Animation Vocabulary

Animation
A filmmaking technique where the illusion of motion is created frame-by-frame. The word comes from the Latin word, "anima," meaning "life" or "soul".

Animator
The person who draws the moving character in an animated film.

Background
A flat piece of artwork that is the setting for a moving character in an animated film. A background could be a picture of a forest, a sky, a room, or a castle.

Cel
A clear piece of plastic on which the animator's finished drawings are painted. The cel is clear so that when placed over the background, the animated characters appear to be in a setting.

Frame
An individual still picture on a strip of film. 24 frames equal one second of a motion picture.

Frame-by-frame
The filmmaking technique in animation where each frame is exposed one at a time and the object being photographed is slightly altered for each picture.

Ink and Paint
The step in cel animation where the animator's drawings are placed on cels to be photographed. A drawing is outlined on the front of the cel with black ink, while the back of the cel is painted.

Kinestasis (Kin-e-sta'-sis)
An animation technique using a series of still photographs or artwork to create the illusion of motion.

Model Sheet
A reference sheet for animators that shows a number of different poses of an animated character. The model sheet also shows how characters relate in size to other characters.

Pixilation (Pik si la' shun)
A stop-motion technique in which life-size props or live actors are photographed frame-by-frame. When viewed, they appear to be moving at a fast speed.
**Script**
The written story of a film that supplies dialogue, camera moves, background, staging and action.

**Squash and Stretch**
A drawing technique used by animators and originally developed at the Disney Studio to show exaggerated movements in characters. For example, if you wanted a character to jump, you would draw him close to the ground as if 'squashed' and then you would 'stretch' him out as he went into the air.

**Storyboard**
A "storyboard" is a visual representation of a story. Pictures can be sketched on pieces of paper and pinned to a large board, or they can be drawn on a large piece of paper, comic-book style, to represent scenes in a film. A story sketch should show character, attitude, feelings, entertainment, expressions, type of action, as well as telling the story of what's happening. When you look at a board, it should reflect the feeling of the sequence so the viewer starts to pick up some excitement and stimulation. A story sketch artist at an animation studio is usually an artist who has special interest in illustration, design, appearance, and character.

**Zoetrope (zo'-e-trop)**
An early animation device that spins drawings in a revolving drum to create the illusion of motion.

**Inbetween**
Drawings that are inbetween the drawings that are at the beginning and end poses.

**Extremes**
Drawings that are at the beginning and end of a particular pose.