Good characters can be created through imaginative and expressive drawings that define their attitude, action, volume and perspective.

Animators learn to create these drawings through observation of live models in order to capture the physical traits, proportions and simplicity that effect how their character will move, stand, sit and gesture.

These drawings need to show a character's **weight, balance, and rhythm** in order to convince us of their emotions, mannerisms and energies... as well as their strengths and weaknesses.

Step One. **Draw your model standing.**

Start by drawing an oval for the head with a line indicating the model's lean and an ellipse representing the eyes. For the body, do not draw shapes. Draw simple lines that represent the action of the figure.

Good character drawings need to show the relationship of each part of the body, one to another, so we do not get disjointed units and figures.
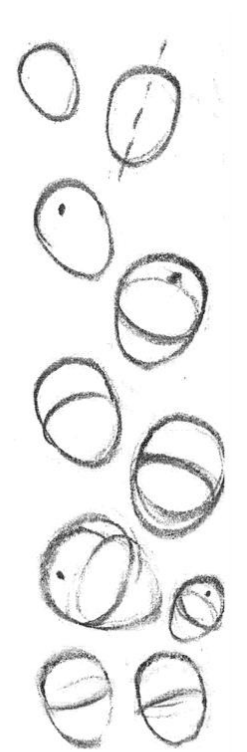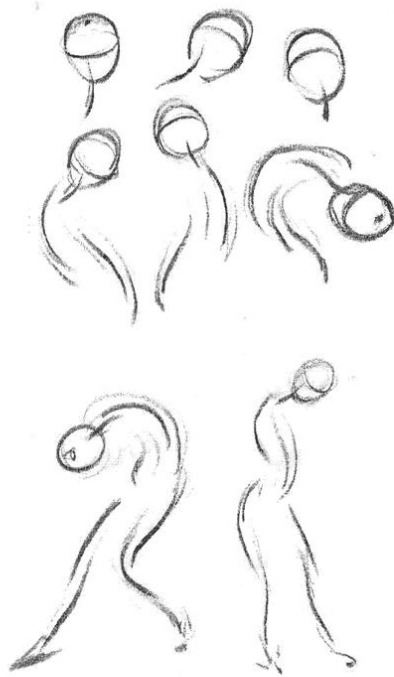
Step Two. Draw a line from the head to the hips that shows the character's action.

This line needs to logically connect with legs that are properly related to the body and can sustain its weight.

Step Three. Draw lines for the legs and feet that convey the character's action. They do not need to be attached, but in order to show continuity and movement one line must lead to another.
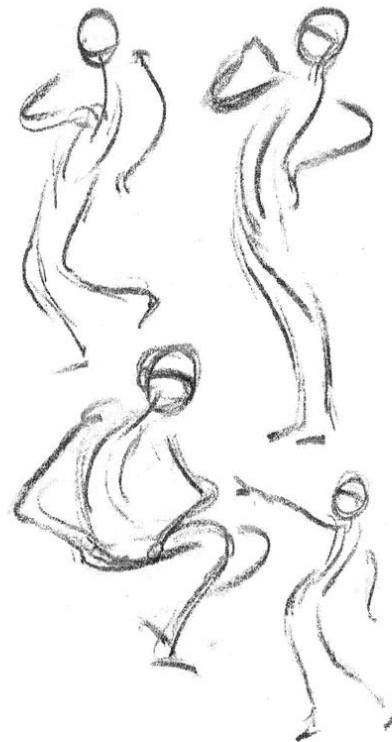
Step Four. Draw the arms in the same manner.

The gesture, the staging make the drawing come to life, if you know where elbows, wrists, knees and ankles are and how and when they work for us to embellish our character's actions.
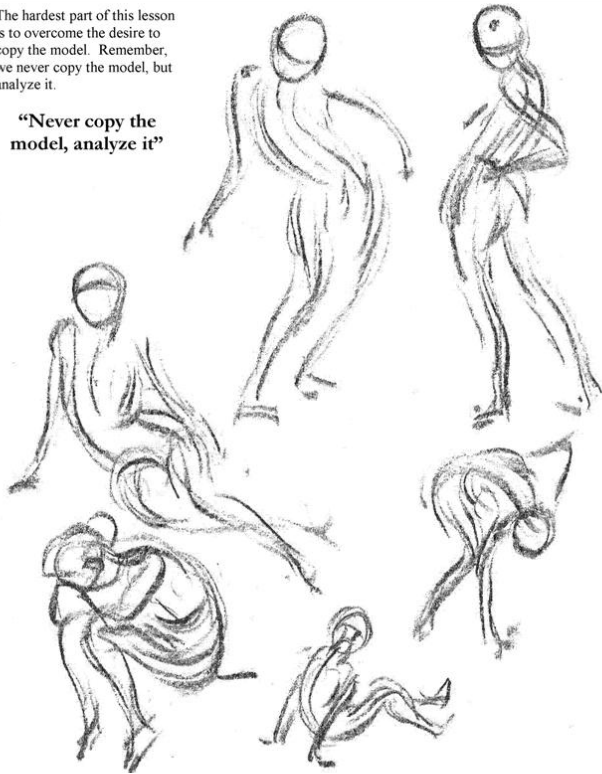
Eventually your lines become forms that stretch, bend and move.
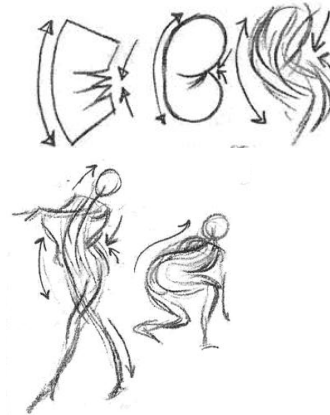
Step Five.

Don't copy your models, analyze them.

The hardest part of this lesson is to overcome the desire to copy the model. Remember, we never copy the model, but analyze it.
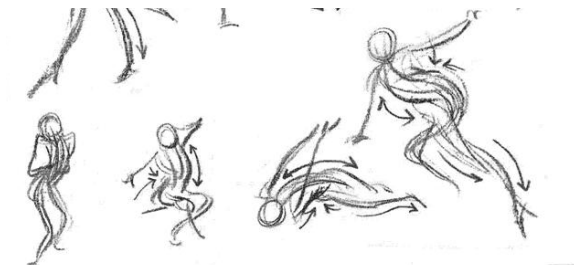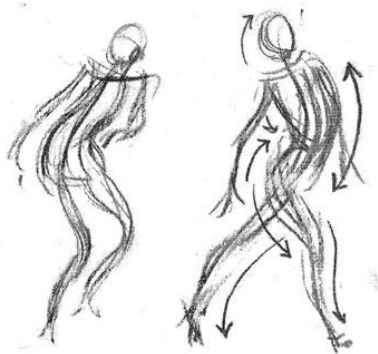
"Never copy the model, analyze it"

Step Six (cont.)

Imagine an accordion, where one side stretches as the other compresses.

The arrows around the figures indicate the direction of their movement.

Step Six.
Eventually an animator needs to draw characters that can overact or underact, according to situation and personality.