

# Cartoons *in* the Classroom

Helping educators create lessons and design amazing animated videos that engage, inspire and improve student achievement.

## The Special Sauce



## Learn the Secret Recipe

by **POWTOON**'s

Chief Executive Unicorn - Ilya Spitalnik

Bonus Chapter by J.C. Bowman  
Executive Director, Professional Educators of Tennessee

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Helping educators create lessons and design amazing animated videos that engage, inspire, and improve student achievement

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# Part 1

## WHY ARE CARTOONS SO POWERFUL?

### The Special Sauce

Have you ever watched a cartoon where mice talk, elephants fly, or penguins build airplanes and found yourself saying: "That's ridiculous! Where'd they come up with such nonsense?"

Actually, no! The likelihood is you've never been bothered by how implausible a cartoon was...

Why? Because something magical happens when you watch a cartoon. Psychologists have a fancy name for it: **"The Suspension of Disbelief"**

It's the special sauce that stops you from asking critical questions such as: Can this actually happen? Is this really possible? Does this make any sense?





## **Conditioned since Childhood to Love Cartoons**

Most of us watched cartoons as children and still associate them with childish, non-educational, and (more importantly) non-instructional subjects.

Basically, we've been conditioned to accept cartoons as a non-threatening form of communication. We absorb the messages depicted in cartoons in a very different way compared to other forms of media.

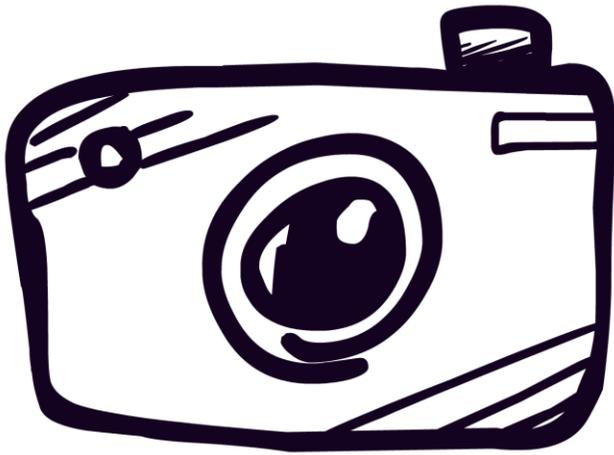
## **Lowering Your Guard**

Cartoons encourage us to relax - while at the same time exposing us to new ideas and experiences. We stop asking questions like: Is this important? Do I like this topic? Do I need to know this concept? Do I like this teacher?

This is where cartoons become such a powerful educational tool! By eliminating the "criticizing" instinct for even just a few moments, they make students far more receptive.

To illustrate, take a look at these next two images. With each, focus on the first thoughts that cross your mind:

## Image 1



**Thoughts:**

"Oh, a camera - someone's probably taking a picture."

## Image 2



### Thoughts:

"Wow, that's pretty complex technology. I bet it costs a lot. I'd need someone teach me how to use it. You probably need additional equipment for it too. Bet it's intended for a professional."

## Seeing the Bigger Picture

Our detail-oriented approach to Image 2 makes it virtually impossible to see any kind of greater message someone may want to convey. We tend to get too caught up with the details to see the bigger picture (no pun intended).



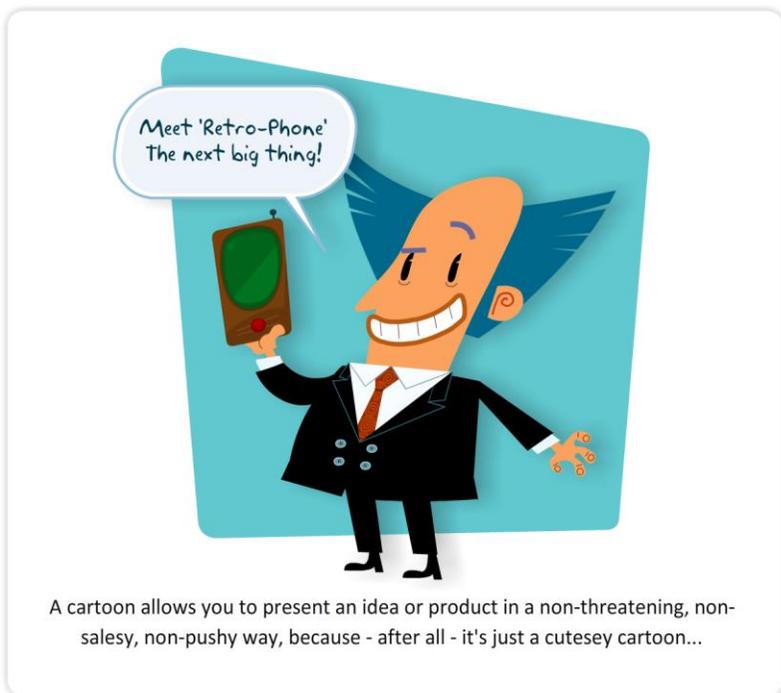
Using the cartoon format adds a level of abstraction to the message that allows us to ignore petty details and concentrate on the greater message!

## The Power of Toon!

Teaching is an art. Harnessing the power of cartoons can help you create high-impact concepts that speak to students in ways virtually no other medium can, because:

1. You're speaking to them via a channel they're conditioned to associate with fun—so they're more mentally receptive.
2. The added level of abstraction allows them to focus on the **concept** rather than inconsequential details, so they can actually benefit from the presentation.

If you want students to pay better attention, there are few better ways than creating and using cartoons to spark excitement within the classroom!



However until recently, creating a cartoon was prohibitively expensive and often beyond the technical reach of a non-designer or animator.

This reality inspired Ilya Spitalnik, PowToon’s founder, to invent a tool that makes it affordable for *anyone* to create animated clips for their classroom, school, or business. “PowToons” give educators a unique instruction tool and ultimately improve student achievement.

## **A Solid “What does/doesn’t work” Formula**

In this short book, we want to give educators a solid **“What does/doesn’t work” formula** for animated video clips, and provide an incredibly effective (yet simple!) recipe that will capture students’ imaginations and inspire an entertaining approach to learning.



# Part 2

## HOW TO MAKE LEARNING MORE FUN

Before we introduce the formula, let's review a few important principles that can help increase student:?!?!?!?

### **1. Pattern Interrupt**

Have you ever entered a room and heard the disturbing humming sound from a broken fluorescent light? Did you notice that the sound faded within a few seconds, only to resume the next time you entered the room?

This ability to block out negative sensory data is known as sensory adaptation, and it's a powerful innate skill in situations where we're confronted with bad smells or unwanted continuous noises. On the flipside, this adaptive ability applies to any continuous sensory situations, like sitting in a classroom for prolonged periods. As such, it demands a constant need for change.

There's a reason why typical lessons are kept under 60 minutes. By then, even when presented with the highly interesting topics, the most steadfast of us lose focus.

So why doesn't this "attention cliff" carry over into our private lives? How can we hold endless conversations with friends or watch TV for hours on end?

It's because of what NLP practitioners refer to as the "pattern interrupt" principle.

A pattern interrupt is an event that breaks an established or continuous pattern. During a presentation, this could be a humorous anecdote, a shocking revelation, or an unexpected fact. With TV shows, it could be the flick to a new channel. The

pattern we've grown accustomed to immediately changes.

This interruption in pattern gives us a chance to renew our attention-batteries, providing a fresh burst of interest and excitement.

The problem is that during lessons, there are only so many authentic pattern interrupts you can introduce while maintaining focus on the specific topic. Teaching anecdotes and jokes are limited, and it's a chore to come up with new ones.

However, a cartoon can bridge this gap by acting as a powerful pattern interrupt. Students always appreciate cartoons, and they're a great way to refocus attention on the material.

**PowToon Tip: While you can use cartoons to keep students engaged during a lesson, they're just as effective (if not more so) in snagging their focus from the get-go!**

## **2. The Attention Lasso**

Have you ever seen a cowboy chase a wild stallion? Well—sometimes that's how it feels trying teaching young unbridled minds. A mad chase after an elusive target.

Energetic kids' imaginations run wild all the time; and it's up to the teacher to corral those minds and instill them with the love of learning.

That's no small order!



One of the most effective herding tools a cowboy has is a lasso...and one of the most effective student engagement tools a teacher has is what we call the “attention lasso”.

By starting off a lesson with a powerful “attention lasso” in the form of a cartoon, teachers can capture students’ attention and improve their chances of keeping it throughout the entire session.

**PowToon Tip: Intersperse your lessons with short, punchy animated videos that provide your students with a pattern interrupt from potentially complicated subjects and create an exciting reason to pay attention to the next burst of teaching material.**

### 3. STORIES SELL

It's no big secret that stories sell!

In education, just like business, people don't want to be overwhelmed with details. They want to be sold a vision of how a particular subject or issue will "benefit them." They want to see themselves being able to apply what they're learning and reap rewards...ideally *lots* of rewards.

However, it can be difficult to create a "real life character" as a viewer stand-in to convey a vision because of all the questions we would intuitively ask about this fictional person. But it's incredibly easy to communicate a vision with cartoons! Remember, a cartoon is all about the bigger picture and glossing over the details...



## 4. JOIN THE CONVERSATION IN THE VIEWER'S HEAD

Every one of us has a private mental conversation going on - ALL THE TIME! Whether we're aware of it or not!

Whenever we look at something, even just a glance, we hold a subliminal debate—like during the earlier example with the cartoon versus the real camera. Your subconscious mind is always discussing any sensory stimulus it receives.

Therefore, in creating any story, we should aim to tap into the conversation(s) going on in our students' heads.



Not only that, but we must **establish a dialogue** with students to make them pay attention. And cartoons, associated with harmless entertainment, are the perfect way to slip past any mental defenses and engage those internal dialogues.

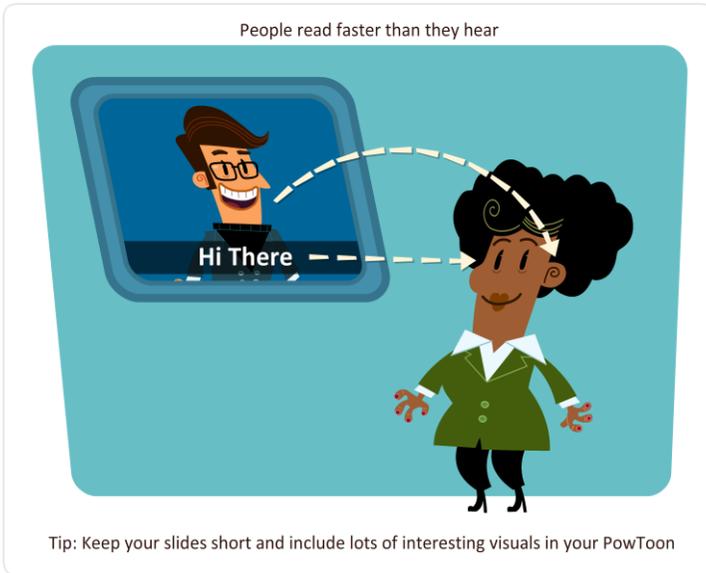
## 5. IMAGES VS TEXT

Naturally, we want students to pay attention with the logical part of their brains. That's why we use speech; it engages the frontal lobes, responsible for critical thinking and analysis. However, when we want to activate their emotional faculties...we must use images! And if we want to totally engage students, **coordinate images and speech with music** for full brain immersion.

Too much text in a presentation can be distracting. The human brain processes only 275 written words per minute, and processes only 150 audible words per minute. This means that lots of on-screen text can cause a mental disconnect or an attention lag.

Cartoons allow you to craft the perfect mix of text and audio (both spoken and musical) to fully absorb your class, without overwhelming them. Plus, it caters to a wider variety of learning styles at once!

**PowToon Tip: "Flavor" your cartoon with short phrases or words to emphasize emotional triggers. This can be a very powerful way to grab your viewers' attention at key moments.**



**Video Tip on using images:** [www.bit.ly/tip-images](http://www.bit.ly/tip-images)

**Video Tip on using text:** [www.bit.ly/tip-text](http://www.bit.ly/tip-text)

## 6. BEST LENGTH FOR ANIMATED VIDEO CLIPS

With the rise of the “social media generation,” the average attention span is now 90 seconds. That’s all the time you have to get a core message across and hook someone’s long-term attention—and **the first 7 seconds** are the most crucial!

Our research indicates...

Best cartoon length:     63-92 seconds

Critical start:             7-10 seconds

### How many words should your script have?

Clip Length	Number of Words
30 seconds	85
60 seconds	160
90 seconds	230

So the maximum optimal length for an animated video is around 90 seconds, and you should aim to get students' attention - hook them - within the first 7 seconds. This is when they decide whether the subject is important or interesting enough.



## 7. SHORT - SHORTER - SHORTEST

It isn't easy to write a compelling short story that crystallizes the essence of a subject into a few animated scenes. So it's okay to start out with a longer presentation, and then make it shorter. Draft your story, and then read it through and edit out the non-essentials. Then read it through again, and cut it down some more, until it's really, really short! You can always add items back later.



The motto in writing your script is: short - shorter - shortest! This way, you can crystallize the essence of what you want to say and avoid losing viewers because you're too long-winded. An additional benefit is that it forces you to be very clear about what you want to convey.

# PART 3

## HOW TO CREATE A COMPELLING LESSON USING CARTOONS

### THE SECRET RECIPE

#### Captivate - Engage - Call to Action

Few jobs require more creativity than teaching. In embracing their creative nature, teachers tend to reject a one-size-fits-all solution to education.. They understand that students have different learning styles. We recognized this as well, which is why PowToons are designed to offer teachers incredible flexibility in how they introduce, develop, and reinforce key concepts.

To enthuse students, the main objective is to create a story that leads them through the following three stages:

**Stage 1:** Capture their attention.

**Stage 2:** Engage them (and keep them engaged!).

**Stage 3:** Inspire positive action toward the subject or concept being taught.

Let's start creating a compelling lesson by asking three associated questions:

1. How do I capture students' attention in only 7 seconds?
2. How do I engage students so they will continue listening?
3. How do I inspire positive action?

As we talked about earlier, one of the most powerful psychological tools at our disposal is the ability to enter the conversation in a student's head. Here's how it breaks down:

## Question 1



### How do I capture students' attention in only 7 seconds?

When presented with educational material, the first internal question students will ask themselves is: "Do I actually care about this subject? Is it going to be interesting?"

So your first objective is to grab their attention and convince them that you're talking about something directly relevant to them.

How?

The best way is to create curiosity!

There are several ways to feed students' curiosity, and thus their attentiveness. Anything new, unforeseen, challenging, unusual, ambiguous, or that breaks boundaries will capture their attention. Wit and humor, for instance, is a great way to make them sit up and listen.

A cartoon can secure students' attention just by promising something fun—but this doesn't eliminate your need to continue generating interest. Even as they watch the cartoon, you have to ensure that your initial "call out," your opening line, makes them want to discover more.

Here's a bit of psychology: as soon as a student crosses the initial 7-second marker and makes the decision to continue listening, you've bought yourself a further 30 seconds of attention. This is when you must convince them that you're offering something relevant, either by revealing a solution or dazzling them with surprising knowledge.

Video Tip on getting attention: [www.bit.ly/tip-attentiongrab](http://www.bit.ly/tip-attentiongrab)

## **Question 2**

### **How do I engage students so they will continue to listen?**

Getting students focused is difficult enough. Anyone who has sat through any presentation or teaching session can relate.

### **Use Open Loops**

One of the most effective methods to get students to care about your message is to create an “open loop”.

An open loop, sometimes also called a “tension loop,” is a powerful rhetoric device that poses a question or states a problem that remains unresolved and holds the students’ attention until the teacher closes the loop.

A cartoon can be a powerful loop opener that easily carries over into classroom discussions.

### **Carrying over the conversation into the classroom**

Use open loops to ask the biggest topical question and roll the rest of the story out in an entertaining form—such as an investigation, a detective novel, or any context that’s appropriate for your class and student age level. This gives you the ability to transfer the conversation from the cartoon into the classroom at any point, while continuing to open new loops or resolve the problem whenever convenient.

## Question 3

### How do I inspire positive action?

At this stage, students will realize that:

- You're talking about something that intrigues them.
- You actually have something relevant and interesting to say
- There could be benefits to paying attention.

Now you need to present the explanation and focus on the benefits—after all, the student needs a vision of how this subject or concept will enhance their lives. As we established earlier, a cartoon is the perfect medium to convey a broader vision as opposed to a detailed “grown-up” picture.

So you must **clarify the action you want the student to take**. This is referred to as the Call-To-Action. This may seem simplistic, but you might be surprised how many teachers overlook this critical element!

The easiest way to achieve this is by stating outright what students should do next: take out pencil and paper, open a textbook, get out a calculator, do additional research, or create their own PowToon, etc...

**Tip: A great way to get students to enjoy the subject matter is to invite them to question or respond to it with a PowToon of their own!**

## **A creative outlet**

PowToon provides a creative outlet for educators and students to work individually or collaboratively on projects. As a dynamic, interactive, and online resource, PowToon enhances and supports teaching and learning. You now have the power of creativity to help meet your students' educational needs.

The engine of student learning that you're driving simply hasn't been in top gear---until now.

**Video Tip on calls to action:** [www.bit.ly/tip-actioncall](http://www.bit.ly/tip-actioncall)

## **How to Create an Awesome Animated Video**

Now that we've seen the psychological principles and main strategies behind using cartoons in the classroom, how do you actually go about creating one? What are the individual steps to making a PowToon while ensuring you don't overlook anything important?

Fortunately, we've laid everything out so you can easily use PowToons to make teaching more engaging, less stressful, and more effective!

Part 4 of this book will guide you through two main stages:

1. Developing a compelling short story about the concept or subject you wish to teach, and
2. Turning this story into an awesome animated video clip using PowToon!

Shall we begin?

# PART 4

## How to create an awesome animated Video: An easy 6-step Process



### Step 1 - Write an awesome script or short story

If you want to capture your students' full attention, draft a script that covers the following bases:

1. Make it clear who you are talking to and why the subject is relevant to them by showing a real-life, practical application.
2. Create curiosity by opening a loop.
3. Indicate that you have a way to close the loop with a resolution...but only if the student remains attentive!
4. Present your solution and clearly show its benefits.
5. Establish a clear call-to-action.

**PowToon Tip: Structure your story as a discovery trip, a mystery, or a mini detective novel. Students will be confronted with a question or problem and remain engaged until the mystery is resolved. This way you're also leaving the**

option open to continue the story “offline” by embedding a call-to-action and using the inspiration to discuss the subject in class.

## **Step 2 – Storyboard ( Creating Scenes )**

We now have our short story about the subject we want to cover. But how do we turn the text into a visual script?

Easy! We divide the text into logical sequences of short scenes and think of potential visuals that could go with them – we call this process storyboarding.

So, divide the script into main scenes, and spend some time determining the best visuals that might represent the concepts you wish to convey.

Remember, the result doesn't have to be perfect at this stage! The visuals should simply act as the emotional support for the words; so if you're talk about "confusion," an image of a confused guy is all you may need.

### **The PowToon Software**

From this point onwards, we'll be interacting directly with the PowToon software. As an educator or student, you may qualify for a free account through your teachers association, so please get yours now if you don't already have one.

## Step 3 - Voiceover Guide / Background Music

It may seem counter-intuitive to start with the voiceover instead of the imagery. It's only natural to think: "I'll do all the visuals first, and then I can time my voiceover to coincide with what's happening onscreen"—but, in reality, this is a recipe for headaches.

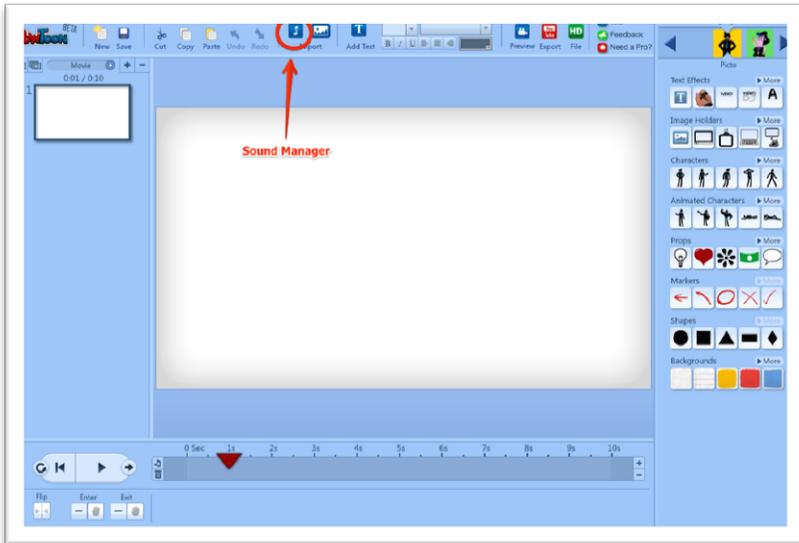
When you record a script voiceover first, you get much more accurate timing of the final story versus choosing the visuals while guessing the timing (and having to retime everything later).

Your personal voiceover is called a “scratch track”; so don't worry if it sounds scratchy and unprofessional. We just want something basic. Remember, this is mainly a TIMING GUIDE. *(Read further for a way to achieve more polished voiceover results)*

**Tip: It's much easier to record the voiceover, get it right, and then time the visuals to the story.**

Ok - so we need to either choose a background track for our music or record a voiceover guide (or both). This means we need an MP3 file of the TEXT PARTS of the script read out as they will appear in our cartoon.

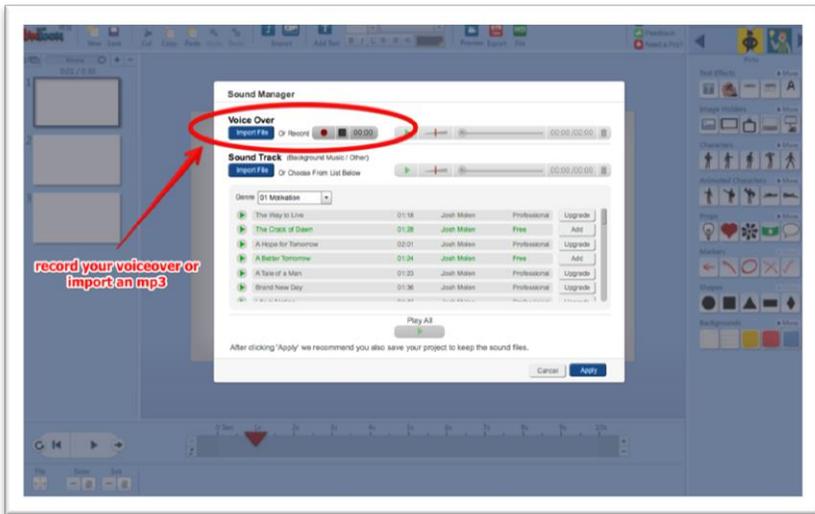
Let's get started by going to the Sound Manager in PowToon and recording our voice.



Once the sound manager is open, you can either upload (import) an MP3 that you recorded earlier, or you can record one yourself right now by clicking the record button.

Don't worry about making mistakes or getting the voiceover to sound professional; that's not the aim here.

Here's the interface you'll see when you open the sound manager:

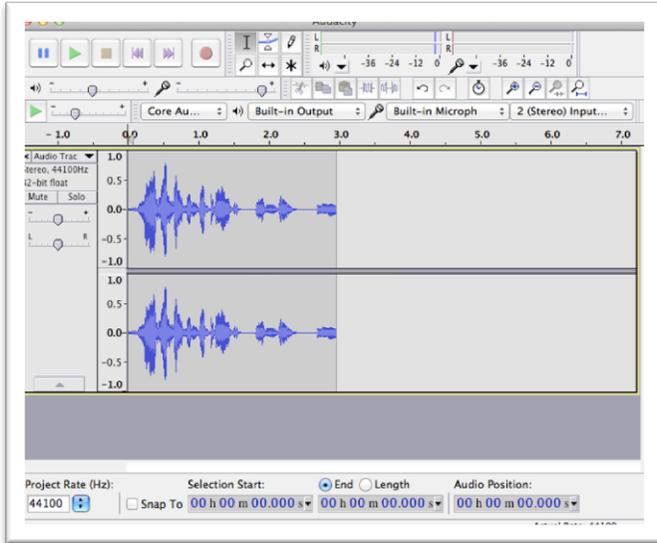


You can record and re-record as many times as you like. Every time you record a new version, it will overwrite the previous one.

The sound manager also allows you to choose a background track from the provided soundtrack list, and lets you import a second MP3 track of your choice (to stay fair to artists, please only use licensed or creative commons music). You can regulate the voiceover volume and the background track separately in the dashboard to get better results.

If you would like to record and edit a voiceover or soundtrack outside of PowToon and subsequently "import" it, here's a tool I absolutely love and strongly recommend! It's free, open source, and simply amazing:

Audacity: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> - you can achieve professional quality using this tool.

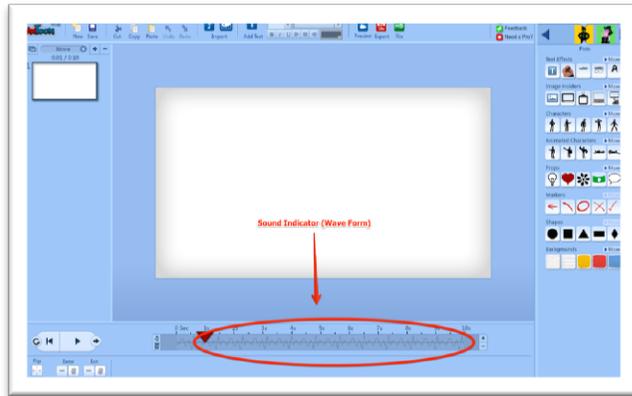


Here's a screenshot of my scratch track/timing guide based on our Startup PowToon script (I missed a bunch of words and mispronounced others, but that's ok)

Hear my Voiceover for the Startup Script:

[www.bit.ly/voice-over-powtoon](http://www.bit.ly/voice-over-powtoon)

Now, click APPLY and your soundtrack appears inside of PowToon's timeline as a wave.



## The Professional Voiceover

If you wanted to use your PowToon for a system-wide or community event, for example, you can choose to use a professional. A professional voiceover can make an enormous difference in a presentation and give your video a higher quality "finish."

If you don't readily know someone who does this type of work, here are some voiceover source options ranging from \$5 to \$150

[www.fiverr.com](http://www.fiverr.com) – \$5-\$25

[www.voicebunny.com](http://www.voicebunny.com) – \$70-\$150

We consciously chose not to include a text-to-voice function in PowToon because it generates those "barely" bearable robotic-human voices.

However, if you want to try it anyway, here's a list of the "Top 10 Web-based Services For Text-To-Speech Conversion":  
[www.bit.ly/text-to-speech-tools](http://www.bit.ly/text-to-speech-tools)

Our next steps are to create enough slides to hold all the sound, and then time the slides to match the different scenes.

## **Step 4 - Dividing the Slides**

### **Slides are Scenes**

Creating a PowToon is a little like directing a mini-movie. Every slide in your PowToon represents a scene that you have to equip with the right sound and visuals.

In Step 3, we created a scratch track (rough voiceover) to go with our PowToon, and our next step involves creating enough slides to accommodate the sound track.

PowToon's default slide length is 10 seconds and you have a + / - on the side of the timeline to lengthen or shorten it. Each slide in PowToon is limited to a maximum of 20 seconds.

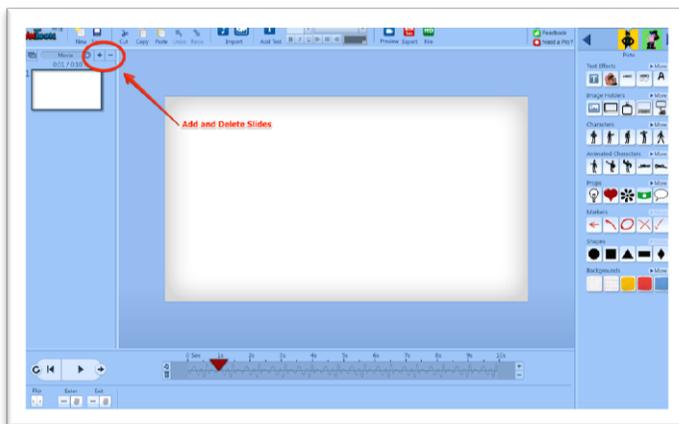
The reason for this limitation is that staring at the same scene for longer than 20 seconds in a short clip quickly becomes tedious. So this is PowToon's way of gently nudging our users to shake things up! Change the visuals if you don't want your audience to fall asleep.

Now to the practicalities:

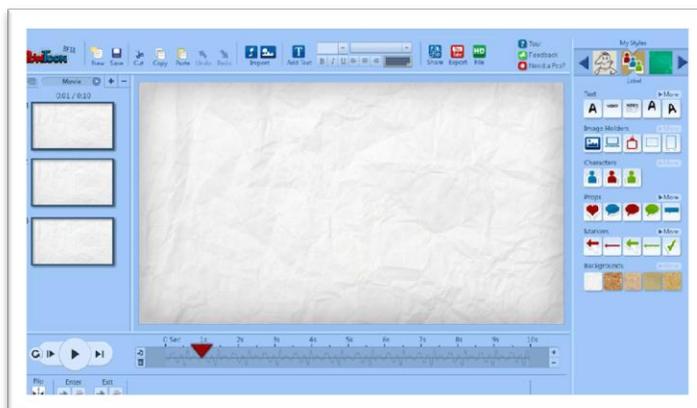
Let's assume we have a voiceover that is 97 seconds long. We'll start with 10 slides (10 seconds each, making a total of 100 seconds).

### **Adding Slides**

You add or remove slides by clicking the + and - in the slides panel. In our case we click + ten times.



Your Powtoon Editor will contain 10 empty slides once you're done. 10 empty slides.



Clicking on any one of the slides will show you the timeline specific to that slide. Pressing Play will - at this stage - just play the sound track of this isolated slide, since there are no visuals yet.

## **CREATING SCENES - Fitting the Sound to the Slides**

TERMINOLOGY: Okay, we have to spend a moment on proper

terminology. We're dealing with a short video here; this means we're creating a series of scenes.

There are three elements to each scene:

1. The voiceover (or sound track): What's being said?
2. The visuals: The emotional and visual triggers.
3. The timing: When things happen - and for how long.

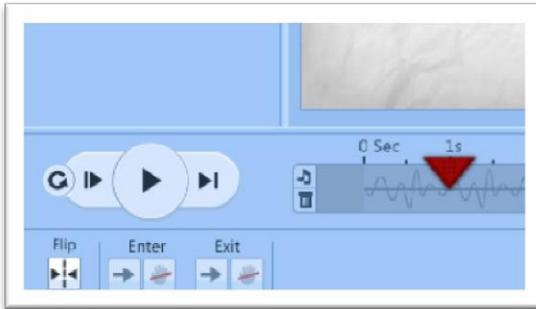
So the way we create a scene is by matching our voiceover with the appropriate visual and timing the whole thing to work together seamlessly.

Our first step in this process is to adjust the length of each slide to fit the actual length of the scenes we envision. That's actually the reason for the timing guide (or scratch track) that we created in step 2. It allows us to get our basic timing right.

For this purpose, we are going to listen to the whole voiceover from beginning-to-end inside PowToon and adjust the length of the slides to work alongside it.

Let me take this opportunity to introduce you to PowToon's Play Controls.

## PowToon Play Controls



**Play:** play from the playhead until the end of the entire PowToon or until you pause



The Play button will play from the red, triangular playhead, right through to the end of the PowToon or until you stop it by clicking Pause. This allows you to see how several scenes work together.

The playhead indicates where you are on the timeline. In the above image, the playhead is on Second 1 and moves through the seconds when you press Play.

### **Pause: pause or stop**



The Play button turns into a Pause button while it is playing. You can pause the PowToon at any time by clicking this button.

### **Play Slide: play from the beginning of this slide until the end of this slide**



This button saves you the trouble of having to drag the playhead to zero every time you want to review the scene you are working on.

### **Play to Slide End: play from playhead until the end of the slide**



You mainly use the Play to Slide End button while working on one particular slide because it will stop at the end of the slide without moving to the next.

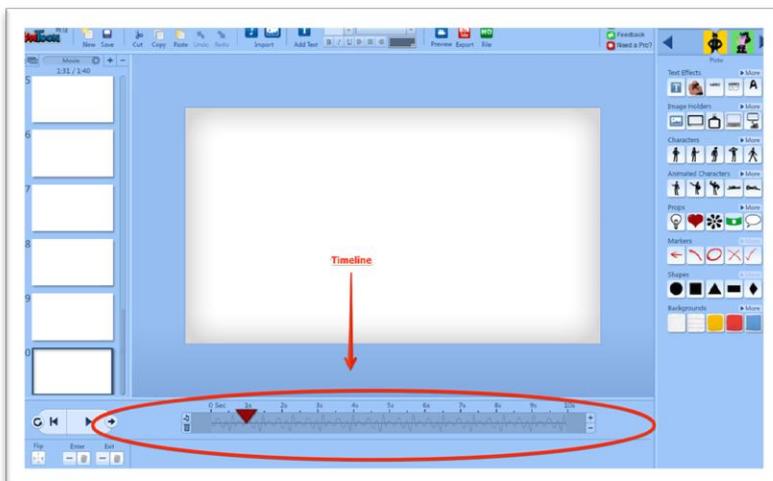
### **Play All: play entire PowToon from start to finish**



This button goes back to the beginning of the very first slide and plays right through to the end of the PowToon, or until you click pause. This is useful when you want to review the work you've done so far.

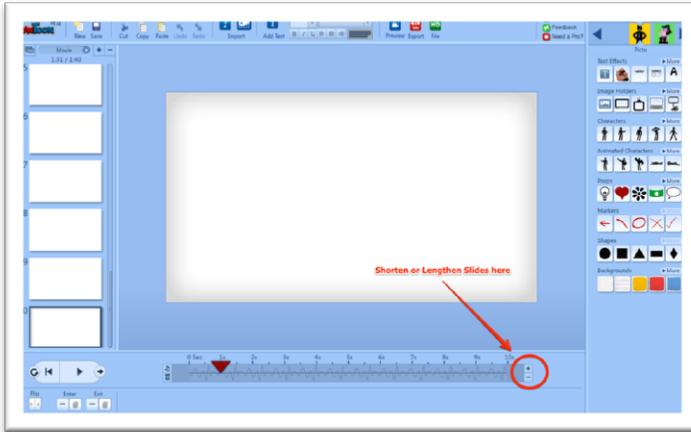
Sorry to go all technical on you, but there's one more thing I need to show before we can do the fun stuff. The timeline.

### **The Timeline**



The timeline indicates the length of a slide and as the red

triangular playhead moves along, it also indicates where in the time sequence we are.



If you want to lengthen or shorten a slide, you have to press the + or - on the right hand side. The default slide length is 10 seconds and you can lengthen it to a maximum 20 seconds and shorten it to a minimum of 1 second.

### **Dividing the voiceover into scenes**

Now we have all the tools to divide our voiceover/timing guide into scenes. The best-practice way of dividing the voiceover is by using the following buttons:

#### **Step 1: Press Play**



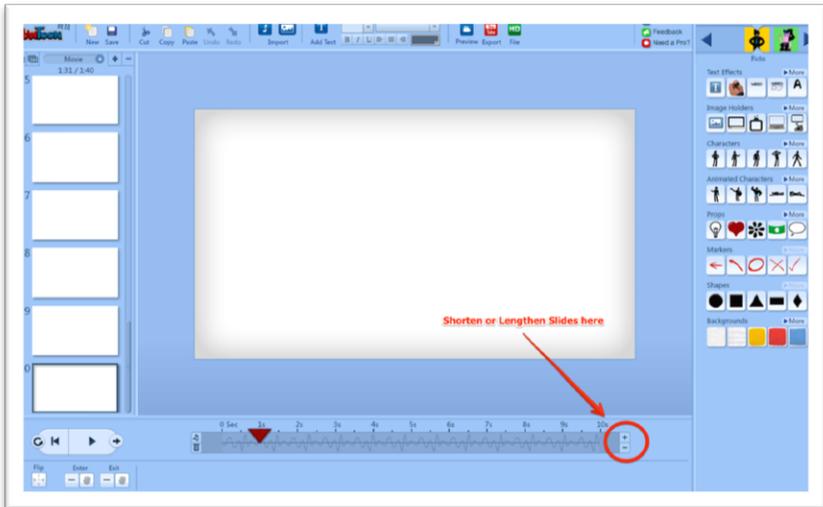
This will go through all the slides until you press pause.

#### **Step 2: Press Pause**



Pause the playback once you figure out where the cut off point for this particular scene is.

### Step 3: Press +/- Slide Length



Add or delete seconds to match the voice timing. You will find the voiceover continuing on the next slide once you have finished.

### Step 4: Rinse and Repeat

Move on to the next slide and repeat Steps 1 through 4 until your voiceover is distributed across as many slides as you need.

Now we have the length of all the slides coordinated with the voiceover. We know the length of our individual scenes and can move on to the next stage, which is to add the visuals.

## **Step 5 - Populate the Slides with Visuals**

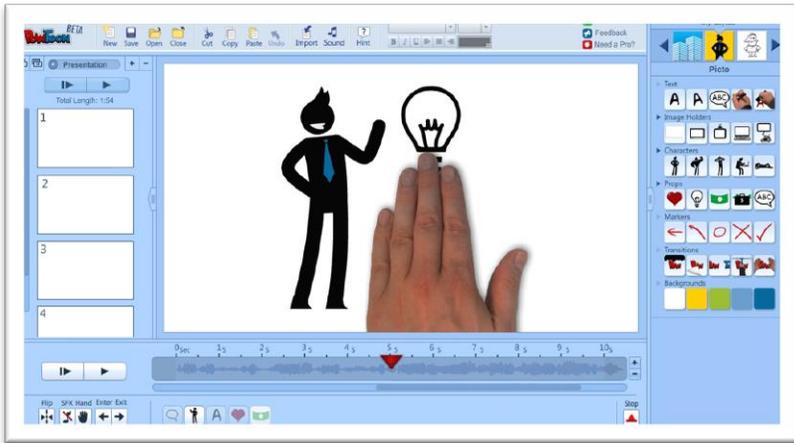
This is where we add animations, graphics, background, props, images, and characters to our slides/scenes.

To harness the maximum power of cartoons, we want to convey the message with as many graphic images and as little text as possible. This way the audience doesn't sit there reading the whole time (unless this is the effect you're after) and it doesn't overwhelm students with information.

Images are powerful conveyors of emotions. If a character in your story is sad, it's enough to display him/her in a sad pose without any text at all.

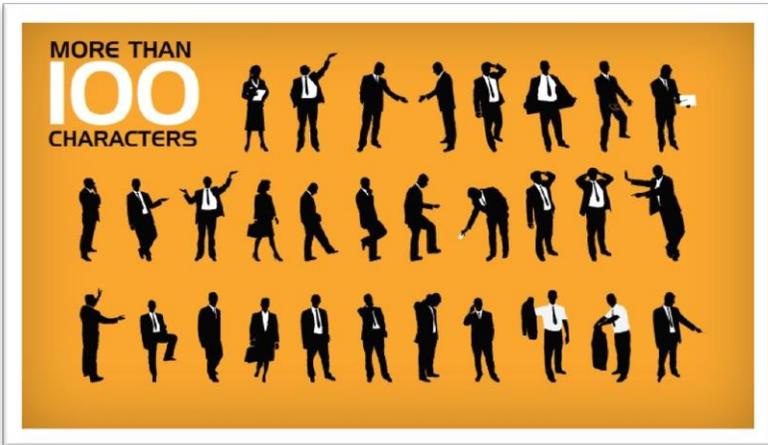
An effective way to use text is by bringing individual words to life by making them appear in time with the voiceover. Use words as "emotional triggers" to emphasize your message.

PowToon has a large library of characters, poses and props that you may want to use for this purpose:



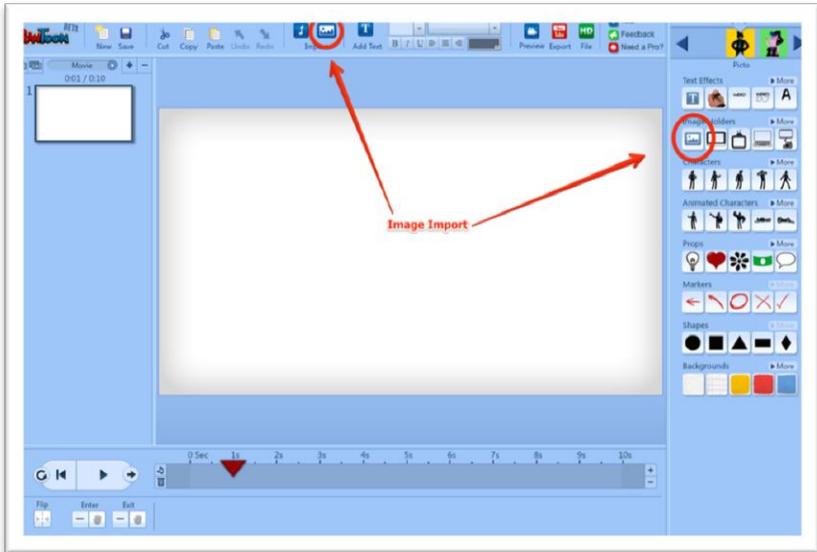
## Some of PowToon's Styles





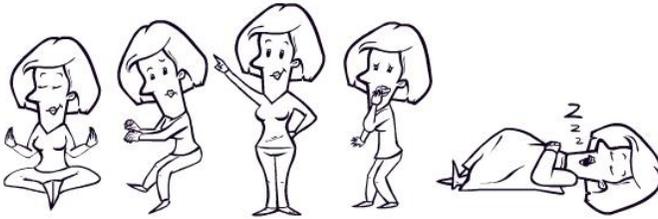
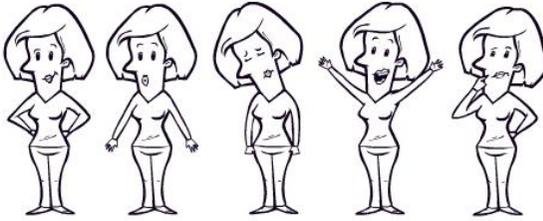
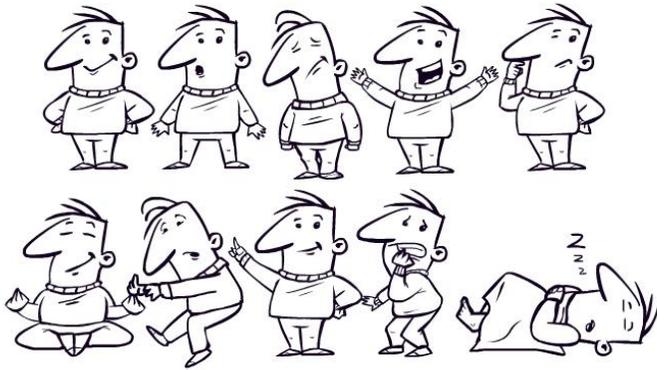


You can easily bring your own images into PowToon by clicking the "Image Import" icon:



We will continue the demonstration by using the Marker Style. We could make it more colorful using another style, but we really like this style's minimalism which also works well with photos of real people, an element we may want to use in this PowToon.





## Constructing the scene:

We'll walk you through the construction of a scene, providing you with the skill to construct your own.

Our subject? "Great inventors who changed the world!" Our story revolves around showing the impact a great idea can have. We may want to start our story by building a relationship between a famous inventor and the student...

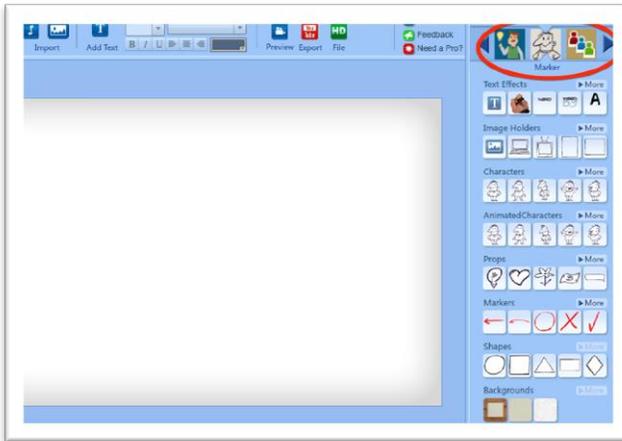
## SCENE

SCRIPT TEXT / VOICEOVER	VISUAL
When was the last time you had a really great idea?	Thinking Guy has an idea.

Description: I would like a "Thinking Guy" to be brought into the scene at second 1 scratching his chin. Then "eureka!" A light bulb appears and he becomes super happy.

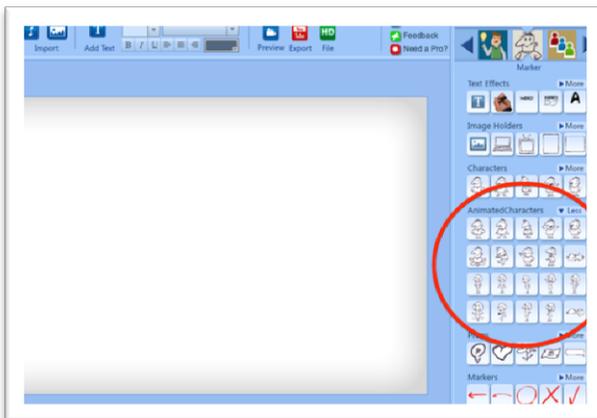
These are the steps we should make in the PowToon editor:

## Style



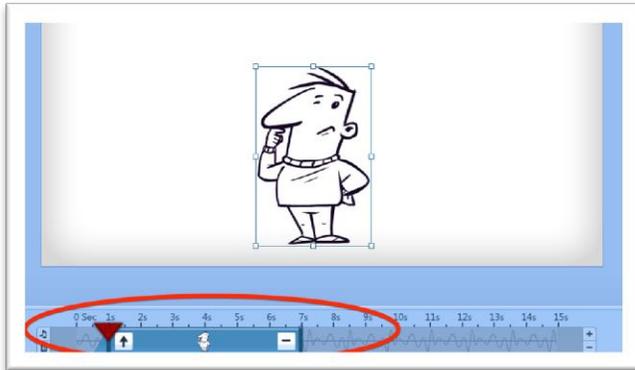
**Step 1:** Go to top left to choose a style. This will open the style library with all the characters and props. Choose the marker style.

## Library



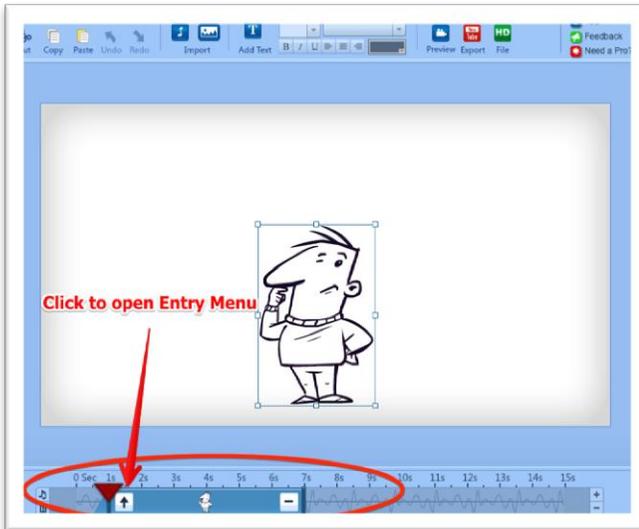
**Step 2:** Open the **animated characters** section and choose the "Thinking Guy" - you can either click him or drag him onto the screen. The character will appear on the screen and a duration bar will appear in the timeline starting wherever the playhead is located.

## Duration Bar



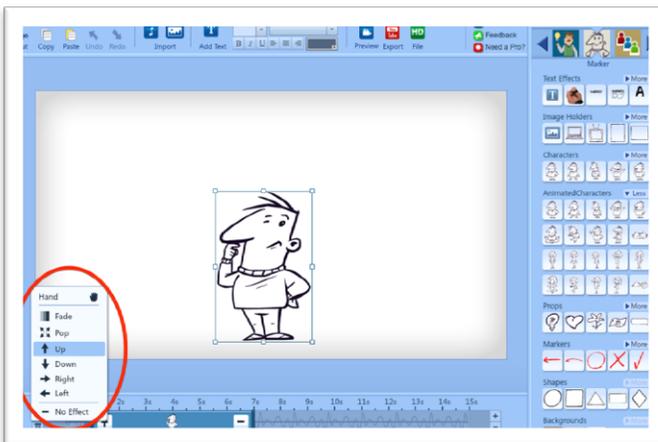
**Step 3:** Now "Thinking Guy" is on the screen and we should look at the duration bar to see when he enters and exists. In this case, he arrives on the screen at second 1 (where the playhead was originally located) and leaves at second 7. You may have noticed the blue triangle on the left side of the duration bar: This indicates that there is a half a second entrance effect, and looking at the symbol, the up arrow indicates that the object is brought into the screen from below.

## Effects Indicator



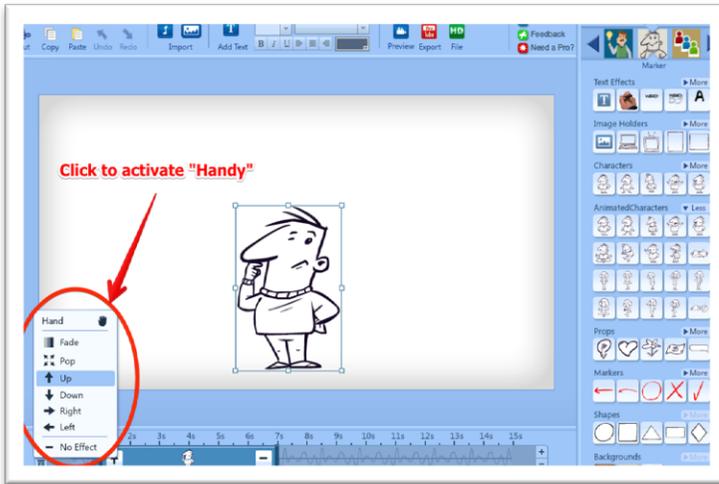
To change the entrance effect, click on the symbol and the "Effects Menu" pops up.

## Effects Menu



The effect menu allows you to choose which entrance effect you want this character to have.

## Handy - PowToon's Magic Hand



The effects menu also allows you to choose whether you want the object to be brought in using "Handy," our clever little hand.



**Step 4:** Choose an entry and exit effect for the object and adjust the length of time the object remains on screen by dragging the duration bar's ends.

Let your voiceover guide your timing; it allows you to accurately assess when an object arrives and leaves the scene.

In my case, I want a light bulb to appear and the character's pose to change to "happy." This pose switch-over is best achieved by overlaying the two images and making the old image disappear while the new one appears.

### **This is how it's done:**

We've already assigned the "From Below" and "Handy" effect to "Thinking Guy's" entry; now we assign the "No-Effect" to his exit, which means that he will just disappear once his duration bar ends. We now shorten the duration bar to end at second 2. Which means that the character is scratching his chin for 1 second (from sec1 to sec2).

Now we drag the "Happy Guy" character from the "animated characters" library section to the scene - placing him directly over "Thinking Guy" and set the duration bar to start at second 2. We assign a "No-Effect" to the entry which means that as "Thinking Guy" disappears, "Happy" appears.

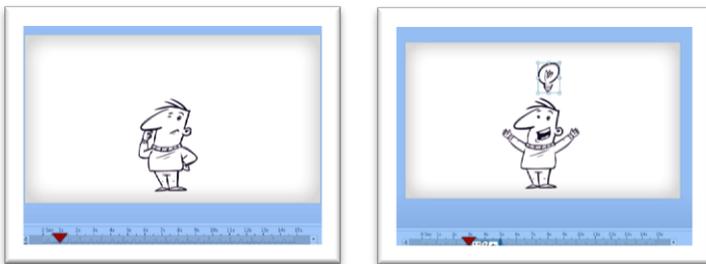
Now all we have to do is adjust the length of Happy's duration bar to end at second 5 and give him our chosen exit effect.

Voila! That's our main character taken care of.

But we forgot one thing.... We wanted a light bulb to appear, indicating that our Guy has a great idea.

The voice guide indicates that the right time for this is at second 3. So we drag the light bulb from the Props section and adjust the duration bar to "Pop-In" at second 3.

We have our first scene!



Review the steps we took to create the first scene:

1. Drag "Thinking" into screen - Choose entry/exit effect and adjust duration bar
2. Drag "Happy" into scene - Choose entry/exit effect and adjust duration bar
3. Drag "Light bulb" into scene - Choose entry/exit effect and adjust duration bar

I know it took a few pages to explain but, in reality, this first scene should take less than 2 minutes to complete! If you stay focused, you can have your whole PowToon done in 30 minutes FLAT!

Okay, now you have to do the same for the rest of the scenes, populating the slides and timing the images. We aren't aiming at perfect matches between voice and imagery at this stage, just a rough match... we'll do the fine tuning in Step 6.

Once all slides are populated, we have the first draft of our PowToon.

The process of creating a PowToon is incredibly fun, but at the same time it forces you to be very clear about what you want to convey to your audience. This helps both you and them to really GET what you want to say.

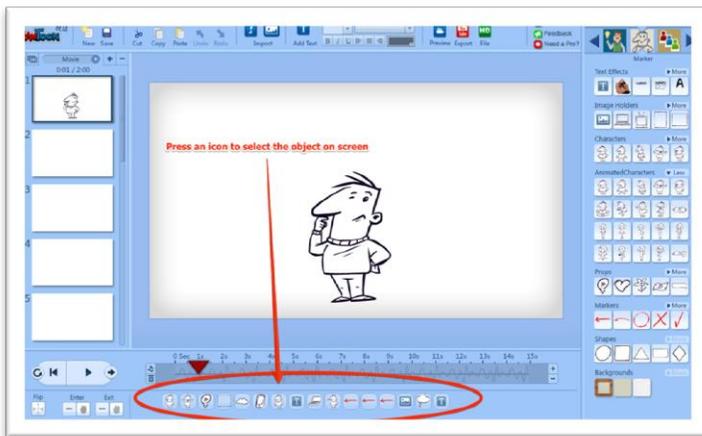
## Step 6 - Timing

This last step can actually have the most significant effect on the “professional” look and feel of your final result.

Along with a professional voiceover, this is where you can really make your PowToon shine.

We go through the whole PowToon, checking that we have all the timing right and making last changes and additions.

The PowToon timeline and effects/duration bars are designed to help you easily adjust the appearance and timing of all the elements on the screen.



The icons under the timeline allow you to select any object that appears in this scene without having to scroll through the entire timeline.

So let's start off by playing the whole PowToon from the start and making notes where things don't quite match.

## Play All: play entire PowToon from start to finish



You can now listen to the voiceover running in the background and make sure that all the visual elements reflect what you hear. The more accurately you time this, the more awesome the final result!

If you get to a place where the voiceover and imagery don't match - or something is missing - hit the pause button and adjust the duration bar of the objects in question. If you feel the scene is too short, add the necessary number of seconds to the timeline.

That's it! That's how you create an awesome animated PowToon that captivates, engages, and calls students to action.

We realize cartoons aren't the only teaching method you'll utilize. However, we believe they can be a useful tool to add to your instructional arsenal, helping you more effectively give students a high-quality education. Much success and happy Powtooning!

## Artistic Limitations?

When we set out to create PowToon, we wanted to build a tool that enabled non-technical, non-design people to achieve exceptional, creative animation results. Granted, we didn't aim to replace animation or design studios, but we did have a vision of empowering any user to achieve awesome final products—results typically unattainable without flash software knowledge, design savvy, or animation skills.

So we needed to equip PowToon with many of the basic building blocks of design and animation, and make them so seamless that they appear almost nonexistent. This way, they wouldn't distract from the actual task at hand—that of creating an awesome video clip or animated presentation.

For example: Handy – PowToon's helping hand - may seem to be just a hand that is attached to an object, but in reality there's a complex background algorithm that smoothes the entry and exit of the hand and creates a realistic path so the motion doesn't look robotic or strange. It's the same with every other object within PowToon – the greatest effort has been made to make the design and animation hurdle disappear.



At the same time, limitations had to be set that would stop people from getting frustrated by indecision or confusion.

In the beautiful words of Antoine de Saint-Exupery (Author of The Little Prince):

"In anything at all, perfection is finally attained not when there is no longer anything to add, but when there is no longer anything to take away."

We've made the effort to take away as much complexity as possible so that educators can simply concentrate on getting their concepts or subjects across to students as easily as possible...

Now it's up to you to go and create something awesome!

# BONUS CHAPTER

## **The Current State of Education and How PowToon Can Help** **By: JC Bowman**

Our schools and our educators are preparing our students for the future. We understand the moral and ethical responsibility to provide a quality education for every single child who comes to the door of our public schools every single day. Education is a parental right, a state and local responsibility, and a national strategic interest. Not only are students learning basic subject matter, but the formal education they receive provides skills and preparation necessary to thrive in a modern society.

Education is also a critical component for America's future. Without an educated workforce, our citizens simply cannot compete in a global economy. Those that lack a high school education will have significantly diminished lifetime earnings, creating increased social costs as well. Every state across the nation needs an education system that provides all of our students with the skills that are necessary to compete and succeed in life. Technology provides tools that help motivate and enables students to work together. The teacher is still the most important factor. However, it is imperative that educators are able to stay on the cutting edge of technology as both a medium and an interactive tool.

Recently, a colleague of mine, Jay P. Greene, wrote in a WSJ Op-Ed that "...we need to substitute technology for labor in education like we have in almost every other industry to improve productivity. But in public education we have been doing the reverse, hiring more, lower quality teachers and failing to develop and implement cost-effective technology." While I think he dismisses the labor factor too easily, Greene is dead-on in his assertion that technology is essential. Given

that children grow up with technology in their homes and the fact that cost-effective accessibility of devices and broadband continues to increase, as educators, we must engage our students in the ways they have been conditioned to best receive information.

Obviously, the cost of the latest technology and ease of use are two important issues facing both educators and school districts. In the past, competing computer platforms have been an obstacle, but with the rise of the cloud and “software as a service” (SaaS), issues with compatibility and interactivity are largely being combated. We are seeing various software offerings release cloud-based SaaS versions including Adobe Creative Cloud, Google Docs, Quickbooks, and more. It is clear that the digital age and era of education must be embraced for maximum effectiveness and strong student engagement.

Let’s not forget that education is competing for attention. Just as students have been conditioned by technology, this technology has also delivered more engaging entertainment than ever before. In an article in Forbes, education commentator Nikhil Goyal said, “American schools are failing, because they are suppressing children by forcing them into a compliance-based model of education. All children are natural learners. We’re born with curiosity, creativity, wonder, and intrinsic motivation. Research shows that with more years of formal schooling, those very qualities are stunted tremendously.”

## **Issues Facing Educators & How PowToon Can Help**

Technology has unquestionably impacted K-16 education despite being faced with challenges including hesitancy of educators, lack of training, as well as a lack of support or funding. As a result, implementation is often hampered. Policymakers and stakeholders understand that every classroom and every school is different, just as each

community is also different. Without outside assistance, communities across America simply cannot keep up with technology challenges, either from an economic standpoint or an access standpoint. That is why open-source and donated cloud technology has begun to find greater accepted use in classrooms across America.

For example, my organization, Professional Educators of Tennessee, places a premium on professional development (PD). Part of our advocacy with policy makers involves requesting more PD to ensure adequate, continuing professional development for teachers who are required to incorporate new technologies into their classrooms. Too often technology is integrated into a school system without an implementation plan, thus frustrating educators, shortchanging students, and wasting system resources.

PowToon's commitment to provide technology to educators, as well as their customized tutorials can help educators more effectively integrate these new cloud-based capabilities into their teaching methods. This will help ensure that American students make progress each year and graduate from school prepared to succeed in college and in a modern workforce. Of course, this requires that educators think outside the box in aiding their students, putting them at the frontline of public education with a blend of both formal and informal learning. The technology offered by this tool helps deliver personalized, differentiated instruction.

## **How Can It Be Used?**

Teaching is an honorable profession, and few jobs require more responsibility, more qualifications, and more creativity. In embracing the creative nature of the profession, teachers tend to reject a one-size-fits-all solution to education. They understand students learn in different styles. PowToon offer teachers more creativity and flexibility in student instruction

to help introduce, develop, and reinforce key education concepts. As I reviewed PowToon for educators, I thought of how I would utilize the tool in a classroom setting.

For example, you could use PowToon to assist with math concepts by providing opportunities for students to observe critical features or attributes of shape, size, position in space, length, etc., or explain to students why it is advisable to learn multiplication tables.

In Music, PowToon could be used to discuss the purposes for music in society or explaining how Art is used in the lives of ordinary people.

Explaining the results of the signing of the Declaration of Independence or Emancipation Proclamation could be addressed by PowToon for History. And teachers could compare technology today with advances made during the Industrial Revolution using PowToon.

Regardless of the type of assignment, good writing has several common elements PowToon could be used to illustrate idioms, sarcasm, hyperbole, inferences, and different elements of writing. Imagine teaching focus; organization, development; clarity, concision, precision; and, grammatical correctness and the avoidance of spelling and typographical errors by using cartoons and leveraging them for the classroom.

The demands on our schools have increased exponentially. Educators are engaged in taking responsibility for their chosen profession, because they understand the communities in which they work and live. Most educators will do everything in their power to preserve their classroom as a beacon of hope and a place of opportunity for every student who is willing to work hard to improve his or her life by means of a high-quality education. Any innovation can be expected to result in a

learning curve. However, cloud technology, such as that provided by PowToon, can help make education “robust and relevant to the real world.” As American students become fully prepared for their future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.

# IS THERE A SHORTCUT?

If this whole process is too complicated or cumbersome for you and all you want is a great animated video or presentation without the hassle of doing it yourself...then you aren't alone! In fact we anticipated this! We recognize that some people just want an animated video created for them at an affordable price, rather than the usual \$2,000 - \$25,000 it often costs.

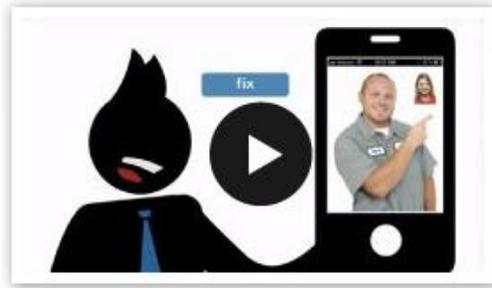
If you would like a PowToon, but don't have the time or the energy to make one yourself, you can have someone create a PowToon for you (or your business) for around \$400 - \$700. Just go to the PowToon Studio and ask a professional for help: [www.powtoon.com/studio](http://www.powtoon.com/studio)

They'll write the script, arrange the voiceover, and create an awesome PowToon for you.

Here are some examples of what Master PowToonists from the PowToon Studio have created.



[www.bit.ly/studio-01](http://www.bit.ly/studio-01)



[www.bit.ly/studio-02](http://www.bit.ly/studio-02)



[www.bit.ly/studio-03](http://www.bit.ly/studio-03)

We want to see every child achieve his or her full potential and succeed in the 21st Century. So, whether you become a PowToonist yourself or hire a Master PowToonist to create visually stunning, animated presentations for you, we wish you happy powtooning and much success as you educate your students. We invite you to share your PowToons with us and others in a collaborative spirit!

# A Personal Note from the Authors

In the end, we desire that all students embrace a love of learning. Research supports the theory that students who develop a love of learning at an early age continue the process throughout their lives. Those who love to learn are normally more successful, interesting, and content as adults.



We put a lot of effort into developing this product and writing this book in the hope of giving you a tremendous amount of value. And we are giving it to you for FREE. We want to thank you for accepting this gift and hope you make the most of it. We've even included

a special link to a bonus exclusive to the book readers!

<http://www.powtoon.com/cartoonmarketing/special/>

Education sparks creativity. It motivates and teaches students how to think for themselves. It is a torch passed from one generation to the next! We salute those educators who are passing the torch!

*Ilya Sitalnik*      *Jon Barker*

P.S. We would love to hear your thoughts and comments on the book or how you're using PowToons in your class, please write directly to us: [education@powtoon.com](mailto:education@powtoon.com)

## About the Authors



Founder and CEO of PowToon, Ilya Spitalnik is an internationally recognized thought leader, keynote speaker and advisor on best business practices in the Google Era.

His passion for entrepreneurship inspired him to leave a successful career in banking in order to concentrate on building startup enterprises across numerous sectors including real estate, information technology, software and energy.

Alongside his in depth marketing expertise gained from hands-on roles in dozens of online projects, Spitalnik has developed a proprietary Vision Selling™ methodology which empowers non-sales people to master the art of closing a deal in an ethical way.

His most recent venture PowToon, an animated presentation software company that gives anyone the ability to easily convey their message in a dynamic and powerful format, has grown at a lightning pace. PowToon embodies Spitalnik's vision for tech solutions that truly make a difference in both the personal and professional arena. You can contact him directly at [ilya@powtoon.com](mailto:ilya@powtoon.com).



John C. “J. C.” Bowman is the Executive Director & CEO of Professional Educators of Tennessee, a member-owned, member-governed professional association for educators.

Dr. Bowman has an extensive background developing legislative priorities, evaluating existing education policies, and coordinating political activities with policymakers and lawmakers. He formerly served as Director of the Center for Education Innovation at Florida State University. In addition, he previously served as the Chief Policy Analyst of the Education Policy Unit for Florida Governor Jeb Bush, as well as at the Florida Department of Education.

A popular speaker, he has appeared on radio and television shows, and been featured at events on the local, state and national level. In addition he has authored numerous academic studies and articles for various organizations and publications. He has outreach in faith and community initiatives through EPPC Global Management, which works with non-profit organizations across the globe. This includes working with AIDS organizations in Botswana and character education programs in Rwanda and the Congo.

J. C. and his wife are the proud parents of two grown daughters, two sons-in-law, and four grandchildren. They reside in Franklin, Tennessee. You can contact him directly at [jc.bowman@proedtn.org](mailto:jc.bowman@proedtn.org)