Tips From Design Layers II Workshop

1. It's a good idea to get in the habit of **clicking 0 seconds before making changes** to IntelliMation, if you want your changes to affect the animation from the beginning. If you want a change to occur later, be sure you are on the correct timepoint before making the change.

2. Close the timeline before going to a page which should have IntelliMation play as the page opens. It won't play automatically with the timeline open. However, if you **don't** want the animation to play, for example when you are trying to edit, leaving the timeline open is one way to prevent the animation from playing.

3. It's convenient to control-click the page to open **Page Properties**, but not always the best way. If a full-page picture or even a smaller bit of clip art is on the page where you clicked, you will open its **Properties** window instead of **Page Properties**. Get in the habit of checking the top of a **Properties** dialog to see what kind of **Properties** you're looking at. Also remember that you can select **Page Properties** from the **Pages** menu.

4. The **Picture Library** has a **Backgrounds** category, with full page pictures that make good stage sets. But if you try to load these as floating pictures using the **Insert Picture From Library** command, they still go into the **Background** layer as if you had used the **Backgrounds** toolbar or loaded a background in **Page Properties**. To load them as floating pictures, use the **Insert Picture From File** command, go into the **Pictures** folder in the Classroom Suite **Media** folder, go into the **Backgrounds** folder, and choose your picture.

5. There is a way to turn a page background into a floating picture. This would let you use a picture background created by a student in **Paint** mode as a stage set! While in **Design** mode, open **Page Properties**, click the **Picture** tab, and click the **copy** button. This puts the background picture onto the clipboard. Click **OK** to close **Page Properties**. Choose **Paste** from the **Edit** menu or type **Control-v**. The background image will be pasted as a floating picture. You'll still see the same picture on the page background. Open **Page**

Properties again and clear the background, then close **Page Properties**. Move your floating picture into position, give it a **-50 Design Layer**, and take it off **Scan** and **Respond To Mouse**. Click **OK** and you're done!

6. Once you start building complex animations, with scenery and a stage set, you often need to select an object that is behind something else. From the menu bar, use the **Edit-->Select Object** option to do that. Then, if you need to change settings, using the **Edit-->Properties...** option makes your job much easier.

7. Did you notice that only **0 seconds** and **5 seconds** were marked red on the timeline, to create an IntelliMation of the girl crossing the page? You don't need to open every timepoint, and in fact you should try to use as few points as possible. Only open a point if you need to make a direction, size, or rotation change. **Let IntelliMation do the work for you** between these key points.

8. You've learned to use **Design Layers** to control what's in front when you set up an IntelliMation. You also can change the **Design Layer** settings at later timepoints to make objects go behind something they previously were in front of. Just remember that if you do this in the middle of an animation, you should check any IntelliMation timepoints you've used **after** that point to make sure the settings are correct. It's easy to see if they need changing, because something will disappear or go in front or behind something incorrectly when you do a test run.

9. Like ordinary clip art, you can adjust frame animations with the **Transform Tools** to change the size or flip them horizontally or vertically. This option is especially useful in stringing together sets of animations of the same figure in different poses.

10. You can use your own photos as well as the Backgrounds pictures to create stage sets. The amount of size adjustment you will need to make depends on the default size of the picture you bring in, and on the size you have set for the pages in your activity. For an activity with default size

pages, **128%** seems to work for the pictures in the **Backgrounds** folder, both **Illustrations** and **Photos**.

11. You can add props to the stage set just like on a real stage by bringing in and positioning clip art, re-sizing where needed. Then open the clip art's **Properties**, set the **Design Layer** to -49 (just in front of the stage set picture) and take off the checkmarks from **Automatic Scan**, **Step Scan**, and **Respond To Mouse**. Clip art props with these settings behave like they were part of the stage set picture, but you can hide them backstage or bring them into view with a change to their **Design Layer** setting.

12. You can use the **Horizontal** and **Vertical Scaling** settings to change the proportions as well as the overall size of clip art. For example, make the **Horizontal Scaling** smaller than the **Vertical Scalin**g to make the clip art look thinner and taller, proportionately. This trick can help a bit of clip art fit into a picture drawn in perspective. It's also handy to vary the appearance of clip art you use multiple times, such as trees in a forest.

13. Frame animations actually have two motions, changes in position and the movement cycle of the frames in the animation. You can change the speed of the position change by having a longer or shorter number of seconds between timepoints to go a given distance. You can change the speed of the frames cycle under the **Frames** tab in **Properties**. Getting these two motions coordinated is a matter of trial and error, but it's worth the time spent tweaking them to get a realistic effect. For example, if the walking girl is moving across the page too fast for her frames cycle, her feet will look like she is sliding or skating. Speed up **Frame Flipping Speed**, and her fast walk will look much more convincing.