

Sliding Shapes

60 minutes

Introduction to Animation

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Get ready to animate a shape sliding smoothly across the screen! You'll use Wick Editor to create a simple animation, learning how timing and spacing impact speed and smoothness. Follow the steps to make your shape move seamlessly.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Understand the principles of timing and spacing in creating smooth, linear animations.
- Master the use of frames to animate a shape sliding across the screen.
- Apply onion skinning techniques to ensure consistent and even movement.
- Analyse how frame count and spacing impact the perceived speed of motion.
- Experiment with multiple objects to create varied speeds in a single animation.

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Open Wick Editor (wickeditor.com, click Editor) on your own device first and check it loads and runs through the school filter.
- One device per pupil, or per pair if devices are short.
- Confirm pupils know where exported GIF files download to on their device, and where to save them.
- Have a finished sliding-shape example ready to show so pupils can see the target.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

Introduction

Create a New Project

Drawing Your First Frame

Using a Tween

Reaching the Finish Line

Previewing Your Animation

Save and Exporting

TEACHING MOVES

- 1. Introduction. Ask pupils to picture something sliding across a table, fast or slow. Draw out that smooth motion needs even spacing. Keep this brief and get them onto devices.
- 2. Create a New Project. Walk everyone to the Editor together before anyone starts drawing. Wait until every screen shows a blank canvas so nobody is stranded on the homepage.
- 3. Drawing Your First Frame. Stress this shape goes on the far left, its starting position. Tell them to keep it small, table-object sized, so it has room to travel.
- 4. Using a Tween. Demonstrate stretching the yellow frame line on the timeline once on the board. This is the step pupils miss. Show it slowly, then let them copy.
- 5. Reaching the Finish Line. Remind them each new shape needs its own layer. Point out that a shorter tween means a faster shape, so different frame lengths create the race.
- 6. Previewing Your Animation. Have pupils press play and judge their own work: is the slide smooth and straight? Send them back to adjust the tween length rather than fixing it for them.
- 7. Save and Exporting. Get everyone to rename the file with the lesson name plus their own name before exporting, then click Export GIF and wait for the download to finish.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Pupils think a longer tween makes the shape move faster, when it actually spreads the same journey over more frames and slows it down. Put two shapes side by side with clearly different tween lengths and play them. Ask which finished first and why the shorter one won.
- Pupils add a second shape on the same layer, so it overwrites or interferes with the first. Show that each racing shape needs its own new layer, and check the layers panel with pupils before they tween a second shape.
- Pupils click Export but assume the project is saved somewhere, or cannot find the downloaded GIF afterwards. Show where downloads land on the class devices and confirm the file appears before anyone closes the tab.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Emerging: Sit with them for the tween step and stretch the yellow frame line together once before they try alone. Let them succeed with one shape sliding across before attempting the race.
- Developing: Ask them to make one shape clearly faster than another and explain to you which tween they changed. Pair them with a partner to compare why their shapes reach the line at different times.
- Proficient: Challenge them to run three or more shapes in a race where the order of finishing is deliberate, not random. Have them draw their own object in Wick Editor instead of a plain shape and tween that.