

ANIMATION

PORTFOLIO INFORMATION AND FAQ



Algonquin College's Animation program focuses on teaching students the skills necessary to meet the high standards required to gain meaningful employment in the demanding animation industry.

Portfolio Requirements

Animation is the art of moving drawings produced in such large numbers as to create the illusion of life. The more experienced the applicant is, in terms of drawing, the more time he or she will be able to devote focused energy to this new and extremely demanding craft. The most important factor in gaining acceptance into the animation program is a structured, confident and open minded approach to drawing. On average one out of every seven applicants meet the high standards of the animation program portfolio evaluation.

We find that these artists tend to fall into two primary groups, those with formal training who can reproduce the human form and its environments realistically, and those who have developed a unique and professional approach to drawing.

The most successful portfolios contain samples from the following categories listed below. We are looking to be impressed by your knowledge of anatomy, proportions, perspective and overall drawing skills. We expect 10 to 15 pages of work in total as well as the drawing tests and cover letter.



School of
Media & Design
ALGONQUIN
COLLEGE

Formal Life Drawing (Maximum 10 samples)

Life Drawing is the study of drawing a live nude model with the supervision of a qualified instructor. If no instructor is available, then detailed drawings of nude models from Croquis Cafe, Line of Action or Pixel Lovely will suffice.

Include:

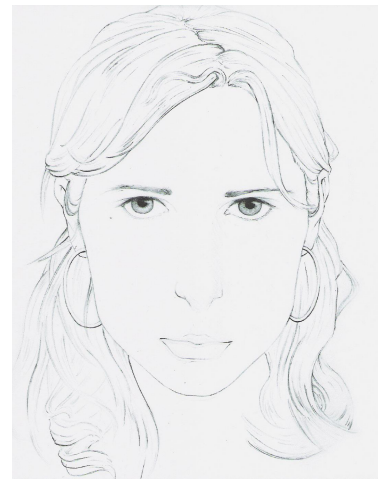
- Short gesture drawings. (2 to 5 minutes) – rough, loose, structured drawings
- Longer studies of the figure at rest or in motion. (30 minutes or longer) – more detail on face, hands and feet then a gesture
- Draw a 6" x 9" self-portrait on an 8.5" x 11" piece of white bond paper. It is preferred that the portrait be drawn using a mirror rather than a photo. ATTACH A RECENT PHOTO OF YOURSELF WITH THE PORTRAIT.
- One (8.5" x 11") page of 5 detailed drawings of the hand. (Counts as one sample)
- One (8.5" x 11") page of 5 detailed drawings of the feet. (Counts as one sample)

Please note that your samples should show an understanding of proportions, structure, weight and form. On average applicants spend about 4-8 hrs drawing the self-portrait. Attention to detail, three dimensionality, likeness and proportions are paramount to the success of this test.

Perspective Drawing

(Maximum 5 samples)

Accurate and highly structured examples, use light straight lines to create your perspective construction lines, to establish a horizon line and vanishing points so you could use that as a guideline for your clean drawing. This will illustrate your understanding and practical knowledge of perspective. Landscapes, cityscapes, interiors or the human figure interacting within an environment would qualify as the type of examples required.

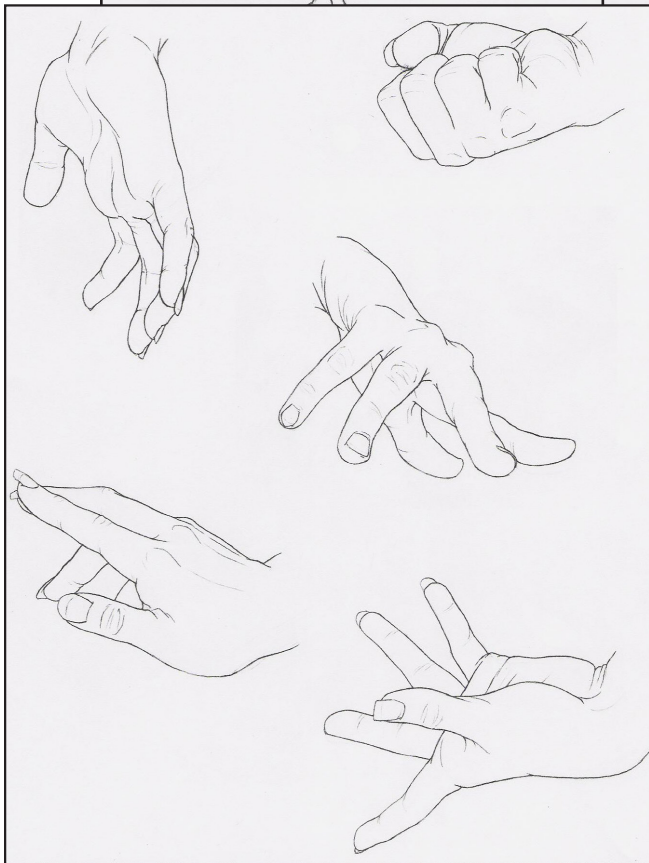
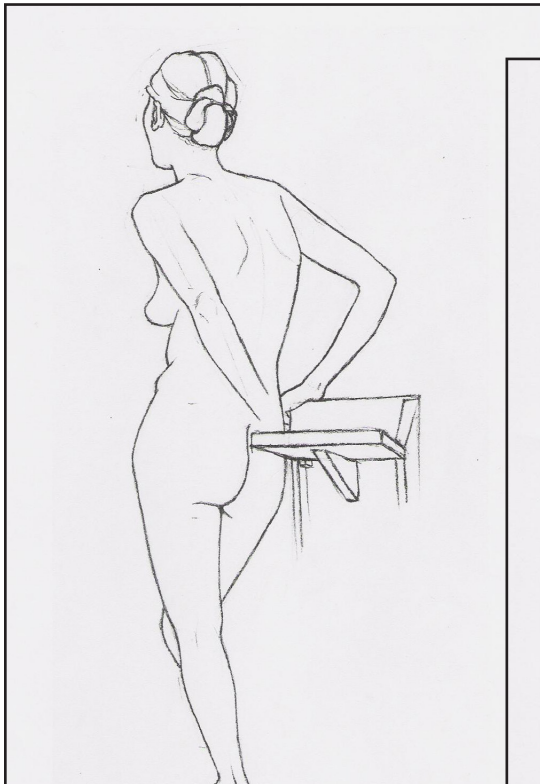


Samples of your own work

(Maximum 5 samples)

Samples can include fantasy art, caricatures or other samples of your best original work. Do not trace or copy any existing artwork. There can be no AI generated or modified artwork included.





Formal life drawing examples.

Drawing Aptitude Test

Instructions for Two Page Drawing Exercise

Start with two sheets of clean white paper, or digital drawing software (300 dpi), measuring 8 ½" x 11".

Draw a one-inch border around each page. Print your name and date in the bottom right corner of each sheet.

On the first sheet, draw a scene that depicts a character sitting or standing inside a room in full view, i.e. an airplane pilot in a cockpit of a plane or an artist sitting at a drafting table. (Note: These are just examples. Please be as creative as possible.) Do not shade or otherwise crosshatch your drawing. Concentrate on depicting all forms and associated details using proper perspective and line work only.

Draw the same scene on the second sheet, this time from a different angle (a different point of view) and closer to the character to clearly show what they are doing. Note that there is no passage of time between the first and second drawing, so your character will remain in the same pose. **Both drawings must use TWO-point perspective!**

We are interested in seeing something that is imaginative and applicable to animation. Do not attempt anything that might show a weakness, but do create artwork that does represent your artistic talents. Suggested themes include: fantasy, historical fiction, science fiction, western, super hero, fairy tale, classic literature, suburban, nightmare, school days, etc.

Make sure that the character you depict is completely original and does not copy, or is not overly influenced by, existing material. Tracing any existing artwork or using any AI generated artwork is strictly prohibited.

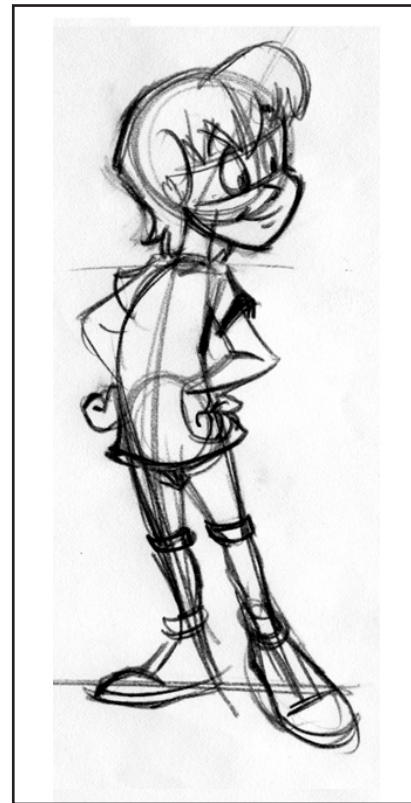
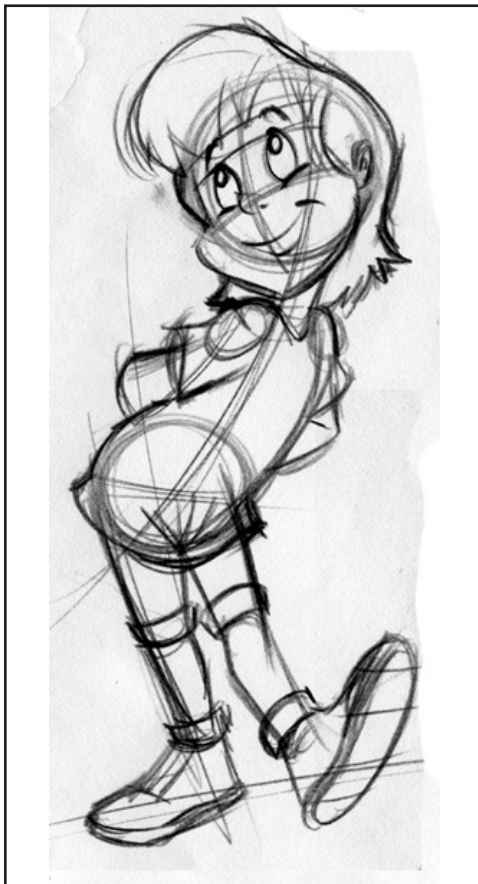


Action Pose

Using the enclosed Wendy design as your guide, draw this character in at least three dynamic action poses based on a popular sport such as gymnastics, football, golf or anything else that should indicate dynamic drawing.

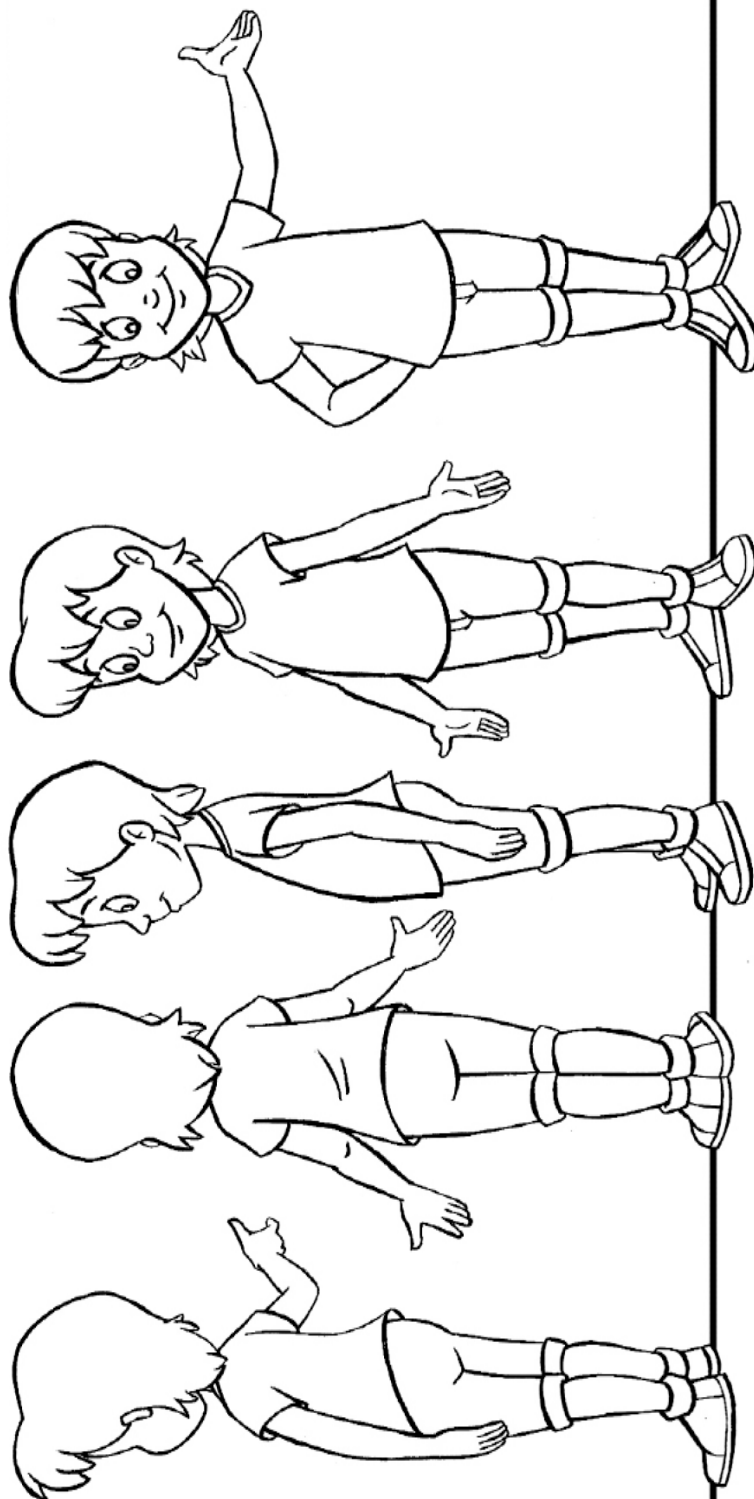
Practice drawing the Wendy character several times so you understand her structure and are able to draw her in any position. It is very important that you are able to reproduce her appearance accurately, paying close attention to proportions, without diverting from her original design or likeness.

Research your subject and get your poses from real-life action with references from sport, dance, magazines, books or television. Make sure to dress the Wendy character in the appropriate uniform and include any or all equipment. Keep in mind when doing research; Animation is the art of moving drawings produced in such large numbers as to create the illusion of life.



Algonquin College Animation Program

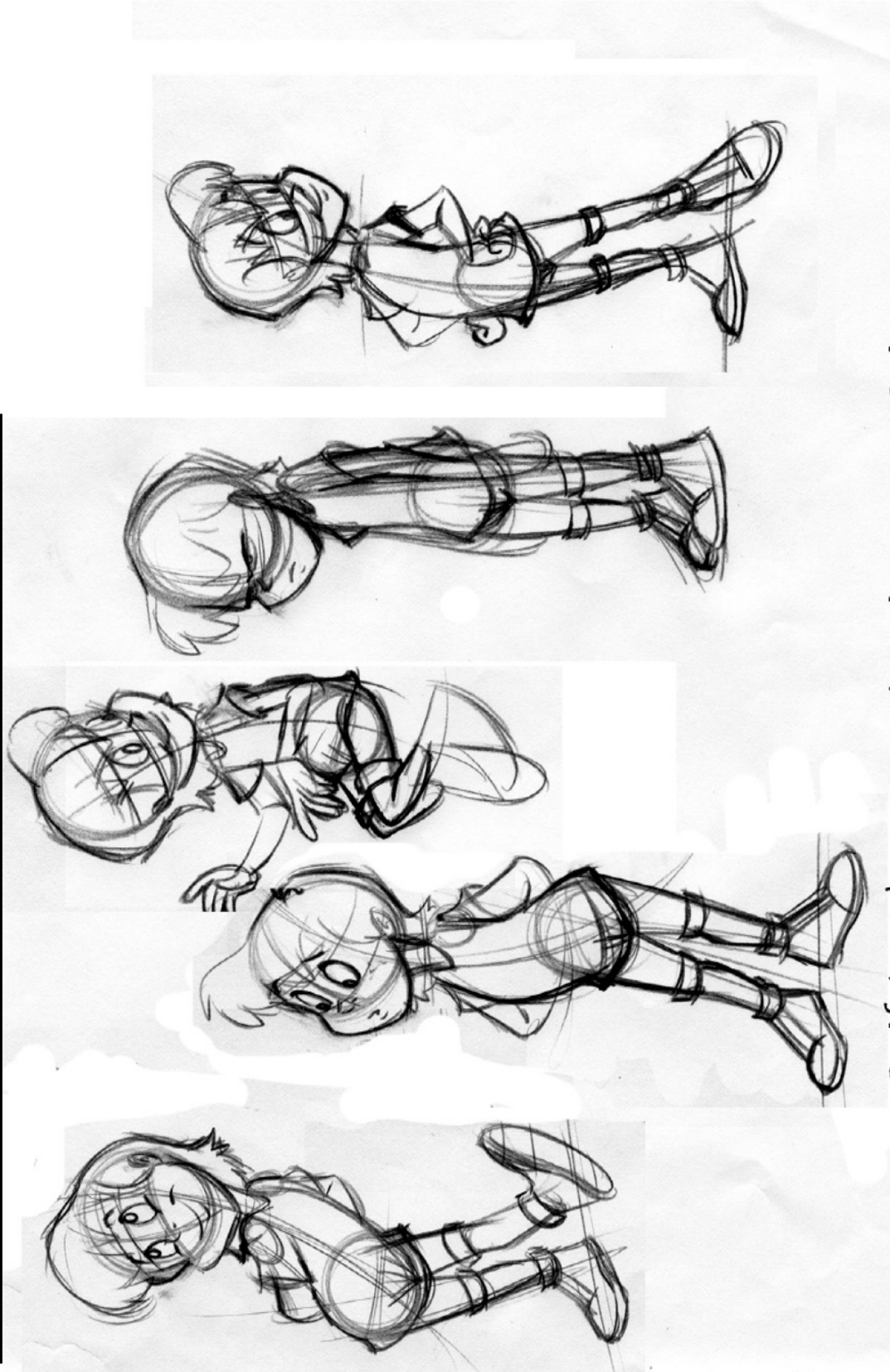
WENDY - TURNAROUND



Portfolio Submission - Character Drawing Test

Algonquin College Animation Program

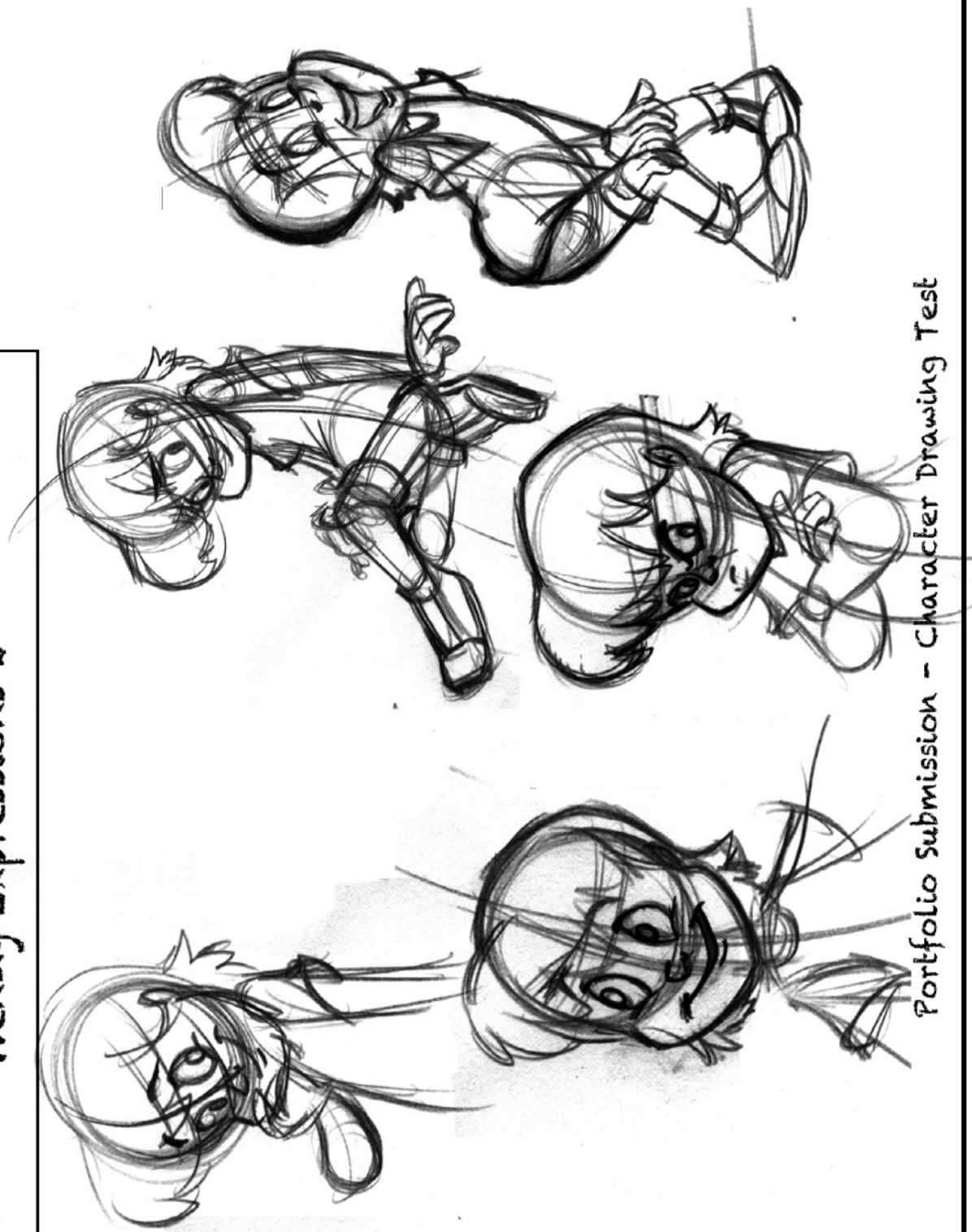
Wendy Expressions 1



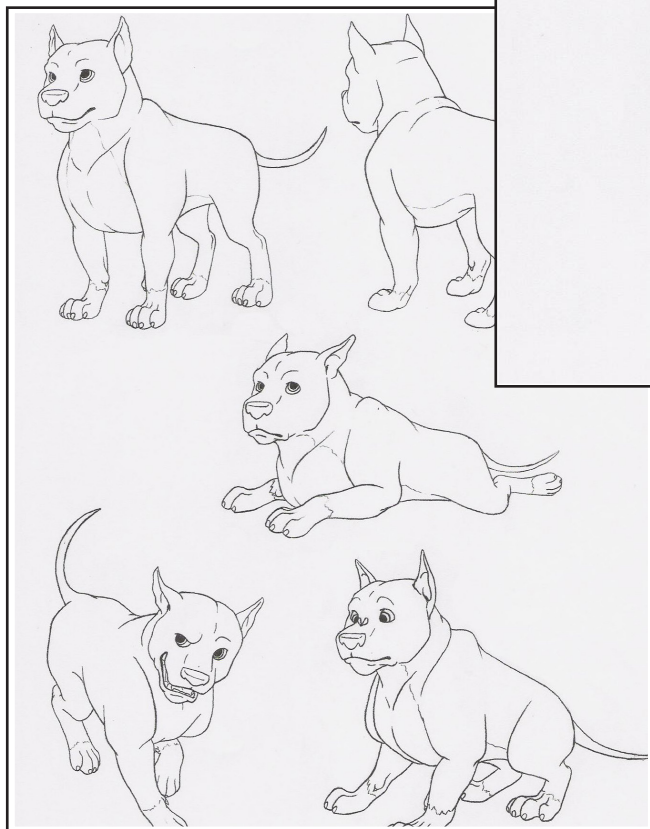
Portfolio Submission - Character Drawing Test

Algonquin College Animation Program

Wendy Expressions 2



Portfolio Submission - Character Drawing Test



Artwork examples from
the portfolios of
successful applicants.



Portfolio Submission

Cover Letter

Include a cover letter explaining why you are interested in the Animation Program, and any background or experience you have in the field.

Your submission must be submitted online as a single PDF. Organize your work into a cohesive presentation, labeling each item. Please feel free to include links to any animation you would like to show.

Be sure to include your name, email address, telephone number and student number.

Electronic Portfolio Submission

NOTE: Please label your pdf as “Animation Portfolio” and include your name. Email your electronic portfolio to: **design@algonquincollege.com** in a single PDF document, and include your name, email address, telephone number and student number. Please contact the same email address for any questions/concerns about your portfolio status.

For one-on-one feedback on your artwork, we offer annual **Portfolio Review Workshops**. You can find more details on dates and registration here - <https://www.algonquincollege.com/mediaanddesign/program/animation/portfolio/>

Each piece should be clearly labeled indicating the title and medium used.

For more information about the Animation Program please visit our website: <http://www.algonquincollege.com/mediaanddesign/program/animation/>

Portfolio Evaluation

Aptitude Tests are given a grade out of 80
Self Portrait is given a grade out of 20
Life Drawing Hands and Feet is given a grade out of 70
Personal Artwork is given a grade out of 30

A minimum score of 120/200 is required to be eligible for possible acceptance into the program.

You MUST apply to the program through the Ontario Colleges website by Feb. 1, 2026 in order to meet the equal consideration deadline. You will be notified if you have met the academic requirements, and then asked to submit a portfolio. **You MUST submit your portfolio by the February 20, 2026 portfolio deadline** if you wish to secure a spot in the program. After the February 20, 2026 portfolio deadline, we will continue to accept portfolios until the program is full.

The deadline for students beginning in the winter (January 2027) intake is **August 14, 2026**, if you wish to secure a spot in the program. After the deadline, we will continue to accept portfolios until the program is full.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is the faculty working with you involved in the animation industry?

We are very proud of the faculty teaching animation at Algonquin. Most have been at least departmental supervisors and some have been directors and producers. Our staff's collective resumes include television shows and features from studios such as Disney, Warner Bros. Don Bluth, Sony Image Works, Film Roman, Nelvana, Amberwood, Mercury Filmworks, PIP, BIG Jump, Animal Logic and Cookie Jar to name a few. Learn more about our faculty here - <https://www.algonquincollege.com/mediaanddesign/program/animation/#contact>

What kinds of things do you study in the program?

Our philosophy is that we are, first and foremost, an animation school that focuses on traditional, 2D digital, and 3D digital animation techniques. Our exercises are based on getting our students to a point where they can do good character animation. Timing, acting, posing and solid drawing are emphasized throughout the program. We have classes in thinking three dimensionally, character animation, life drawing, design, 2D digital animation, 3D digital design, lighting, rendering, and computer FX to name a few. See the full program of study here - <https://www.algonquincollege.com/mediaanddesign/program/animation/#courses>

What software do you use?

We are a MAC based program that teaches Toon Boom's Harmony, Autodesk's Maya, Zbrush, Final Cut Pro, Adobe Suite with Photoshop. We use keynote pages for notes and handouts.

If a student wants to go into 3D animation why do they have to take traditional hand-drawing?

When we set up the 3 year program we asked people at Pixar, ILM and other 3D studios what they wanted to see from a graduate. They said they saw lots of students who knew their way around software packages, but few who could apply animation principles and fewer still who could communicate their ideas through drawing. Drawing is like learning a new language. To be able to communicate in the industry you have to be adept at presenting your ideas visually. Animation is also about learning to see images in motion. There is something about learning to see drawings in sequential order ("flipped") that is a vital foundation for students to develop an "animator's eye" and apply that to any tool, be it a pencil or computer program. Studios see the computer as a very "expensive pencil".

Will I need a laptop for the program?

Check the program website for laptop and equipment specifications at <http://www7.algonquincollege.com/byod/device.htm>.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

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