



ARTS PLUS

The Sunny Pages

At home art activities to brighten your day

“Shapes Characters”

This activity is appropriate for ages 8 and up

Time from start to finish = 15-45 minutes

depending on difficulty level or variation

You will need the following materials:

- Paper
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Construction or colored paper
- Glue stick or glue
- Colored pencils, crayons, markers, etc.



Brief project description:

- For this project, participants will use various shapes to generate interesting and unconventional character designs for comics and narrative art. This process creates unique character silhouettes and helps young artists break away from drawing figures that are too similar or repetitive.

Steps

- **#1:** Using colored paper or construction paper, cut out several interesting shapes, each different from the rest. Simple shapes (such as squares, circles, or diamonds) are good options as well as more organic shapes (such as a long squiggle, a blob, or an ‘L’ shape). Place these shapes into a container and gather your paper, glue, and pencil.

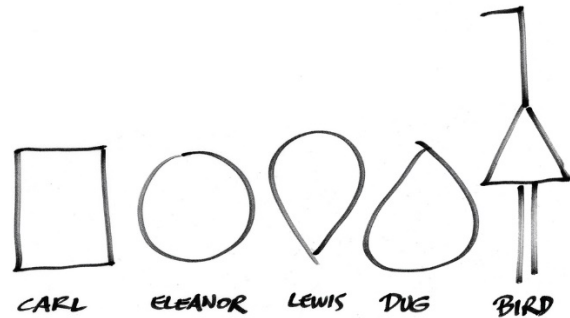
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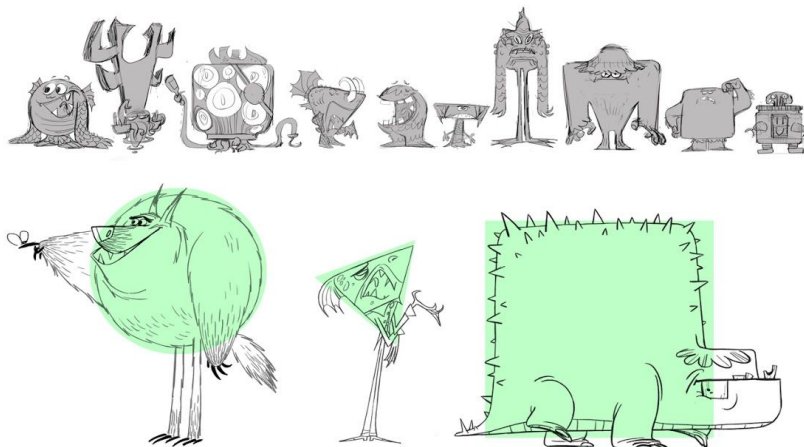
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The basic shapes of the characters from Pixar's Up:



• **#2:** To begin, choose a few shapes from the container. Stay on your toes and give your drawing a fresh perspective by choosing shapes blindly (without looking into the container). Now glue your shapes down to your paper. I like to begin with no more than 3 shapes at a time, so I don't get overwhelmed with too many ideas. Looking at each shape, try to intuitively imagine what type of character could be designed with that shape as a starting point.

• **#3:** With the shapes as a base, draw around and on top of them to create your characters. The starter shape does not always have to be the center (or "trunk") of the body. For example, a large oval might become a gigantic nose! A skinny rectangle could be a thin dress on a tall woman! A wobbly squiggle could be a wild hairdo! There are endless options, but the most important thing is to think creatively and work differently than you would typically. Once you have created some wacky new characters, try building stories around them and adding them into comic panels or your sketchbook.



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***For a more complex challenge, trying gluing several of the starter shapes together to create a more complex character design!



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