



Assignment 1: Research and Planning Theme

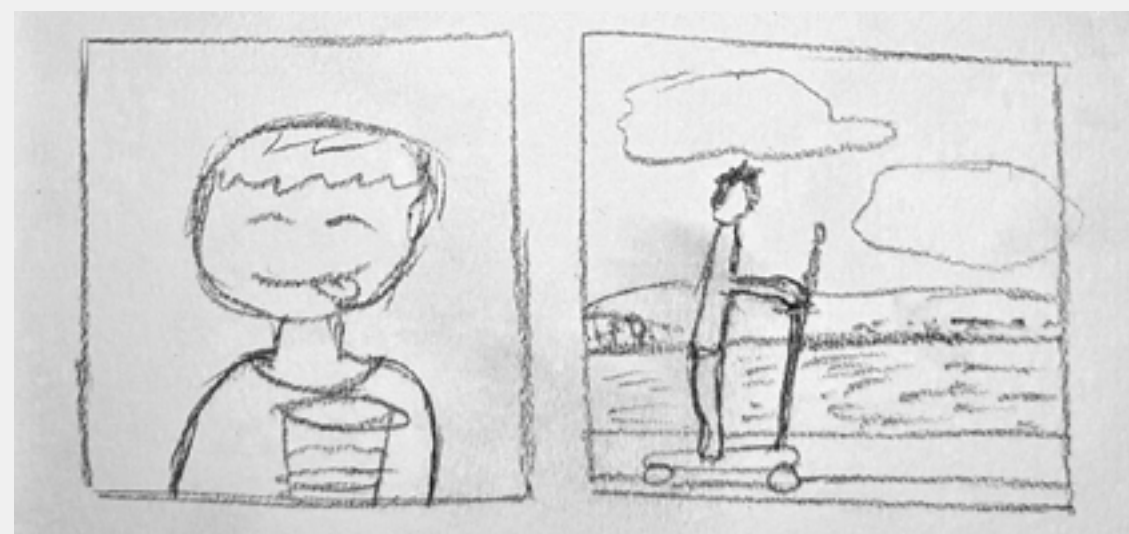
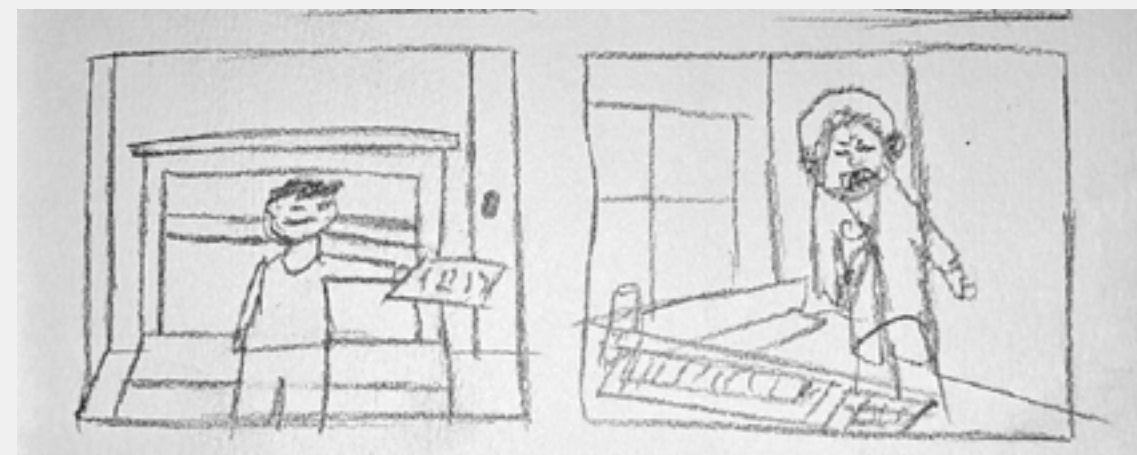
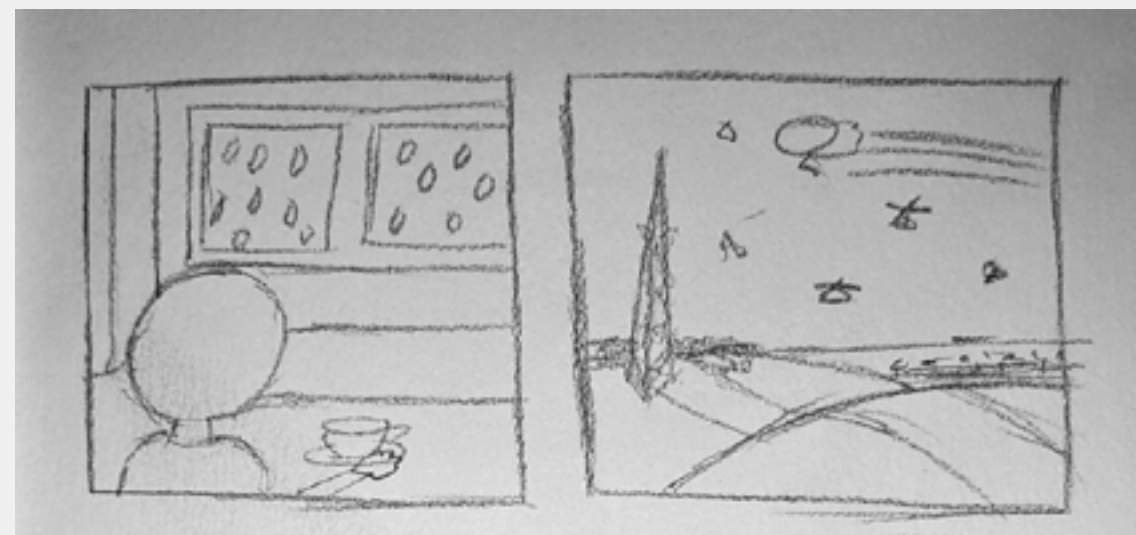
I decided to go with “calm” as the theme for this assignment. None of the previous themes I’d thought of were going to work for various reasons.

When I think “calm”, I think of something smooth, floaty and creamy, like a good coffee or a beer. Soft rain is another option, which is enjoyable if I want it to be.

I guess lo-fi music is calming too.

Libraries are also an example of this, because they’re quiet environments.





Assignment 1: Research and Planning Subject Ideas

Rather than wasting time making a draft animatic in Adobe Animate, I made a simple one-frame sketch for each idea. Hopefully these convey the ideas I had well enough. They do for me at least.

Week 1: weather

Drinking coffee in a library with soft rain outside

Week 2: space

Night sky above Mount Kaukau with a shooting star

Week 3: win

(Different from sketch) Running and winning a race.

Week 4: dancing

Marc Rebillet's smooth moves

Week 5: face

Drinking warm chocolate milk and smiling with fuzzy graphics flowing out

Week 6: freedom

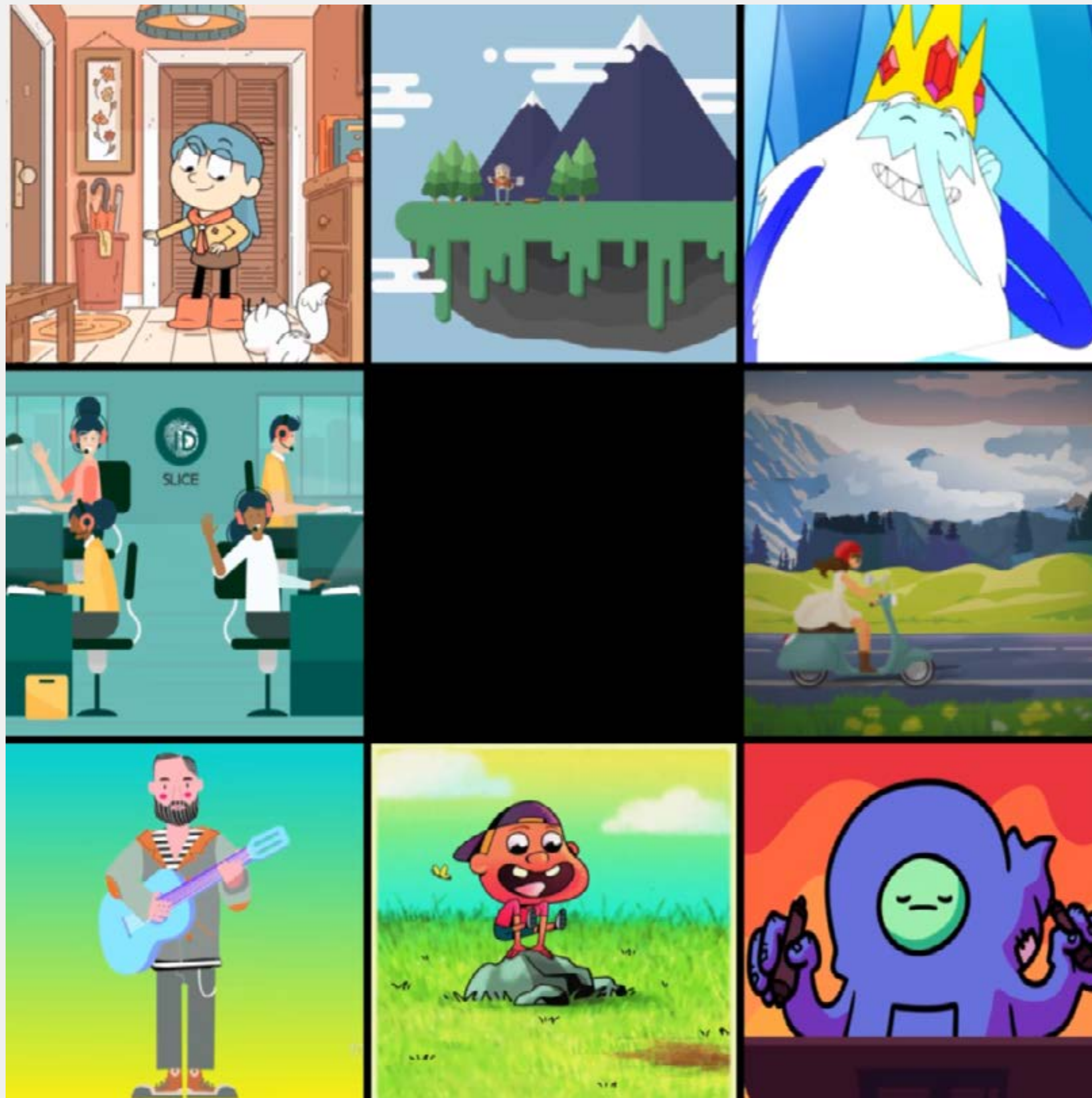
(Different from sketch) A plane flying above clouds

Week 7: music

Smooth lo-fi music at night while studying

Week 8: type

Letters appearing floating off a keyboard and moving onto the screen when typing up an essay.



Assignment 1: Research and Planning Moodboard

Here are some examples of different art styles I found from different types of media. 5 are short animations from Vimeo, 2 are animated cartoons and 1 is from some guy's YouTube channel I stumbled across.

I was thinking of using a cartoon outline aesthetic for the characters as this would allow a lot of detail while making them easy to animate.

For the backgrounds I could digitally paint them in Photoshop or something.

Sources:

Hilda

<https://vimeo.com/187334371>

Adventure Time

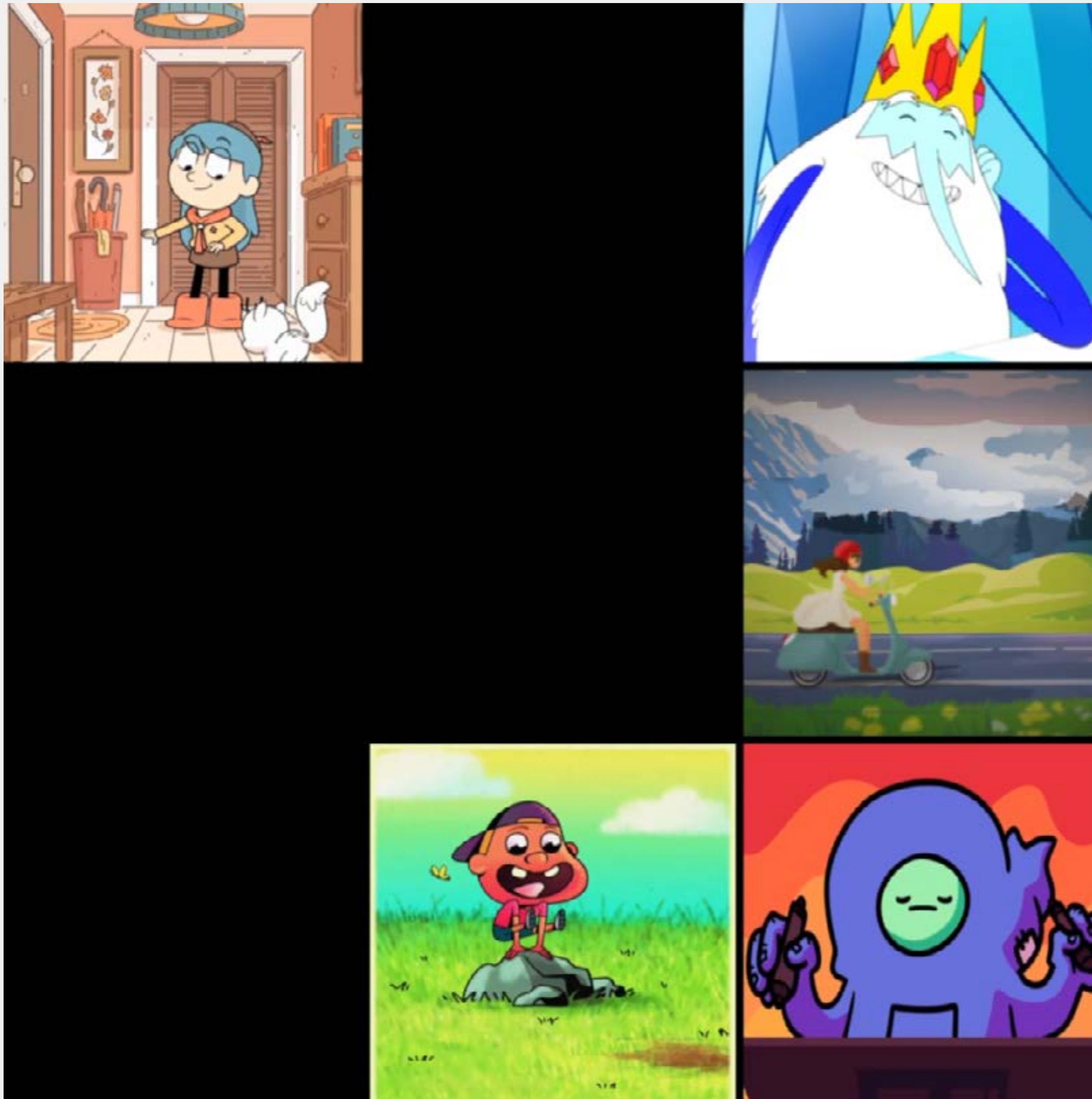
<https://vimeo.com/397149181>

<https://vimeo.com/241891828>

<https://vimeo.com/83977345>

<https://vimeo.com/422262404>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwTz1WMN8hE>



Assignment 1: Research and Planning Moodboard Observations

From the moodboard, these are the clips that use a more unique art style, compared to the flat shape style of the others. Here are some quick analyses of each one.

Hilda:

This art style blew me away when I first watched the series. There's something so lively and bouncy about the visuals that just really works well.

Adventure Time:

Adventure Time is well known for its characters with floppy "rubber-hose" limbs and fantasy settings.

Woman on motorbike:

Although this sort of falls under the "flat shape" style, I included it because I was impressed with the level of detail. While it still looks rigid, it doesn't look anywhere as bad as the others.

Indestructible kid:

Like Adventure Time, this also uses a rubber-hose style, but here it's ramped up and more closely resembles the aesthetic of 1920s cartoons.

Blue guy:

This kind of art style seems pretty common on YouTube. The simplistic art style combined with comedic use of exaggeration works well on a low-budget and gets the point across in the context of the videos.

Assignment 2: Draft Animations Tutorials

How to Turn Illustrator Designs into Motion Masterpieces

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfLDJnPOWoE>

Vector Animation 101 | After Effects To Illustrator Motion Graphics Tutorial

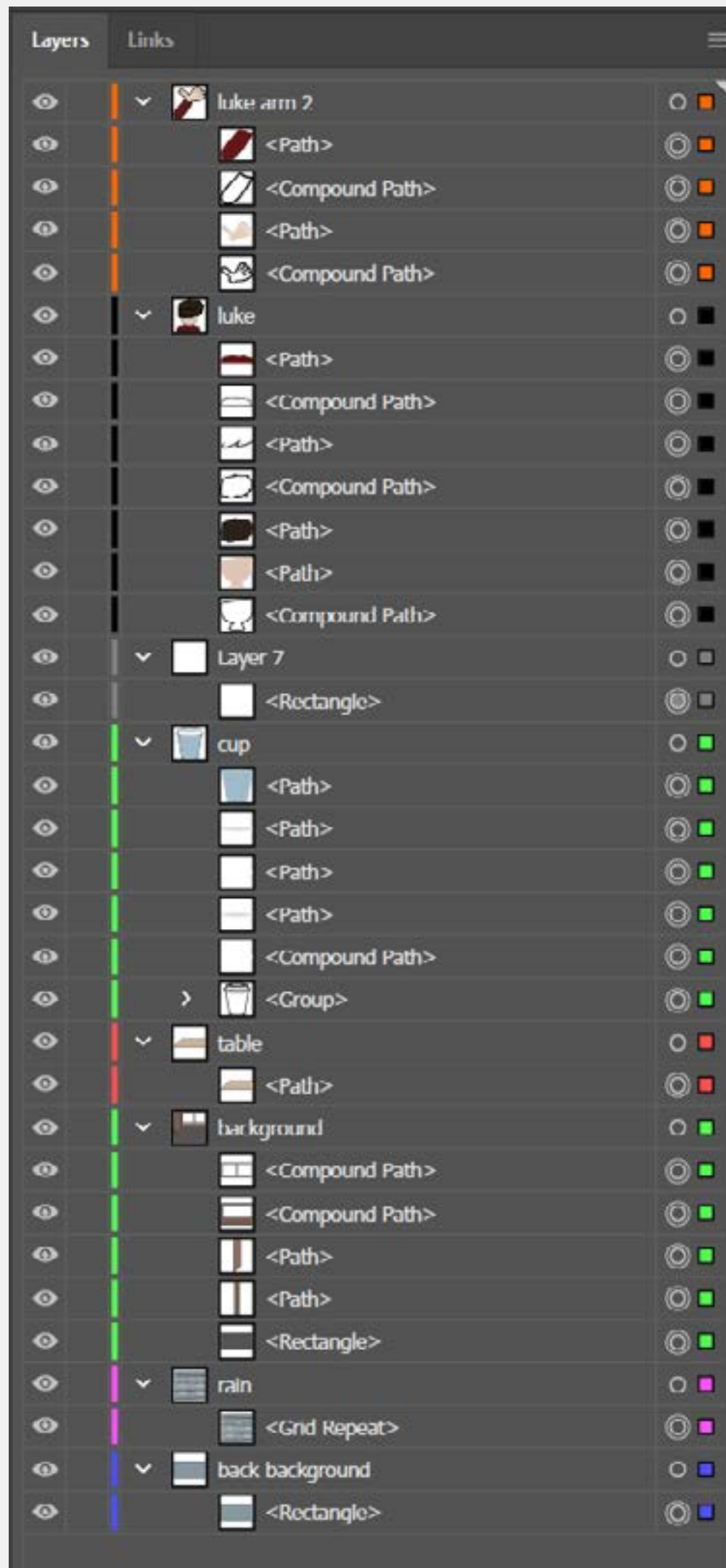
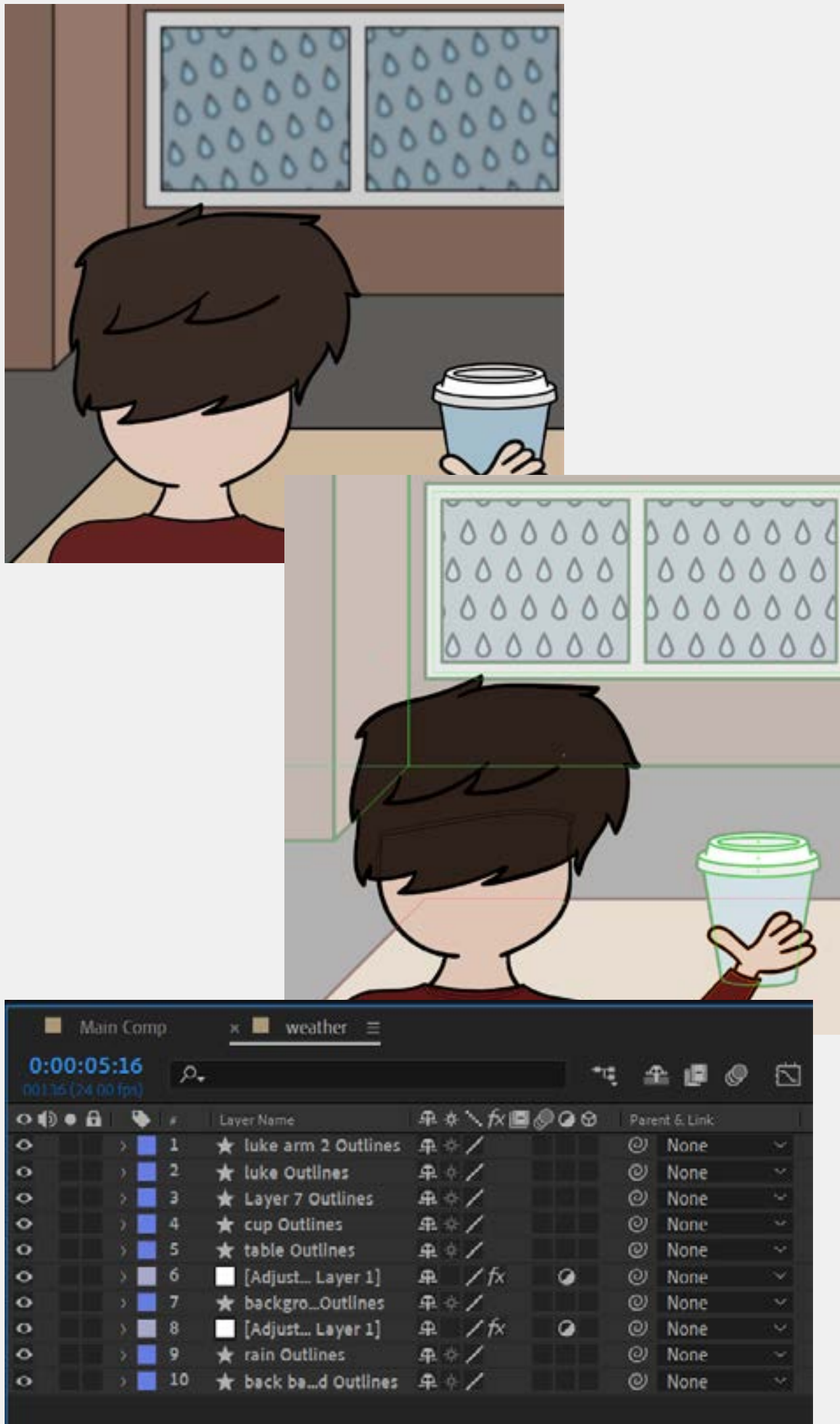
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPkw_CPZVkk

Six Essential Expressions for Creative Coding in After Effects

<https://www.schoolofmotion.com/blog/six-essential-expressions-creative-coding-after-effects>

Adobe Illustrator Tutorial: Create a Vector Pizza from Sketch (HD)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZP6RQu_F6U



Assignment 2: Draft Animations Process

I ended up procrastinating a lot in this class, I think mostly due to a perfectionist attitude. I wanted to get everything looking pixel perfect in the draft stage. Ultimately, the approaching deadline meant I had to just get started.

I followed along with some Illustrator tutorials and made all the assets for each loop in one file. Each part of the scene was one layer.

For some of the strokes, I expanded them and used the shape builder tool to make them all one shape in order to keep things tidy. By doing this, I was able to easily click between the outlines to create coloured shapes (in a similar fashion to the paint bucket tool in Photoshop). The downside to expanding the strokes was that I couldn't manipulate them later.

I had trouble thinking of how to make the arm move in 2 sections, so I just left the forearm in. The rain was made by using the repeat tool in Illustrator.

To give the animation some depth, I added a few adjustment layers in After Effects with some gaussian blurs. I couldn't add them directly to the shape layers for some reason, but that's okay.

Some of the stylised choices I planned to use didn't work out in time, but I'll see if I can get it working for the final versions in assignment 3. The principles of animation are mostly absent here, but as I mentioned before in class, these versions are mainly just to get the timing, action and narrative out there.

Overall, this weather animation specifically was a lot more basic compared to the draft sketch I made, but due to time constraints I didn't have much choice.

Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Draft Loop Evaluation and Roadmap for Assignment 3

Due to time constraints and laziness, I had to rush the draft loops and start learning Illustrator/After Effects skills as I went. As a result, there's a great deal of variation in the quality and style of the loops. I plan to rectify this in assignment 3 by creating specifications for the final loops. This could be as simple as keeping a consistent stroke width or more advanced, such as adhering to a motion style or design language. I also still need to come up with ideas for the last 2 loops (dance and animal).

For reference, here are the 12 principles of animation as defined by Disney animators Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston in 1981:

- Squash and stretch
 - Anticipation
 - Staging
 - Straight Ahead and Pose-To-Pose
 - Follow Through and Overlapping Action
 - Slow In and Slow Out
- Arc
 - Secondary Action
 - Timing
 - Exaggeration
 - Solid Drawing
 - Appeal

Criteria 1 - Lighting and colour:

Rather than using gradients to represent lighting effects (such as the lamp in the music animation), I plan to use shapes with clear outlines that are slightly transparent.

I think the choice of colour in each loop could also be improved to enhance the vibe produced. Additionally, there was too much difference between the space and freedom loops in terms of brightness. I could rectify this by changing the time of day for instance.

Criteria 2 - Stroke width:

I'll try to stick to using a limited number of stroke widths. I had trouble getting the "imperfect" pen pressure width translated across to After Effects, so I thought about using an even width instead for easier manipulation.

Criteria 3 - Liveliness and fluidity:

Many of the draft loops move in a mechanical manner. I think that if I were to introduce some of the principles listed above, they would look more lively and fluid.

Criteria 4 - Extra elements:

I haven't planned this out much, but I thought that the face animation for instance could have warm lines flowing around when I drink the hot chocolate.



Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Music review

Compared to the draft music animation, this one is less mechanical, and some secondary action was added in (like the paper flipping and pulse waves coming from the headphones).

Like with the draft animation for assignment 2, the basic movements are there. They're just more refined/elaborated on in this loop.



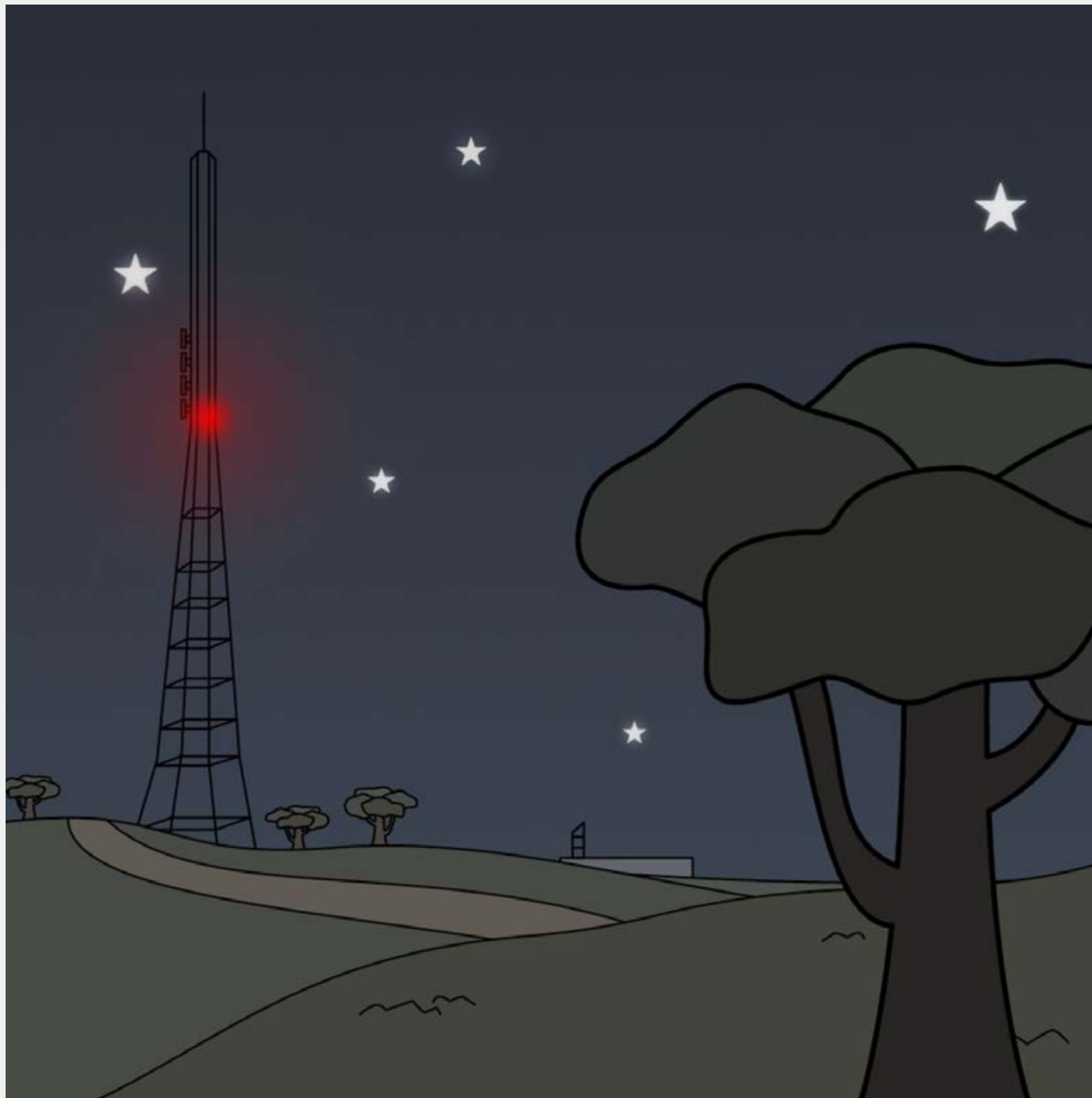
Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Weather review

I thought it would be easier and more consistent or something to avoid using isometric angles or whatever like in the draft weather loop. Here it's a front-on shot. It makes animating realistically easier because I don't have to consider 3D physics as much.

The rain was made using After Effects' Particle Systems effect with a gaussian blur applied on top.

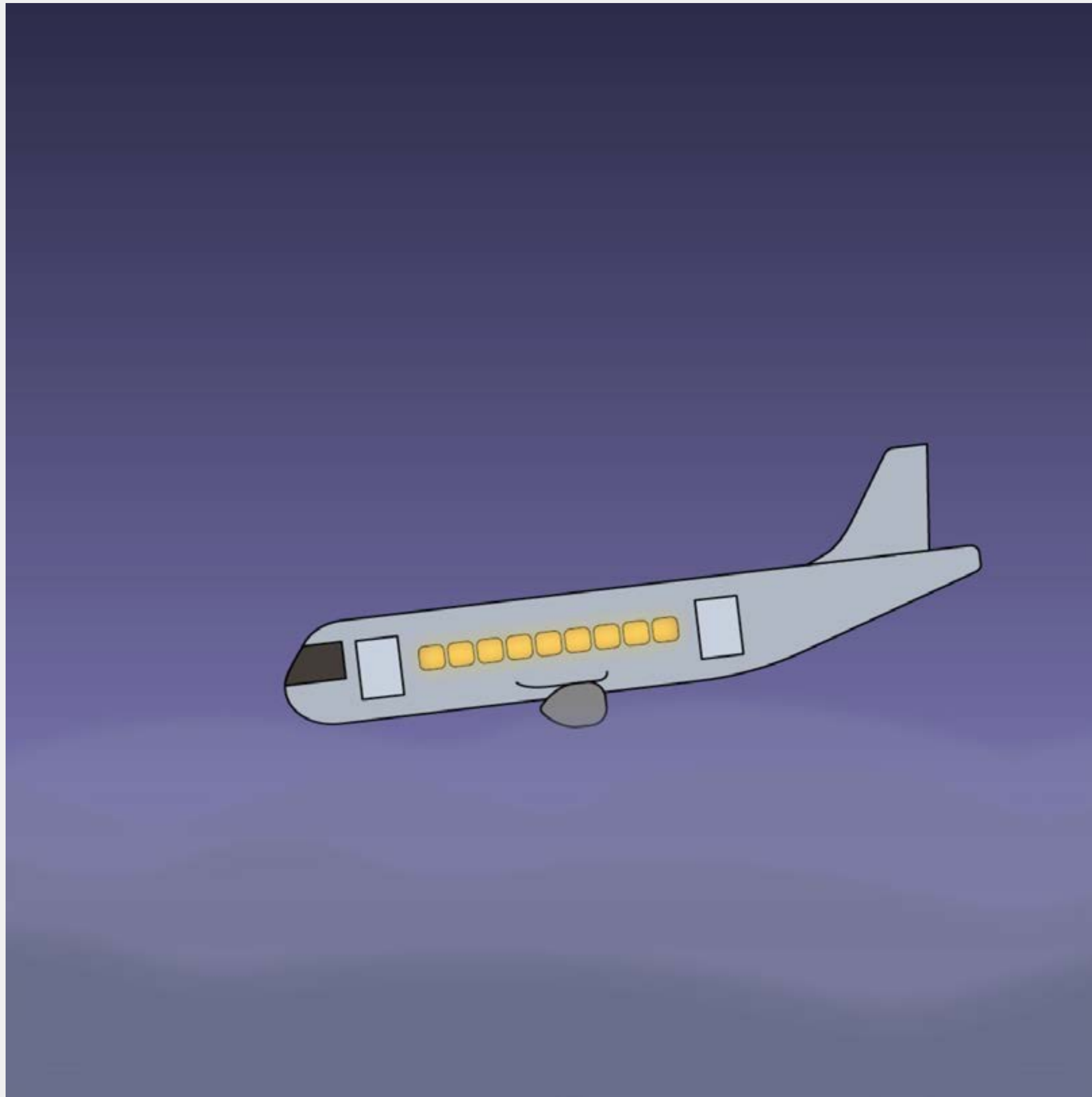
I decided to omit the original design element of creases in joints as it resulted in too many separate shapes for one object (such as the hoodie), which complicated the manipulation of path points.



Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Space review

I redesigned this one from the ground up too. You might've noticed by now that shapes use either a 2pt or 5pt stroke width, depending on the distance from the camera and their importance. The trees, while not animated like before, are redrawn with more detail, and overall the colour palette matches the others more closely.



Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Freedom review

The choice of colour here is vastly different in order to comply with my criteria. The plane appears to move in 3D space (distance from camera yada yada), for a more dynamic motion.

Glow effects were added to the windows, and the clouds were blurred, as they would be in real life.

Each cloud has a duplicate which faded in at the end, allowing for a more seamless loop.

Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Animal review

This one is my personal favourite because of the fluffy cat.

The tail was animated by keyframing a double-bezied path, which had a slightly thicker black duplicate behind it to imitate an outline. This was pick-whipped in After Effects to follow the path of the original.

Like the rain in the weather animation, the fire uses a modified Particle Systems effects with a gaussian blur applied. If I had more time I would've tried animating a hand-drawn fire loop of around 5-8 frames to keep it more artistic.

The flickering light was made by masking a circle out of an orange solid, feathering said mask, then applying the wiggle expression to the mask expansion property.





Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Dance review

You could call this dance in a very generous use of the word. It's just me snapping my fingers and nodding along to music.

The floating lights in the background are meant to represent being focused solely on the music.

Not much else to say about this one. It was a little rushed.



Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Face review (re-used from draft)

This was left over from the draft batch of animations due to time constraints. As it turns out, I overdid it for assignment 2, so all things considered I think this is okay.

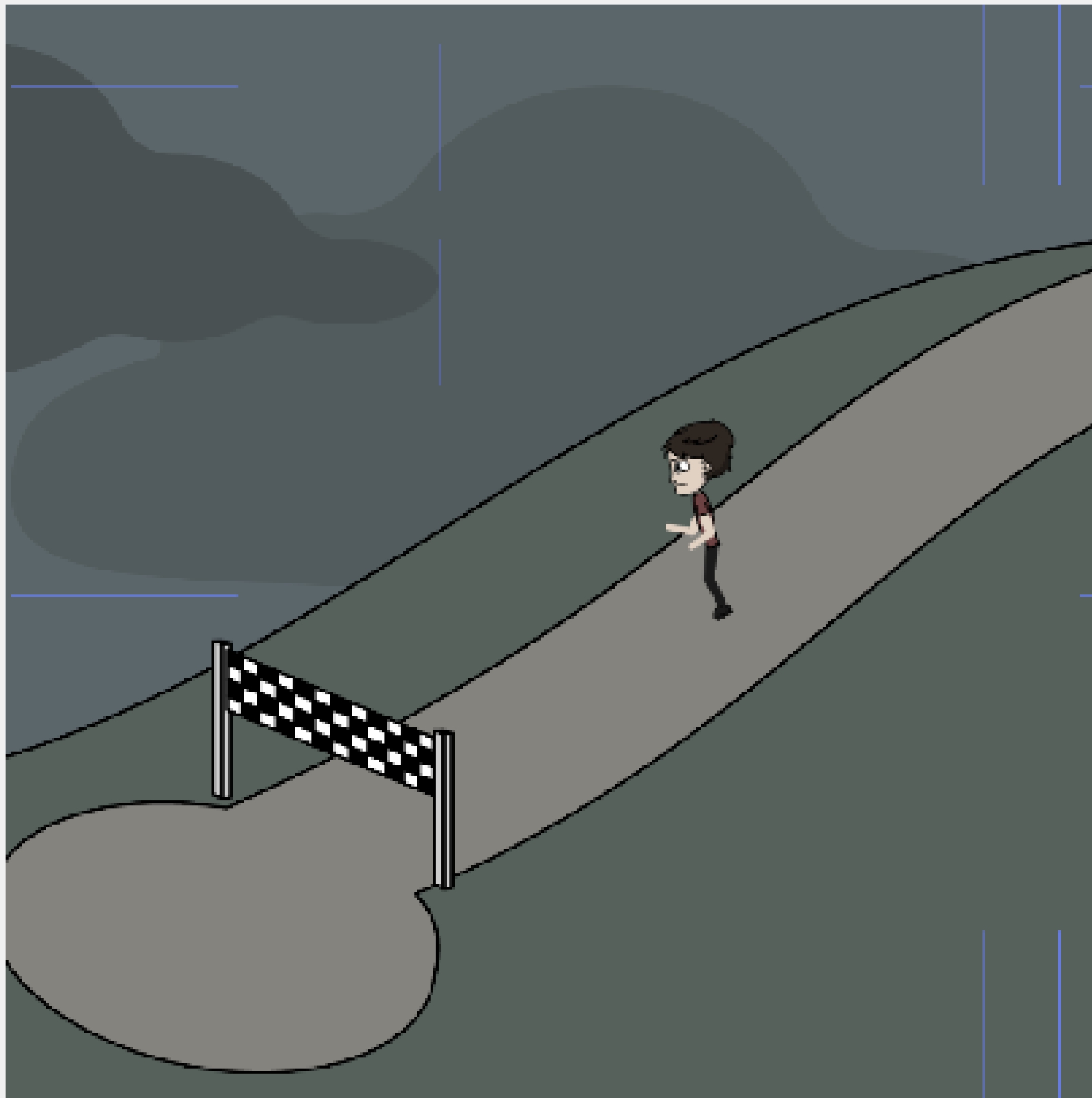
If I had enough time, I would've redrawn it like the others, applying the skills I'd learnt since making this one.



Assignment 3: Refined Animations Type review (re-used from draft)

Unfortunately, this is the only one submitted for assignment 3 that uses an isometric perspective.

Very rough animation, but again, I ran out of time.



Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Win review (re-used from draft)

This was the same as the one used in assignment 2, except it was increased to 2x speed, making the pacing fit better with the others.

The only other difference is that some colours were changed to fit with the overall theme.



Assignment 3: Refined Animations

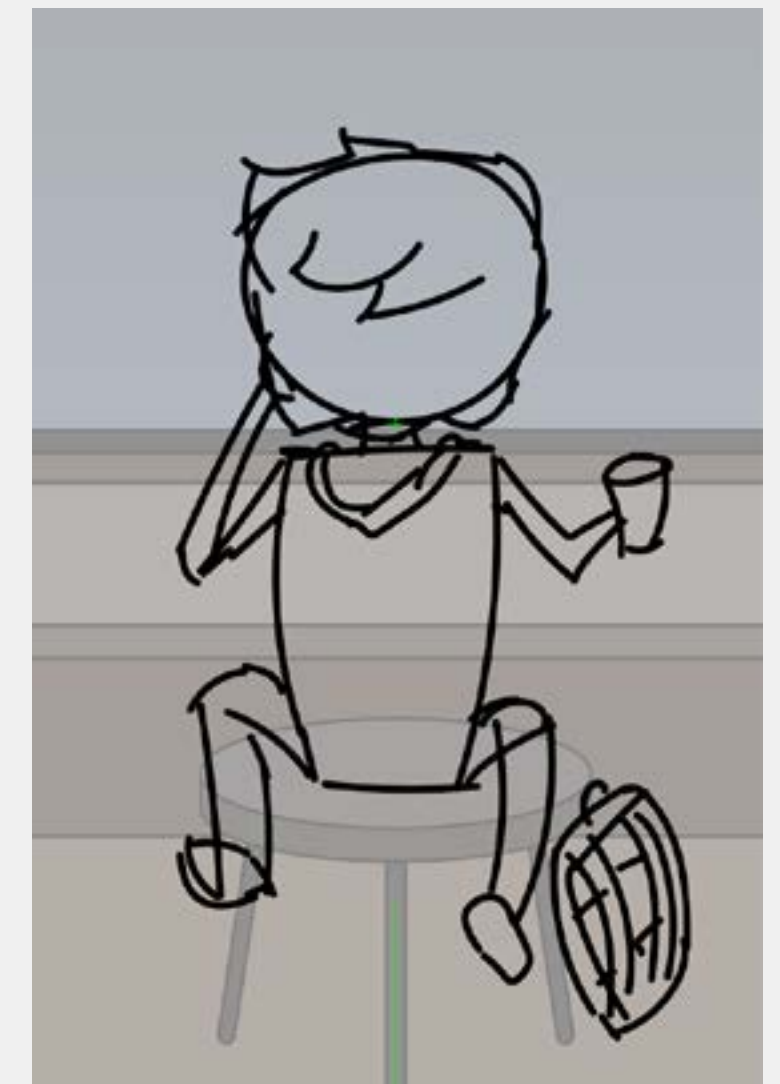
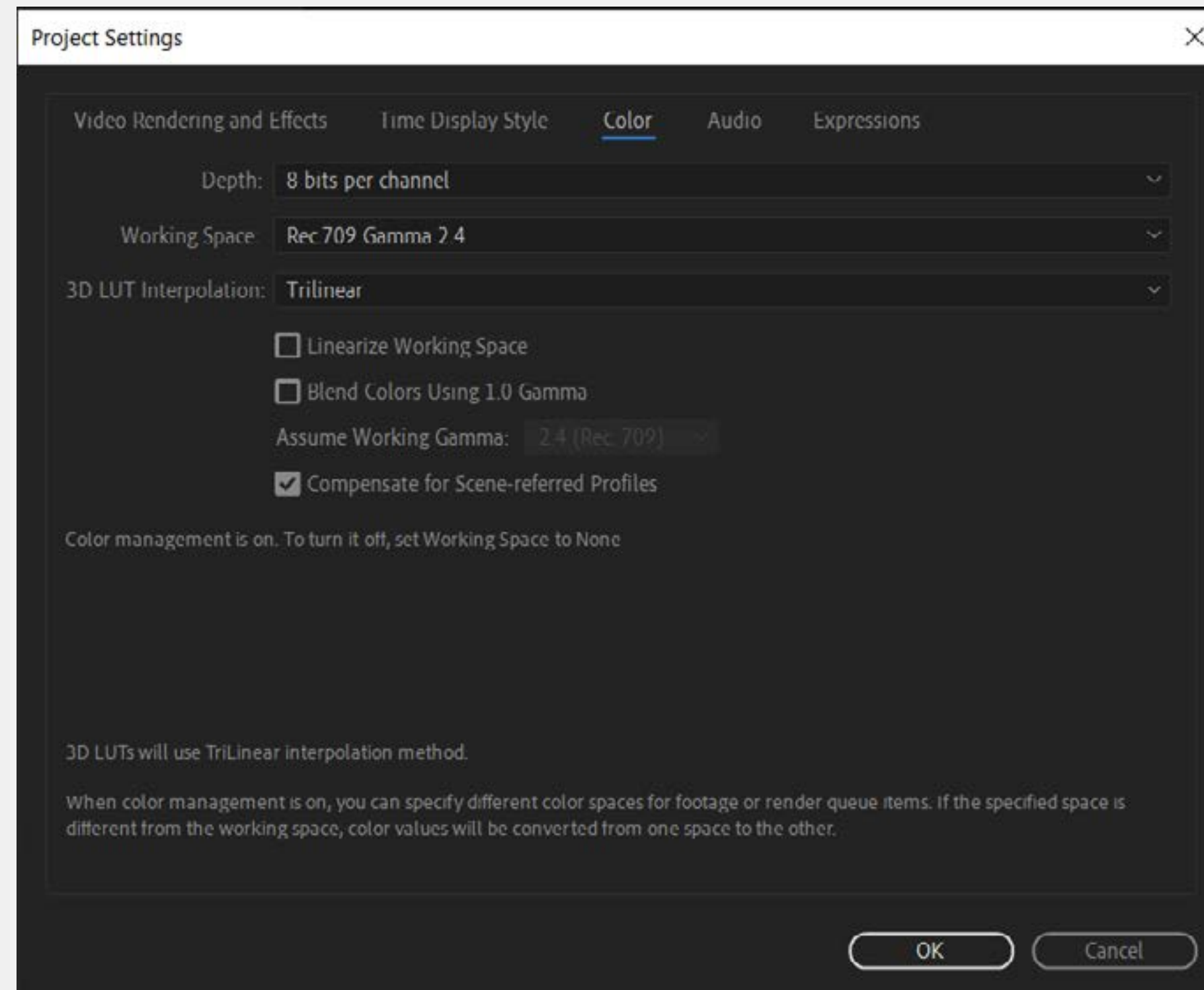
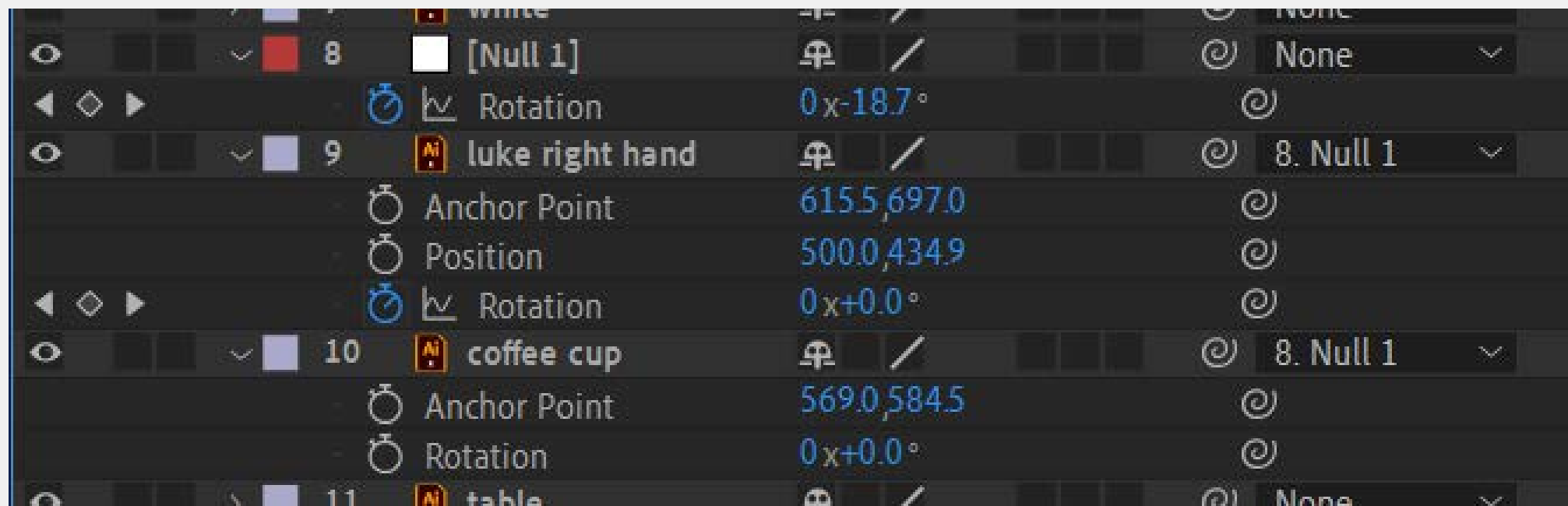
Overall review

Like before, I procrastinated a lot in this class. I think a big contributing factor was obsessing over consistency and detail in insignificant areas (such as the creases in joints I mentioned earlier). To sum it up in one word: perfectionism.

Putting that aside, I'm impressed with how it turned out. Combining all the final loops produces a dark yet welcoming vibe (at least in the top 6 refined ones. Not so much in the bottom 3 leftovers).

In conclusion, I think the use of blurry lighting, particle effects, gradients and vignettes worked well.

Assignment 3: Refined Animations Process screenshots



Assignment 3: Refined Animations

Tutorials that I found helpful

How to Turn Illustrator Designs into Motion Masterpieces

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