back folders with feedback to the original groups.

Explain to the class that they now have their market research on their rides in front of them. They will have the remainder of the session to read through their feedback and talk to each other about what they want to incorporate or change about their original designs. Remind groups that it's important to address as much as their feedback as possible when working on the next version of their design. They can make new sketches onto a "final" blueprint worksheet (from Lesson 2) or on blank paper if they'd like.

Before the end of the session, let students know that in the next and final session, they will be designing their final rides with animation software in class.

WRITING EXTENSION

To give your students an opportunity to practice their writing skills, distribute copies of the Writing Extension for Lesson 3, also found on the curriculum page. Students will be assuming the role of a journalist to write a press release of the amusement park to generate excitement from the public.

DURATION

1 hour

STANDARDS

National Core Arts Standards MA:Re7.1.8

National Core Arts Standards MA:Re8.1.8

National Core Arts Standards MA:Re9.1.8

Next Generation Science Standards MS ETS1-2

VOCABULARY

Innovation

Refine Intent Execution

Blueprint

Constructive



Teacher Guide | 8th Grade | Lesson 4

OBJECTIVE

In the final part of this series of lessons, students will see all the steps of their planning and research pay off.

INTRODUCTION

Recap all the steps and previous sessions of work that groups have put in up through this point. In this final session, students will see their hard work, planning, and market research pay off by building their final product.

In animation, the actual team of animators don't come in until all the steps before are completed. There needs to be a written script, art direction, voice actors, a studio and funding to distribute the movie, sound engineers, and so on. All the steps leading up to this point were important to the process of creating a prototype of something.

Introduce the role of Animator using the resources provided on the Careers in Animation page. Show a video to the entire class or challenge students to research these careers independently.

ACTIVITY

The first part of this final session will be a technical walk-through of how Pencil works. Show students the functions they'll need to know, and project different examples so they have a model to keep in mind. Allow space for questions so that students feel comfortable with the software. Let them know you will be circulating throughout the period to help individual groups with specific questions. Ask students to consider how the design decisions they make tell a "story" to the audience who rides it. Is that story unified throughout? Are there final design touches groups can add to improve audience experience as it relates to their theme?

Remember: You want to make sure students have enough time to actually build their model in Pencil, so you can also give this tutorial in another class period if you'd like.

After the tutorial, distribute folders to groups if you haven't already. Let them know that the rest of the period will be for them to build their refined models of their rides in Pencil. Walk around to check in on groups, make sure they are working together, and that no one student is dominating.

Take the last 5 or 10 minutes (if time allows) to let groups share their models to the class, as well as their ride name and theme. Congratulate each group after they present their ride. Allow class to celebrate the prototype of their new amusement park!

Go deeper: During presentations, you can ask groups to share what was the most helpful feedback they received from another group and how they incorporated it into their final design.

WRITING EXTENSION

To give your students an opportunity to practice their writing skills, distribute copies of the Writing Extension for Lesson 4, also found on the curriculum page. Students will be making a business pitch to potential investors about the entire amusement park to practice their persuasive writing.

DURATION

1 hour

STANDARDS

National Core Arts Standards MA:Cr3.1.8
National Core Arts Standards MA:Pr4.1.8
National Core Arts Standards MA:Pr5.1.8
National Core Arts Standards MA:Pr6.1.8
Next Generation Science Standards MS ETS1-3

VOCABULARY

Prototype
Unify