



*Animation Advanced – Making a Short*

# Character Design

## Achievement Goals:

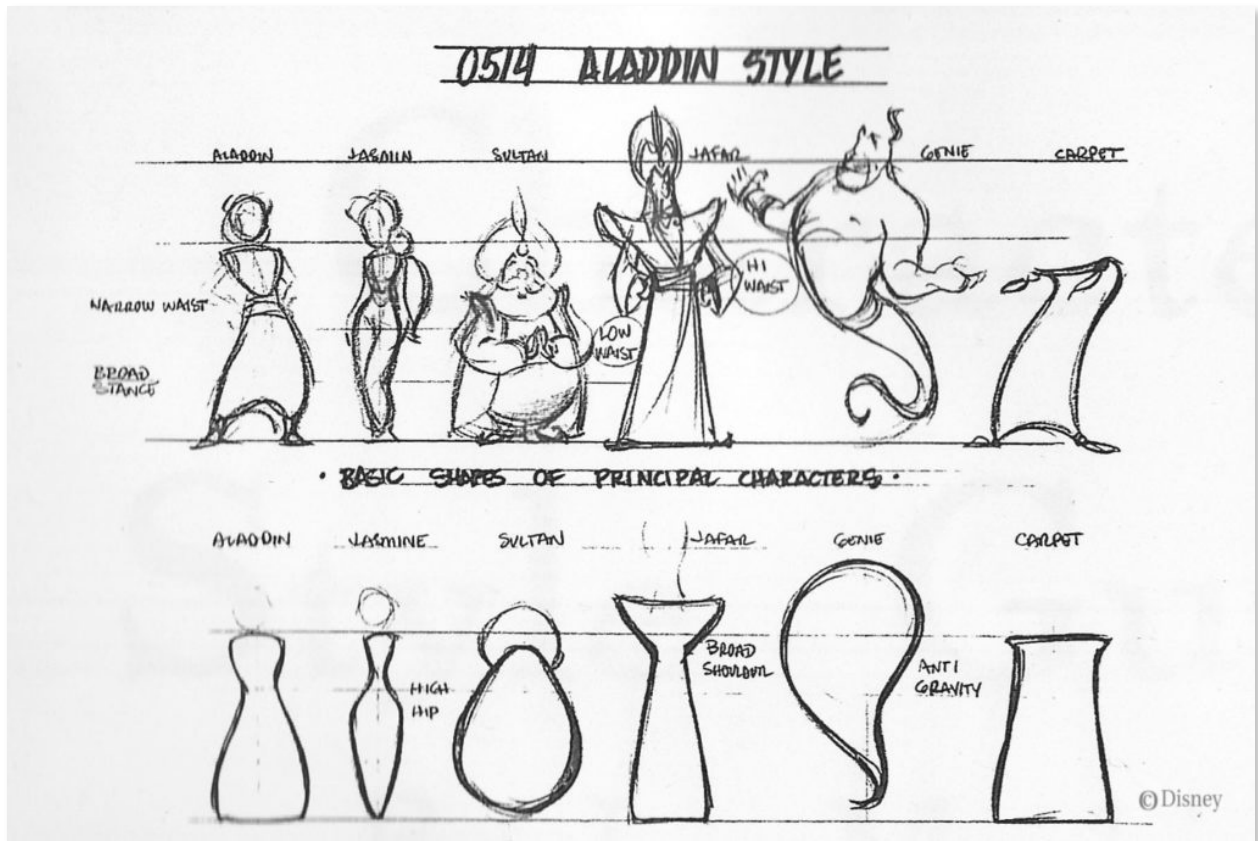
- Demonstrate the ability to create character designs for their story that incorporate the principles of : Shape Diversity, Simplicity, Clarity, and Appeal.

## Instruction:

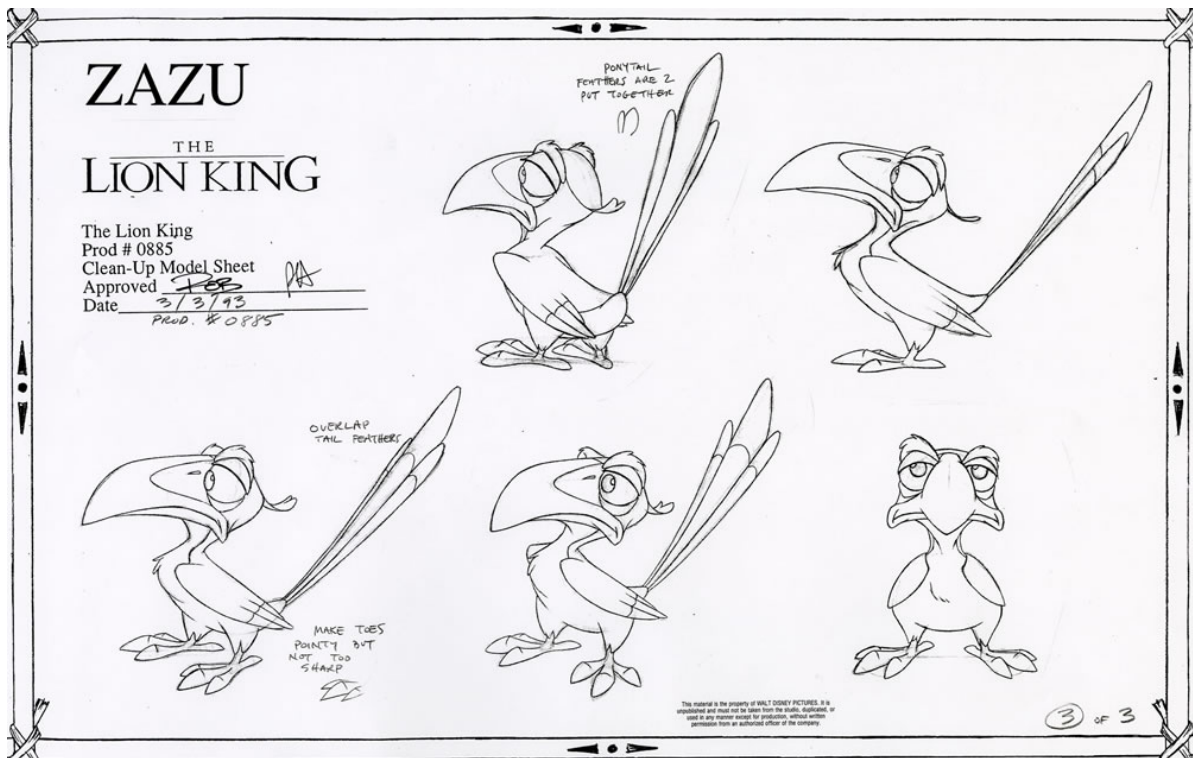
This lesson covers the key principles that go into designing a character, and designing a cast of characters that works together.

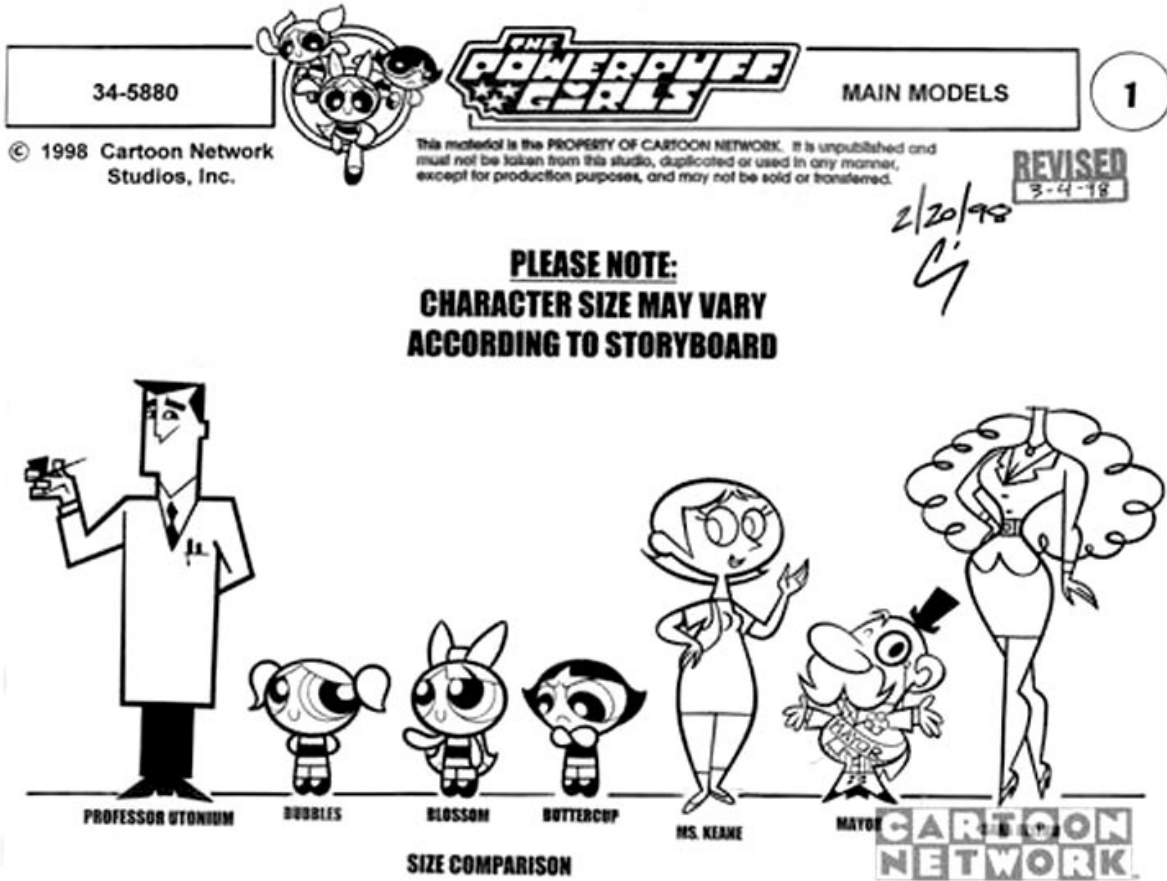
### Shape Diversity

Shape diversity is a powerful tool for helping your characters feel distinct from one another. By basing characters on strong contrasting shapes, it makes it easier to distinguish one character from another, and it makes it more visually interesting as we see new visual ideas throughout an animation



Also, even within a single character, shape and size diversity add rhythm and appeal. Within the individual parts of a character, look for opportunities to contrast straight with curved, thick with thin, oversized with undersized, round with pointed, etc.



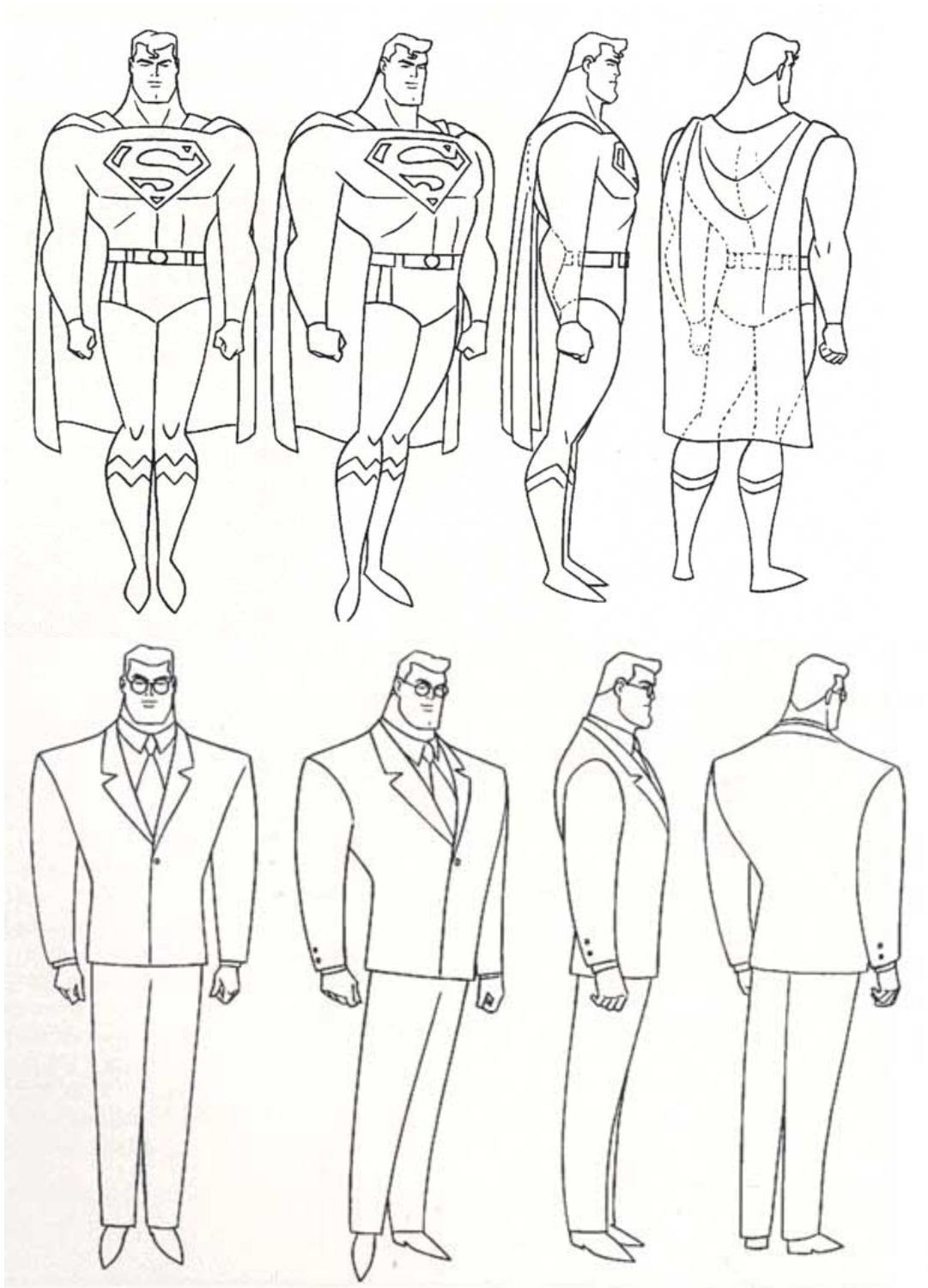


## Simplicity

Simple character designs are practical and visually well suited for animation.

For hand drawn animation it's vital you simplify as much as possible, particularly for a student film. Every extra line in a character is going to be multiplied by all the frames you have to draw. Whether an animation get's finished on time can come down to how well they simplified the designs at the beginning.

Simplifying designs also makes it easier to draw the character the same way consistently. This is called drawing "on model". This



(Designs by Bruce Timm from Superman: The Animated Series)

Even for 2D-Puppet and Stop-motion, it's still a good idea to simplify the character designs, even though you don't have to worry about redrawing. Making the character more detailed can make the character visually busy to look at, especially while it's in motion. And the details can undercut all the design work you did in picking strong bold shapes. You want those shapes to be clear.



**TOO BUSY!**

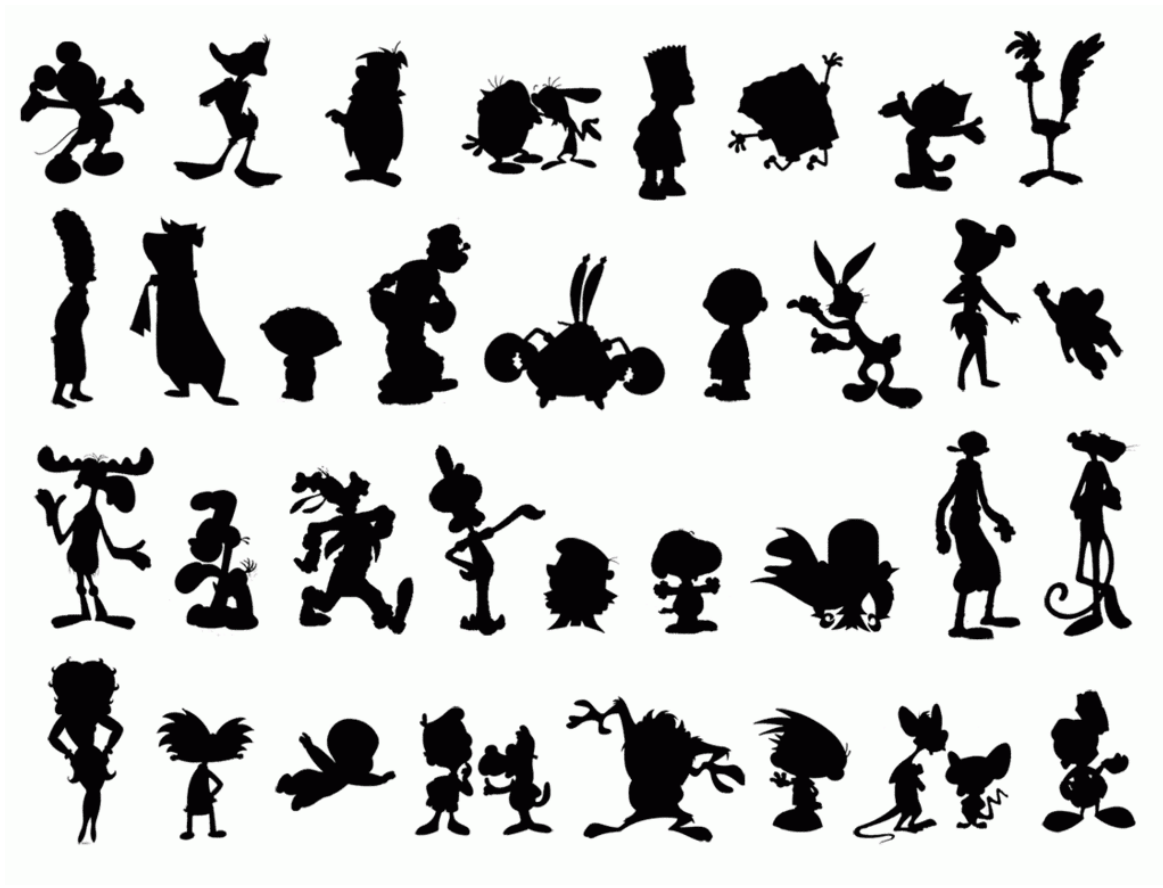


**CLEANER**

## Clarity

Clarity means making sure your character is highly recognizable, even when they're small on the screen, and even when they are moving.

When we've mentioned clarity in the context of Staging and posing, we've looked at the silhouette rule, and that applies to a character's overall design as well as how they're posed. A good character design will be recognizable even in silhouette.



## Appeal

Appeal is broad term for any qualities of a character's design that makes them compelling to watch. Have a vision for what you want to be appealing about a character and try to push that aspect of their design.

Appeal could come any number of qualities:

**Attractive**



**Cute**

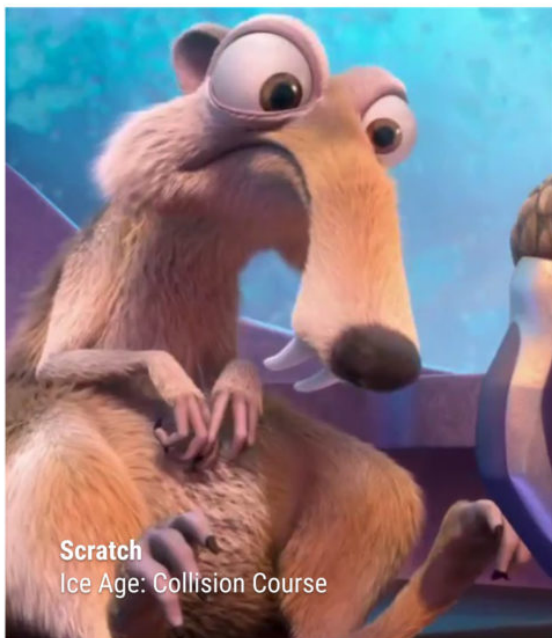




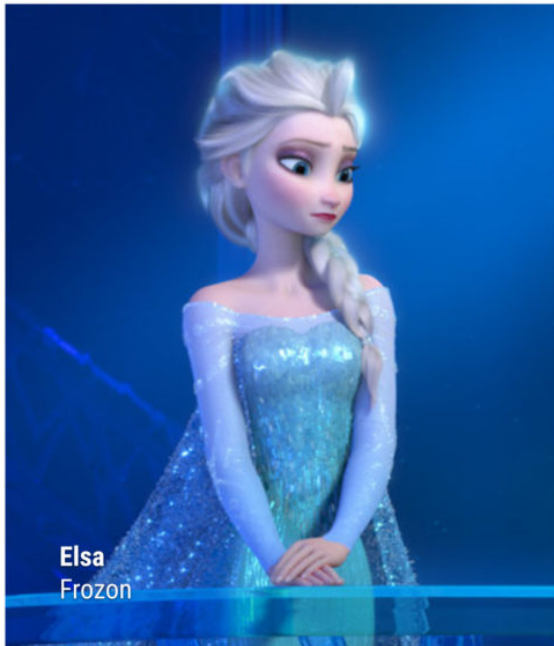
**Intimidating**



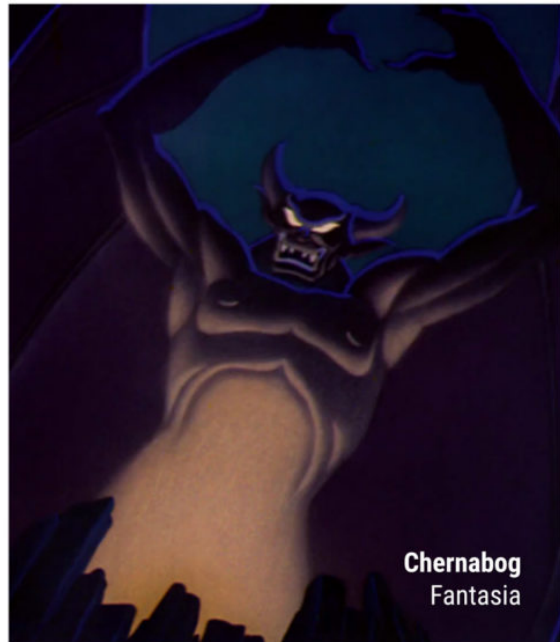
**Funny**



**Elegant**



**Monstrous**



**Simple**



Use exaggeration in character design, to emphasize whatever characteristics make the character appealing, and de-emphasize things that aren't as important.



## Assignment:

Your student probably already has a lot of ideas and design ideas for their character already, but in this assignment they'll go through the process of constructing proper designs that they can use to move forward to animation.

### Part 1 - Experiment

Have the students experiment by trying a bunch of rough designs for their characters where they try out different shapes. Sometimes as a student will get one image or notion of a character stuck in their head, and won't consider alternative options. Encourage them to try drawing the character in a variety of different ways. Experiment with radically different proportions and shapes. Put characters next to each other like in the Aladdin example above to check for shape variety.

### Part 2 - Turnaround / Model Sheet

Once they've decided on a direction to go with the characters, have the student draw turnarounds for each of the major characters in their story.

A turnaround (also called a model sheet) is a design document that shows your character from several different angles.

Usually the views are: Front,  $\frac{3}{4}$ , side,  $\frac{3}{4}$ -back, and sometimes back.

Since an animator or a model maker might need to know that the character looks like from any angle, this is an important reference for later in the process.

<b>CRAIG OF THE CREEK</b>			
prod. #	epi. #	sc.	pg.
1059	008	040	082
design name <b>Jessica without backpack - full turn</b>			
id <b>C008S040_2227</b>		category <b>Character</b>	
epi. name <b>You're It</b>			
series name <b>Craig of the Creek</b>			
		ship date BW	
<b>CARTOON NETWORK STUDIOS</b>			

	Eyes
	Eyelid
	Teeth
	Tongue
	Interior mouth

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## DAY

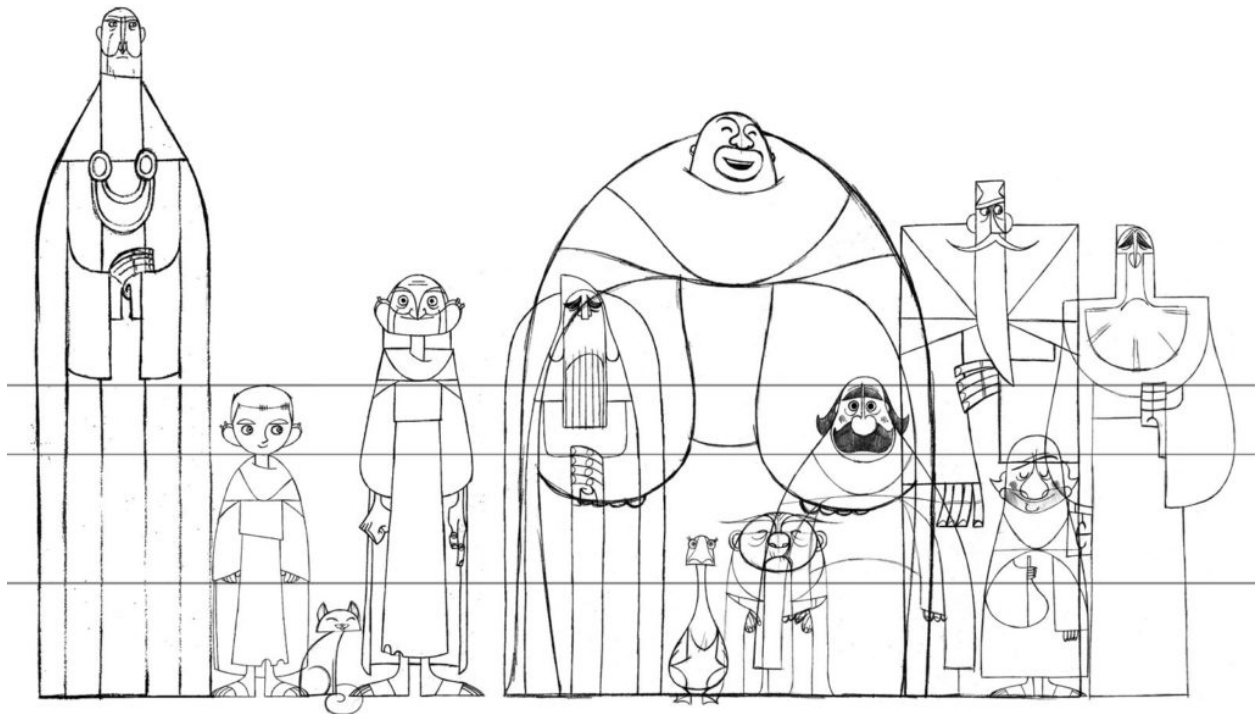
<p><b>NORMAL SIDE</b> (if any)</p> <p>W.O.E.= <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Eye Highlight.= <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Pupil = <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Ins. Mo.= <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Throat=<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Teeth=<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Tongue=<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Gums=<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p>	<p><b>SHADOW SIDE</b> (if any)</p> <p>W.O.E.= <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Eye Highlight.= <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Pupil = <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Ins. Mo.= <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Throat=<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Teeth=<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Tongue=<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p> <p>Gums=<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span></p>
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257-480
MAIN MODEL
RAVEN: BODY TURNS
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### Part 3 – Size Chart

In addition to the turn arounds, have them make a size chart that shows the characters next to each other as a reference for scale.



Brendan and the Secret of Kells	Model Sheet - Line Up - Black and White
Brendan/Aidan/Abbot/Monks	Ref:
Character Design - Barry Reynolds	

©Cartoon Saloon / Les Armateurs / Vivi Film - Walking The Dog

2006



DAY

FINAL 10/16/02



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# 257-320

MAIN MODEL

TEEN TITANS - SIZE COMPARISON

FIGURE