

COMPUTING, STEAM ➔

HUE Animation Studio



Child-friendly camera and software kit for creating stop-motion animation movies. Age 7+

AT A GLANCE

- Flexible HD camera with USB connection.
- Animation software for Windows and macOS.
- Includes 64-page book of step-by-step instructions, hints and tricks.
- Fold-out mini stage with background and green screen.
- For children aged seven years old and over.

REVIEWED BY: MIKE DAVIES



One of my happiest memories of classroom teaching was when I set my Year 6 pupils the challenge of animating their own take on the story of Beowulf. Using everyday items and figures from a variety of unrelated Lego sets, they had terrific fun scripting, planning and shooting a stop motion movie that really brought the story to life. So what if Grendel's ghastly mum bore an uncanny resemblance to Chewbacca? The kids were delighted with the results.

Unfortunately, the kit we had then was rather primitive. The images were often blurry and the sound tended to lose sync with the visuals. Nevertheless, the children found it a memorable and very satisfying experience. So imagine my excitement when I was given the chance to have a play with the HUE Animation Studio.

From flick-books, to Morph, to Wallace and Gromit, there's a particular magic to stop-motion creations. This wonderful resource helps to demystify the creative process and unleash a child's imagination. It encourages planning and problem solving. And, of course, it allows them to explore the possibilities of technology, almost without thinking about it.

Furthermore, it includes a time-lapse function that allows you to speed up reality in order to gain a realistic view of lengthy or slow-moving processes. You can imagine the potential, especially for science activities, for example. Now, of course there are plenty of clips available online of things like germination and growth or rotting and decay. How much better to be able to demonstrate these things happening within the classroom, without having to stare at nothing much happening for hours on end.

Of course, this is not the only such product on

the market. Nor is it the first. However, it really seems to hit that sweet spot between simplicity of use and breadth of functionality.

The camera itself almost conceals the quality of its output. Robust and brightly coloured, it comes with a long flexible swan-like neck which makes it easy to move into the optimum position. It also has a USB connection which means it can either be plugged straight into the computer or, perhaps more usefully, the sturdy, separate base that is included in the package.

But what I really liked was the software it comes supplied with. Not only is it intuitive and easy to use, but it achieves this while offering an enormous range of editing functions to trim, loop and otherwise manipulate animated sequences. Sounds can be added either through the in-built microphone or by inserting sound effects from the extensive library or importing your own from elsewhere. Children will also love the limitless possibilities of using the green screen function to add creative backgrounds to the action.

Having seen the speed with which youngsters work out how to use such technology, I have no doubt that they will soon be creating movies of impressive quality and technical skill. Even so, the package comes complete with a comprehensive set of instructions and there are links to concise video tutorials for specific functions.

Affordable, exciting and easy to use, this is an excellent addition to any classroom's technological tool kit. The potential educational applications are as extensive as your imagination. Above all, it will add fun and wonder to any activity into which it is enlisted.



**teach
PRIMARY**

VERDICT

- ✓ Impressive image quality
- ✓ Classroom-friendly and easy to use
- ✓ Complete with a wide range of features
- ✓ Produces impressive results
- ✓ Extensive educational potential across the curriculum

UPGRADE IF...

... you want to use fun and creativity to add visual appeal to an almost limitless range of educational activities.

£41.63 ex. VAT | huehd.com/products/hue-animation-studio