

# Animation Sketchbook

GDEM 1002: Creative Applications and Digital Media



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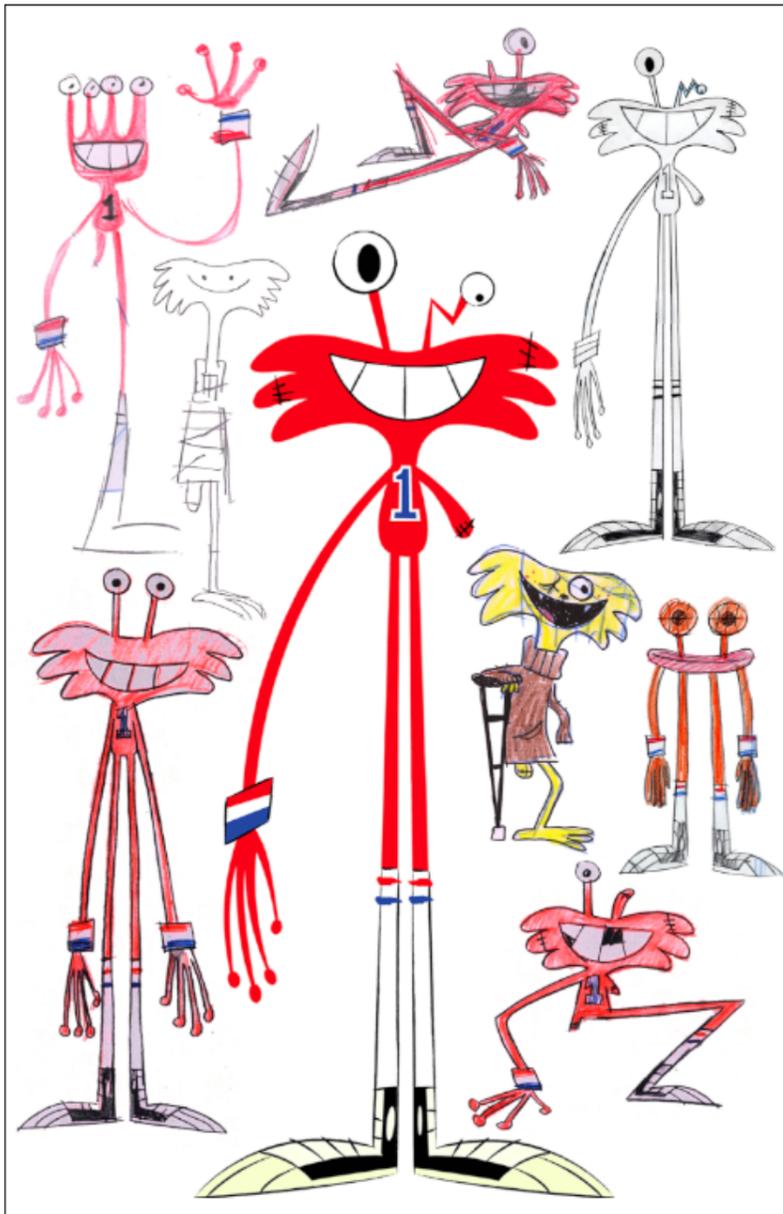
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# F.H.I.F Research

Before this project could be started inspiration needed to be gathered, the way that this was done was by looking at different animations and how they plan out/go through their design process. Rather than looking at small animations this research was more targeted towards animated TV shows, since a lot of them would have their behind the scenes work posted online at some point. The first of these shows was Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends (F.H.I.F) with the specific focus being on how their characters are designed/developed by American animator Craig McCracken.

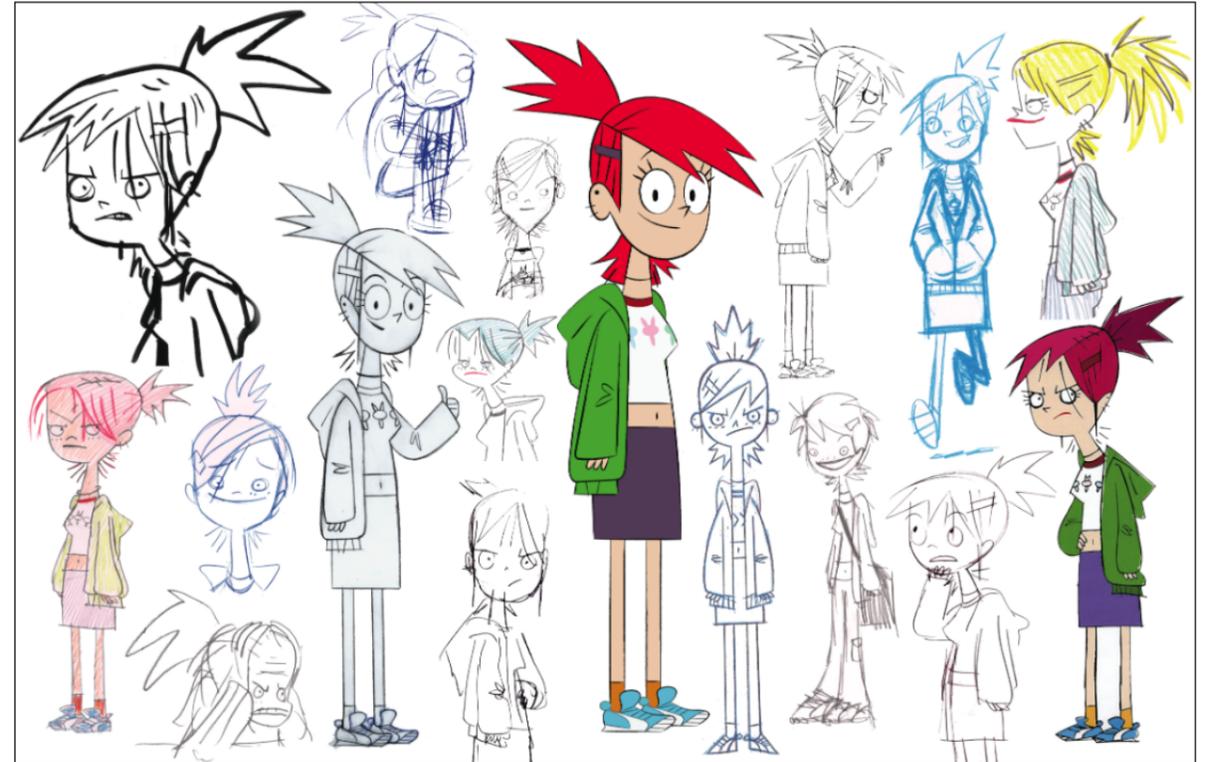


(McCracken, 2006-a)

When looking at the characters it seems that the artist already had a vague idea about what they wanted them to look like. This can be seen with how even though there are many different drawings the character's base emotions, general shape, and in some cases colour stay consistent. An example of this would be how the person on the left is clearly happy, tall, and is missing a body part in almost all of his variations.

Additionally, the artist appears to vary the style of the character, experimenting with different proportions, poses, and clothing to see what would suit the person and the show overall. The reason that this is done is so the artist can picture what the character would look like in several situations, rather than getting a narrow view of what the design will look like.

(McCracken, 2006-b)

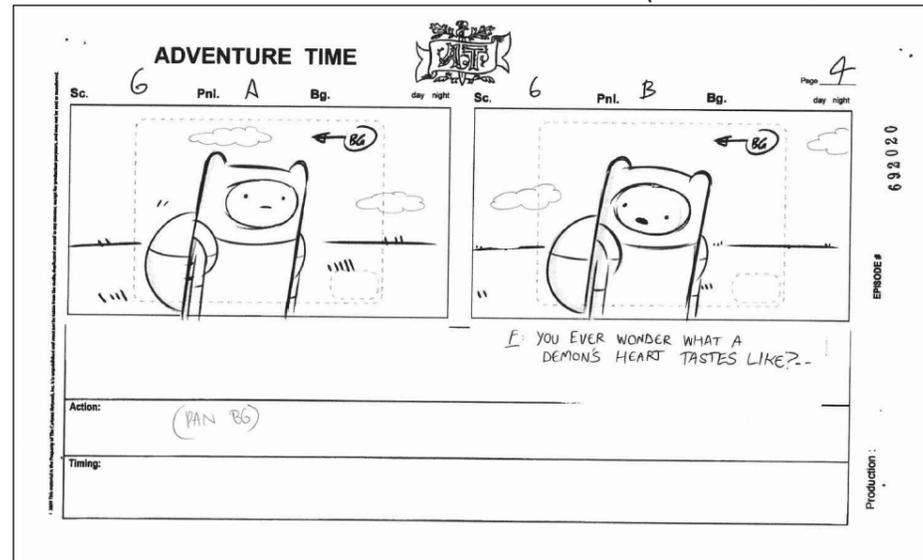


(McCracken, 2006-c)

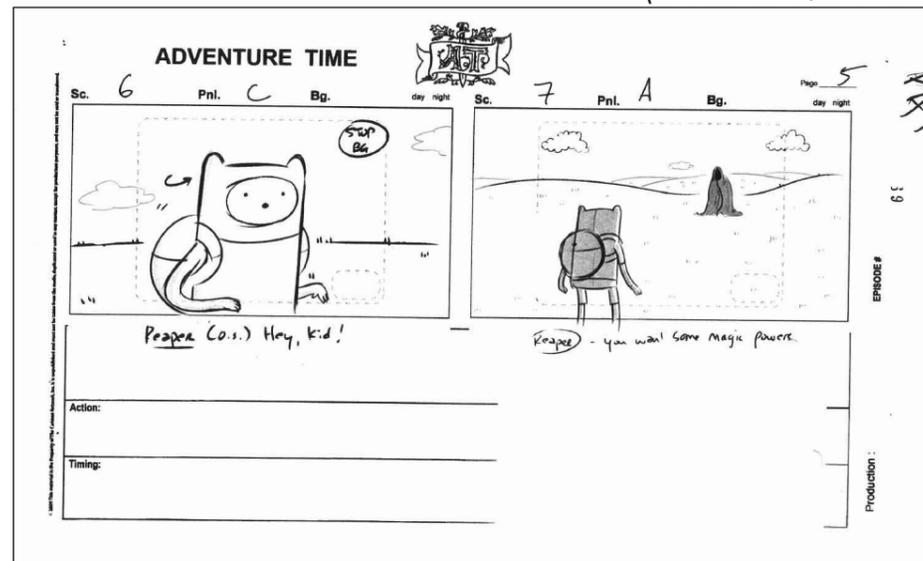
# Adv Time Research

The next piece of research looked into the show Adventure Time and how their storyboards are created for each episode. The artist that worked on this specific episode were Bert Youn, Pete Browngardt, and Mark O'Hare.

(Youn et al., 2009-a)

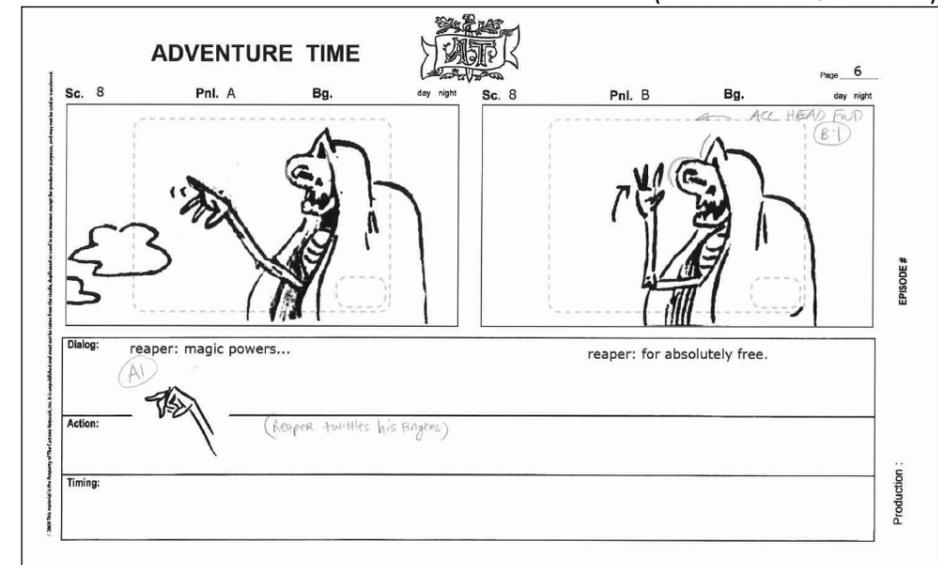


(Youn et al., 2009-b)

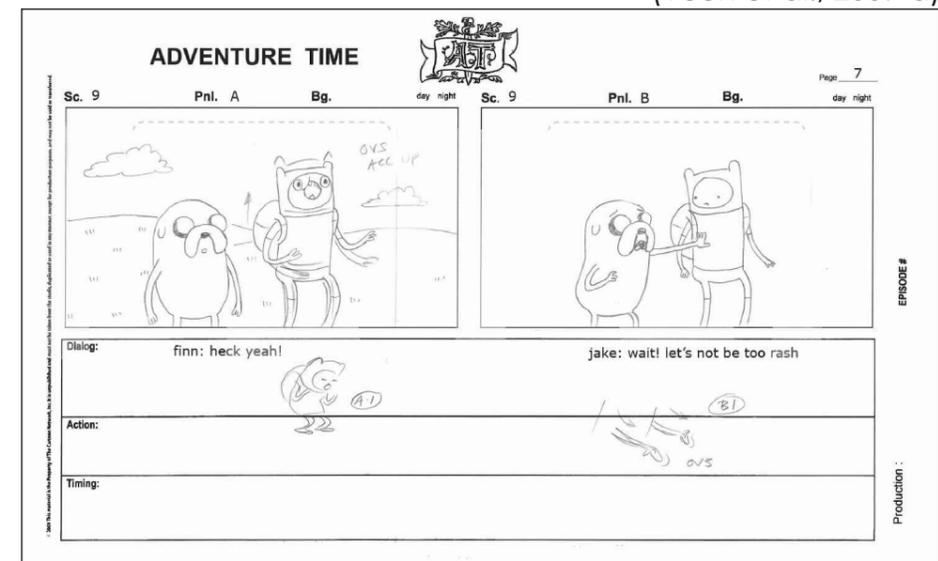


An interesting feature that can be seen on their work is that they don't just include actions in the box underneath each panel, instead they actually draw arrows and make notes to show where motion would happen alongside the drawings. This is useful because it saves the storyboard artist from having to draw out small motions or write out what is happening, as well as this it helps also the animator to understand what needs to happen.

(Youn et al., 2009-c)



(Youn et al., 2009-d)



As well as putting notes next to the drawing in the panel, the artist also seems to include drawings where the text should be underneath. There are a few reasons that this is done, it not only allows the artist to create a different version of the drawing if they are not happy with the original, but it also allows them to have the panel show the climax of the motion rather than its start up. Along with the drawings there are other details that are placed directly underneath the panels, these would be the voice lines that the characters say. In a show like this there is almost always someone talking, therefore having the voice lines appear here with character names allows the storyboard to be read like a script with the main panels working as visual aids.

# Family Guy Research

As well as Adventure Time, the popular TV show Family Guy was also looked at for Mark Covell's storyboarding, however he takes a slightly different approach to the previous method. What is meant by this is that after recording the audio for the show he goes on to roughly draw out the scenes frame by frame, loosely lip syncing the characters so that a more solid idea of the episode can be formed. The only issue with this is that it takes time and experience to do well, since the artist needs to have a detailed understanding of the character from every angle and be able to lip sync with the correct mouth shapes.

(Wall Street Journal, 2008)



(Wall Street Journal, 2008)

(Wall Street Journal, 2008)



(Wall Street Journal, 2008)

Additionally, going through this process allows other people that are involved to point out problems and areas of the animation that can be improved or changed completely before the final piece is created. This would result in a much cleaner final product when it comes to conveying the narrative, since it went through several people and different iterations to get it looking just right.

# Gravity Falls Research

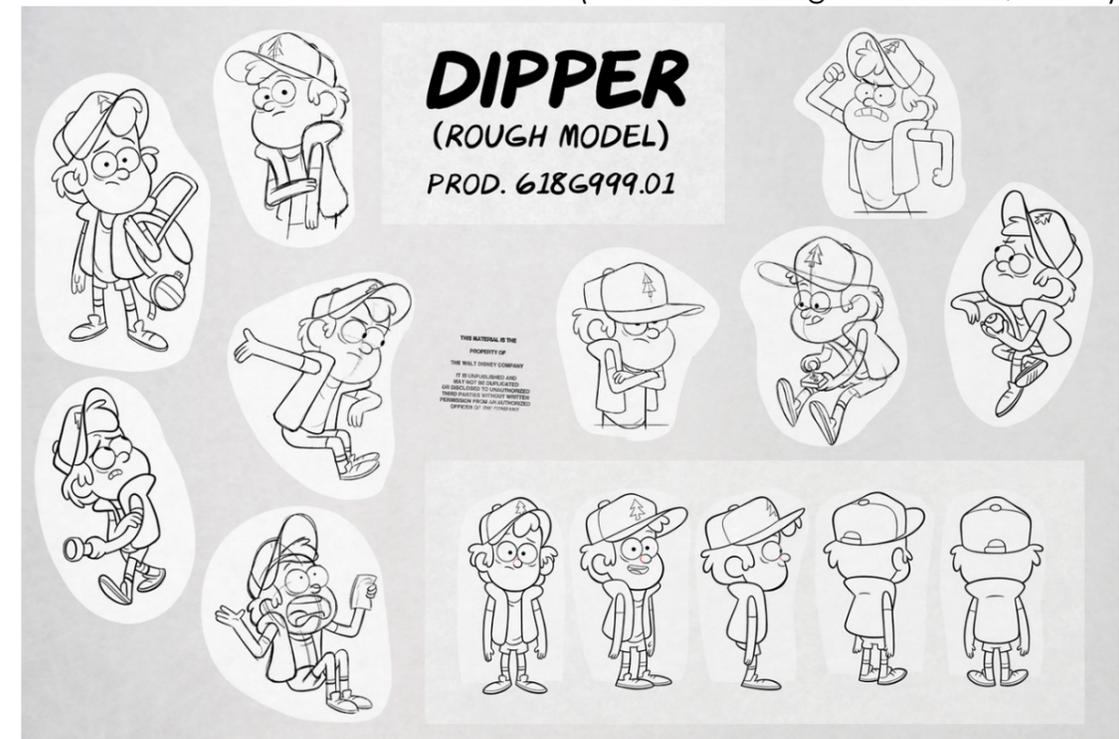
Moving on from storyboards, the show Gravity Falls that was created by Alex Hirsch was looked at for sprite sheets, with the main focus being on Dipper and Mabel on the right. For these characters a clear link can be seen, this is how they are both shown in their resting position from different angles. The reason for this is to provide a helpful reference for the animator, since it shows the character from almost every angle that they could possibly be in during the show. Along with this, there are also a series of drawings that show the characters in expressive poses to once again be used as reference, but also to show how their body moves and what kind of emotions the character typically feels.

Coming away from Dipper and Mabel, there were also objects for the show that were looked at. These are a bit more generalised in terms of design, meaning that they don't have a version from every possible angle, this is because these items don't need to stay consistent and would typically appear in the background or being held by the character at a single angle.

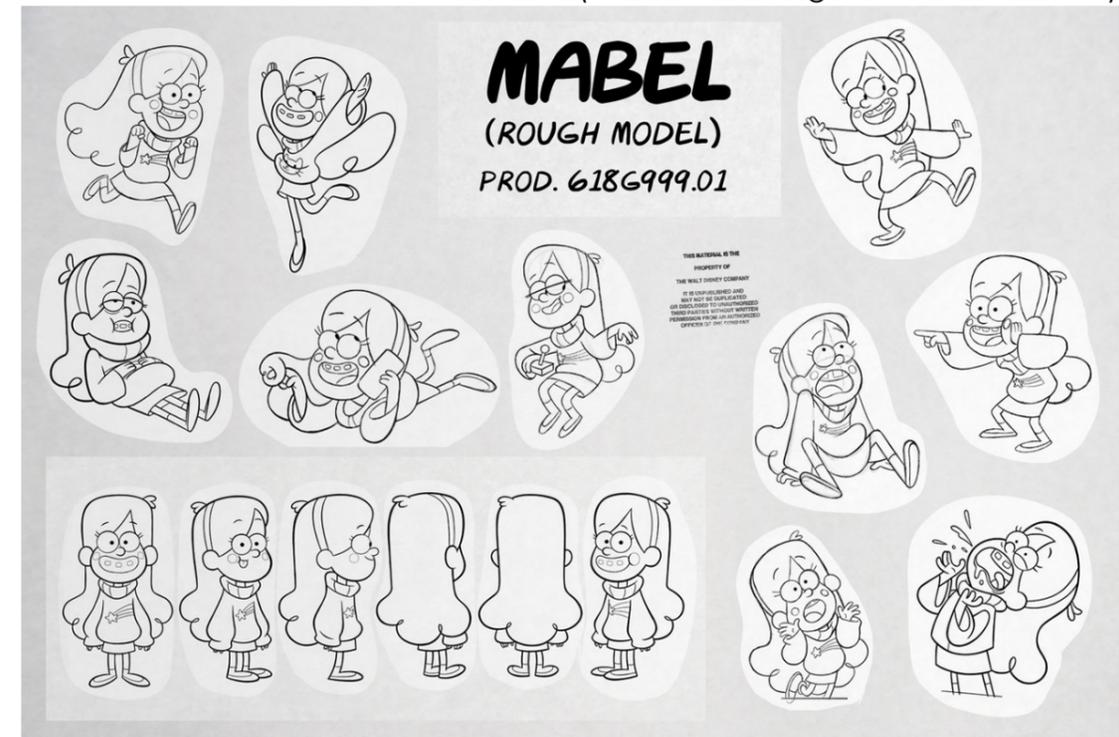
(Gonsalves, n.d.)



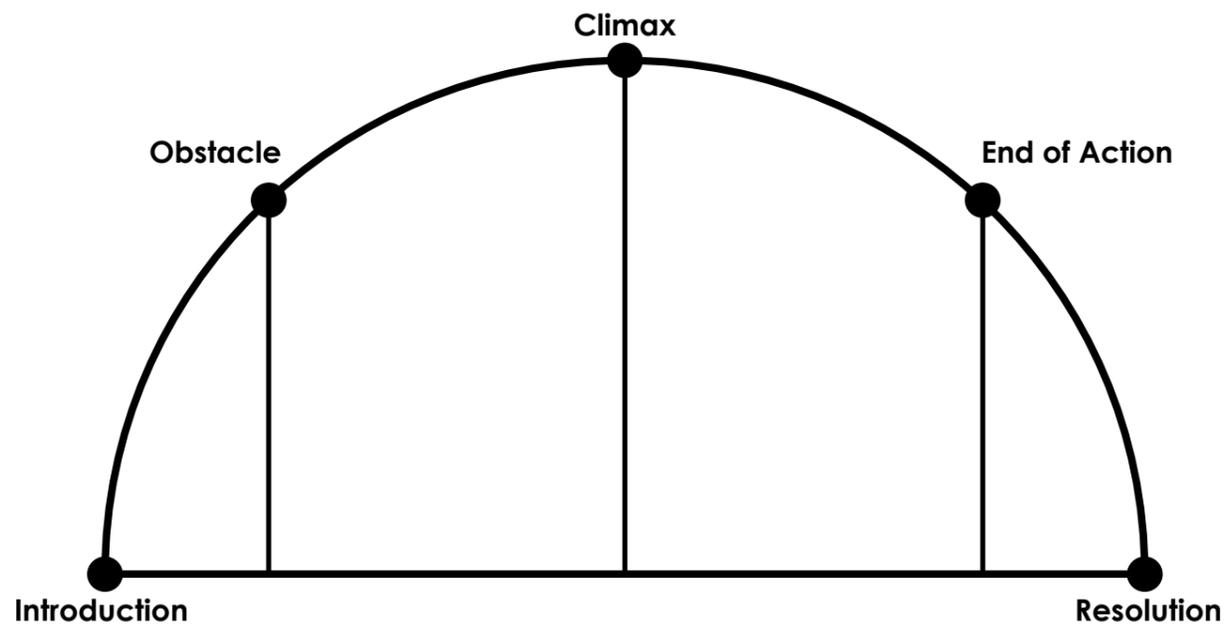
(Character Design Reference, n.d.-a)



(Character Design Reference, n.d.-b)



# Animation Plot



An animation is primarily a story based medium, having both a beginning and an end of some kind of action, this can be in the form of a short repeating animation or a grand story that spans over several minutes. With this said, an animation will typically follow a story arc, which for larger plots would take place over a 3 act structure, but in the case of a short animation like the one for this project a basic arc will be all that is needed.

As seen above there are 5 basic points in a story arc.

**Introduction** - The beginning of the story where the characters and setting are introduced.

**(First) Obstacle** - A problem that the character(s) encounter. There can be more than one of these causing the problem to seem worse and worse.

**Climax** - The height of the action caused by the obstacle.

**End of Action** - The success or failure of solving the issue at hand.

**Resolution** - The story reaches its conclusion.

In the case of my animation, the story that I thought of involved a boy walking through a park looking sad and depressed, until he approaches an ice cream vendor who gives him a free ice cream to cheer him up. This then makes the kid happy and he proceeds to continue on his way through the park, however he hears a rustling in the trees before he is attacked by a bird that wants to steal his ice cream. This sudden attack causes the boy to trip, sending his ice cream into the air and him onto the floor, where he then opens his eyes to see his ice cream splatted on the ground. Once he sees this the boy's smile changes to a frown as he reverts to being as sad and depressed as he was at the start of the story.

Mapping this simple plot into a story arc would look something like this:

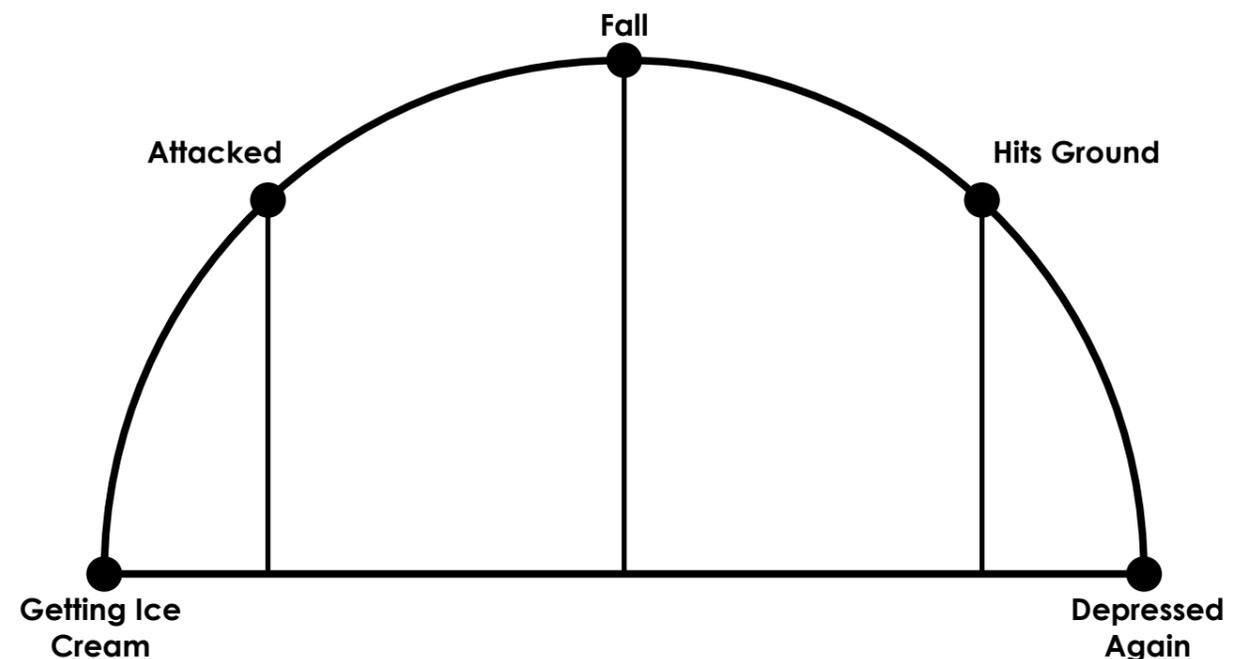
**Introduction** - The boy is seen walking through a park being sad and he receives a free ice cream from a kind ice cream vendor.

**Obstacle** - As the boy is walking through the park with his ice cream he is attacked by a bird.

**Climax** - The boy trips and begins to fall to the floor as the ice cream flies out of his hand.

**End of Action** - He hits the ground as the ice cream splats next to him.

**Resolution** - The boy sees the ice cream and returns to being sad again.



# Character Design 1



After deciding on what the story behind my animation would be I proceeded to start creating the first character, the boy. However, I thought that it would be more interesting if I had the boy himself resemble an ice cream, since it would make it more ironic that eating an ice cream would make him happy. This change wouldn't affect the story much overall, the only changes that this would make are that rather than walking he would hop and instead of tripping I will make his cone crack and eventually snap.

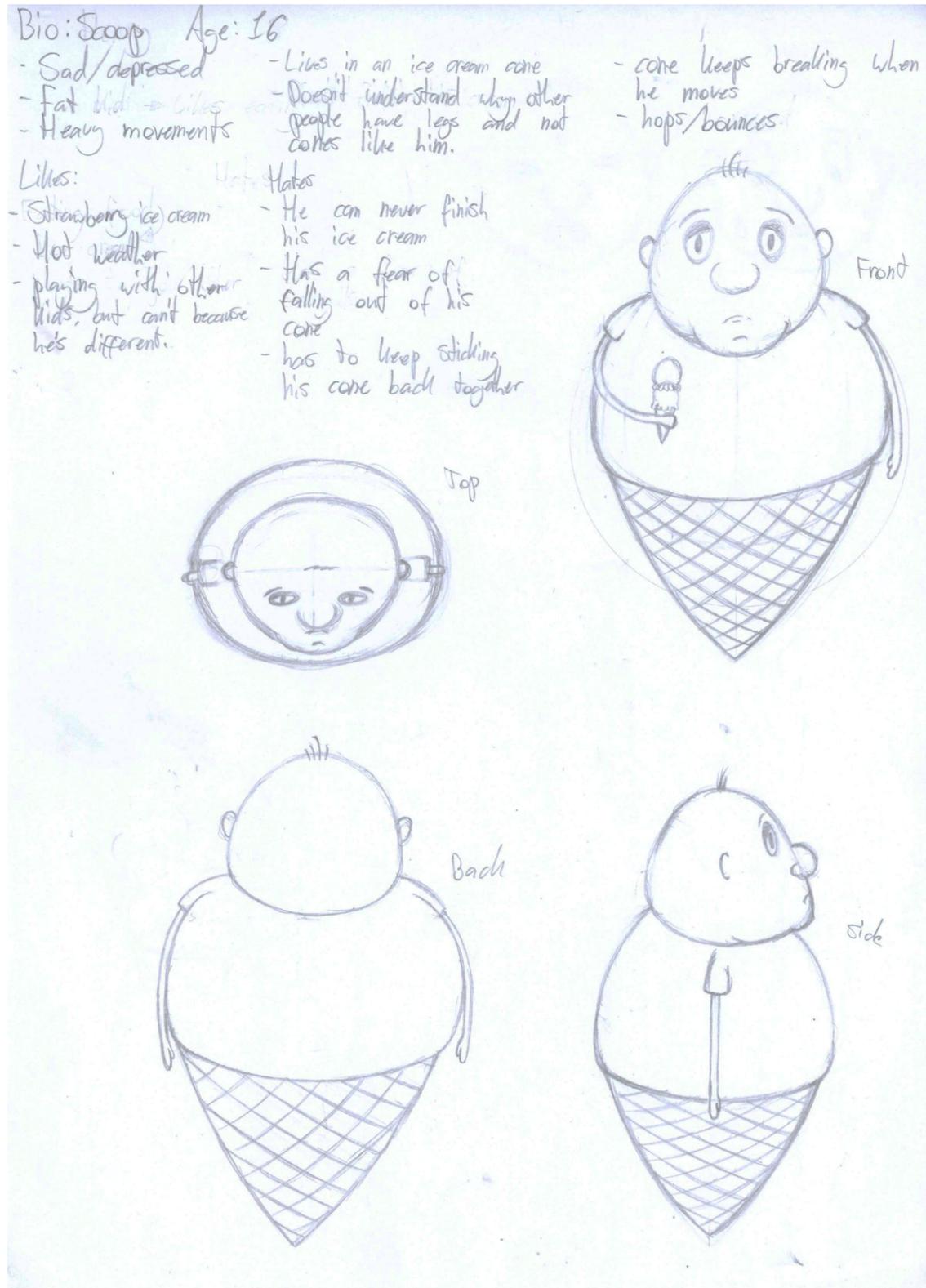
As for the designing process, I attempted to go through a similar process to F.H.I.F. I knew that I wanted the him to resemble an ice cream, therefore the basic shapes that made up his character were 2 circles to act as scoops and a triangle for the cone. Additionally, I also this meant that he would need to be fat, so that he looked like he was stuffed into his cone.

Emotionally, he was designed to look sad, the way that I went about trying to convey this was by lowering the position of the head. The desired affect of this was to make it look as though he was slouching, showing that he was so depressed that he doesn't have the energy to stand upright.

Shape-wise I did try to mess around with ratio of body to cone, as well as how the shirt that he was wearing was fitted onto him. Additionally, edits were made to the head to match different body types, such as using one that was more rounded, adding a chin, and making it more ice cream-like.

Once I decided on what I wanted I moved onto the sprite sheet, drawing the character from multiple angles and giving them some points to flesh out their personality.

# Rough Sprite Sheet 1



## Character Bio:

**Name:** Scoop    **Age:** 16

Scoop is a fat kid who lives his life looking like an ice cream, with the top half of his torso resembling scoops of ice cream and his legs being replaced by a wafer cone that his stomach hangs out of slightly. Additionally, due to his lack of legs his main method of movement is hopping and jumping around, but the force that comes with crashing into the ground multiple times keeps causing his cone to crack. This constant fear of his cone breaking and him falling out of it has made him very cautious about moving around, resulting in him not being able to play with other children and becoming depressed.

When it comes to the ways in which Scoop moves, he often sways while standing idle because of the fact he's balancing on a pointy cone, then when he jumps around he kind of has to wind up like a spring by squatting down and thrusting himself upward. This jumping movement varies in intensity depending on whether Scoop is doing a standard hop (less intense) or a leaping jump (more intense).

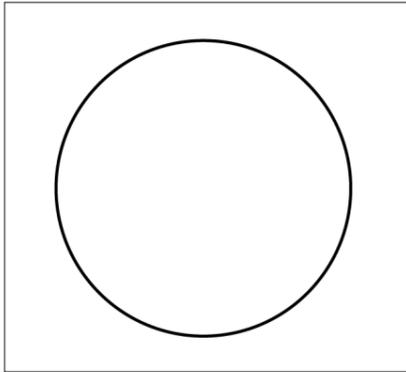
## Likes:

- Eating ice cream, specifically raspberry. (Even though he looks like an ice cream)
- The colour pink.
- Playing with other kids around his age.
- Hot days, even though they make him melt. They allow him to see kids playing like he used to.
- Spending his weekends at the park, that's where he can find the ice cream vendor that serves his favourite ice cream.

## Dislikes:

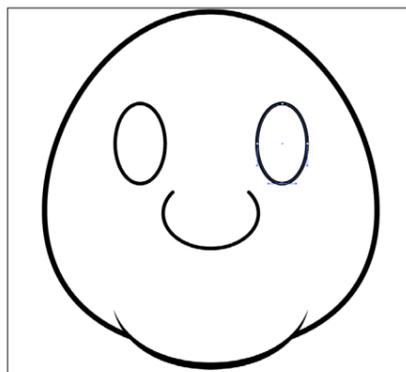
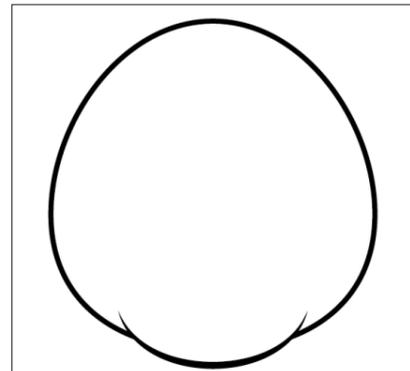
- Birds, they always seem to steal his food.
- Not having food to comfort him.
- The fact that he doesn't have legs like other people that he sees.
- That he has to keep taping his cone back together to stop it breaking.
- Not being able to play with his friends.

# Scoop Development

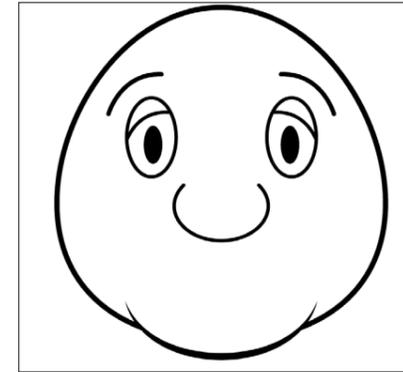


When starting the creation process of this character I began the same way as when I was drawing him out initially, with the head. Getting the basic shape was quite easy due to the roundness of this character, all I had to do was create a circle using the ellipse tool that I thought matched my drawing. (During this time I hadn't yet scanned my drawings in, so I was working while glancing at my sprite sheet)

Then I proceeded to work off of this base shape by using the point selection tool to bring down the left and right anchor points of the circle, this helped to make the head look heavier at the bottom. Once I was happy with how the outline of the head looked I used the pen tool to add in his fat chin. However, to make it look as though it faded into the character's face I placed a width profile on the stroke that tapered off the ends.

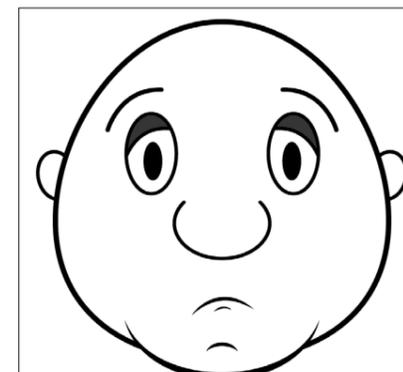
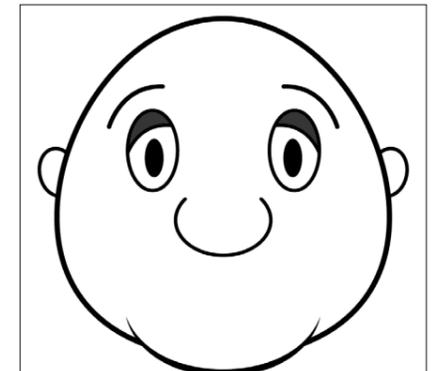


Next, came the process of adding the facial features. To start off I made the nose, this was done by using the ellipse tool to create a squashed circle which I then removed the top path of using the direct selection tool. Additionally, much like the chin I edited the stroke to make it fit the face better, but rather than adding a profile to it I placed a cap on the ends that rounded them off. Then for the eyes I went back to the ellipse tool and made a pair of identical ovals that curved downwards slightly harsher than they did at the top to give an idea of the face shape.

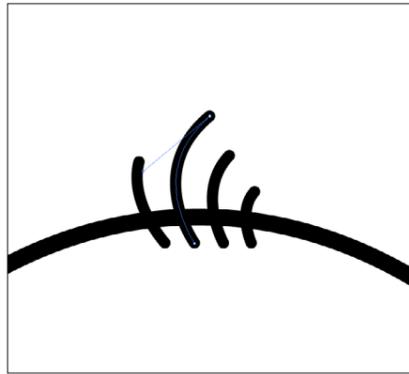


Following this, I made another pair of ovals, with a black fill, to serve as the pupils in the eyes, these were positioned slightly inward so that the character didn't look like he was staring off into the distance. On top of this, I also used the pen tool to create eyelids and eyebrows, which were positioned and angled in such a way that conveyed the character's feeling of depression and sadness. This was one of the most important parts because the eyes of a person tend to be the most expressive part, second to the mouth.

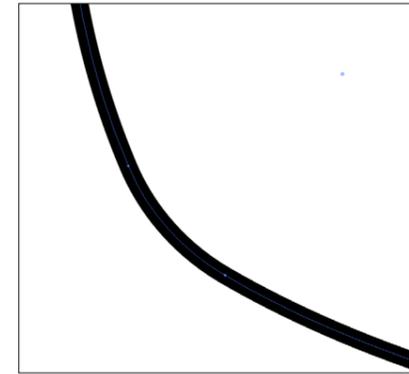
I then used the blob brush to block in the eyelids with a slight bit of colour, so that I could get a feel for how it would look later. I also used the ellipse tool to make a couple of angled ovals that would be placed behind the head and used for the character's ears.



After that came the addition of the mouth and other features around that area. To create the mouth I did the same thing as the chin, by making a tapered line with the pen tool that curved just enough to look depressed. As well as this, I used the same method to create a lip line under the mouth and a dimple in the chin, this helped to add to the weight of his face.

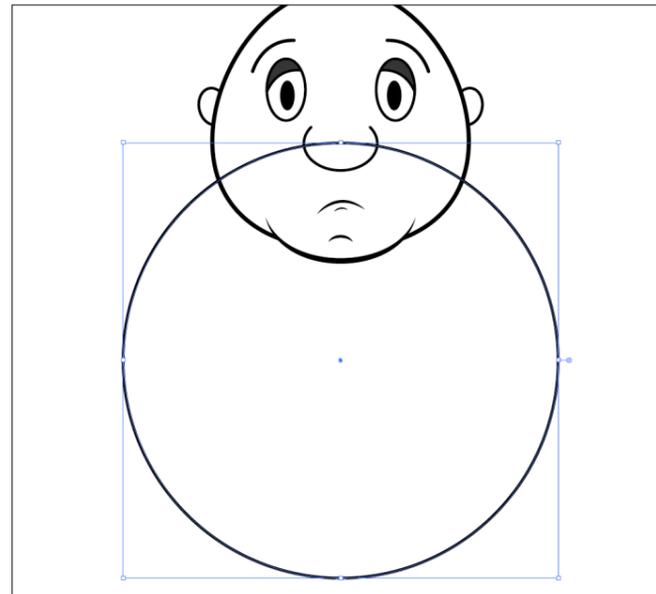


The final part that I did on the head was adding the few strands of hair at the top, these were made using the pen tool and were capped off with rounded ends like the nose earlier.

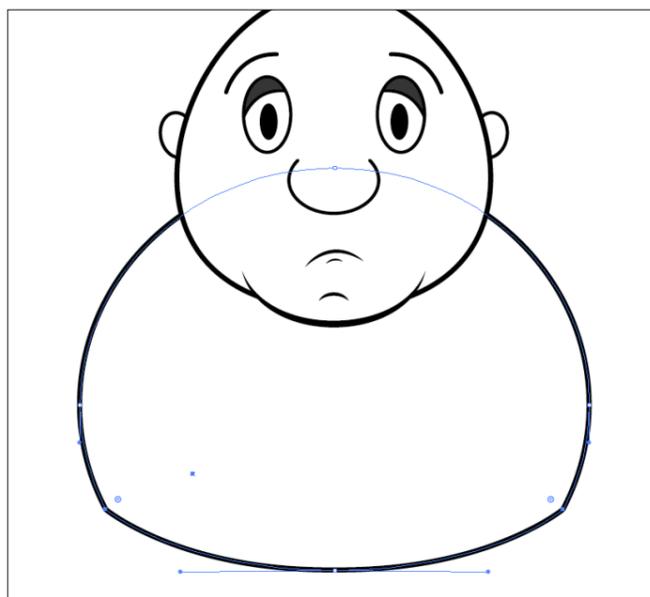
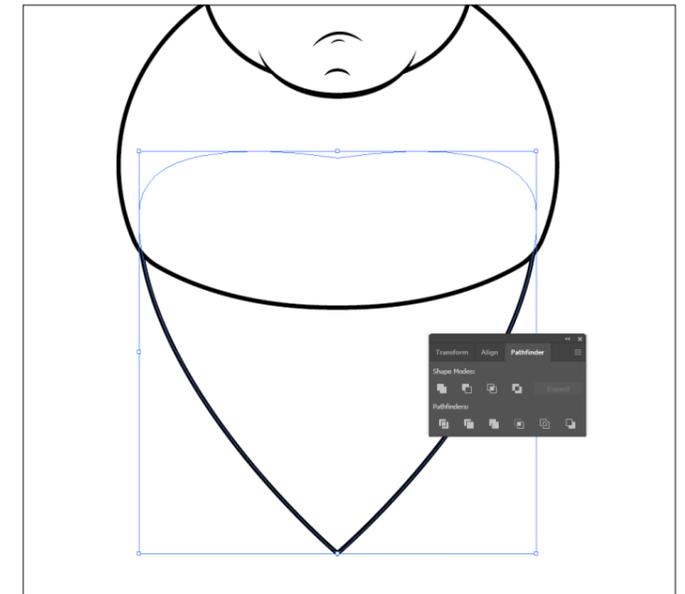


The only issue with this was that I was left with pointed corners of where the circle originally went down, which didn't match the round and soft aesthetic of the character. Therefore, to resolve this problem I used the direct selection tool to select these sharp corners and then I pulled the anchor point to round the corners equally, until it looked as though it was soft enough.

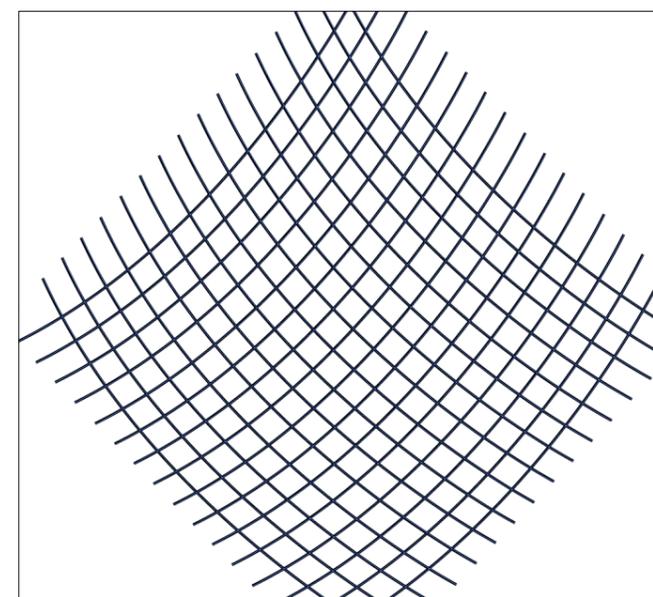
Moving on to the body of this character, I began exactly like I did with the head by drawing out a circle that roughly matched the sprite sheet drawing. This was then moved to the back of the layer list, so that the head would sit nicely on top and the line that overlaps the face would not be seen. Additionally, this would once again serve as a base for the initial start of this section of the character.



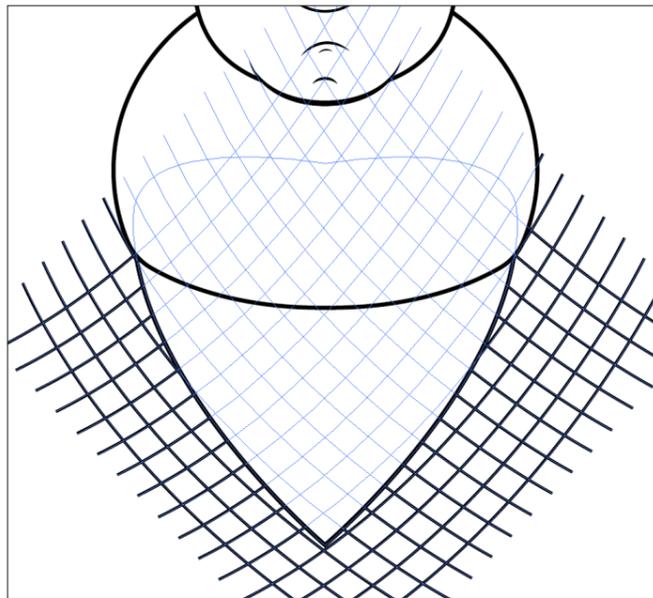
Next came the cone, this was made through the use of the pen tool to create half of the cone, making sure to have it bow slightly to show the character's weight. Then I copied, flipped, and attached this shape onto itself, allowing me to then use the pathfinder tool to unite the two half of the cone into one shape. This was then placed on the bottom layer so that it appeared behind the body of the character.



Once I had the circle for the body I shaped it in a similar way to the head, moving the anchor points, specifically the bottom one. However, this time I was doing it to help shape the sides of the body, which is why I then proceeded to make the line of where the cone would connect with the pen tool. This line was then blocked out underneath and I used the pathfinder tool to remove any of the original circle that was overlapping.

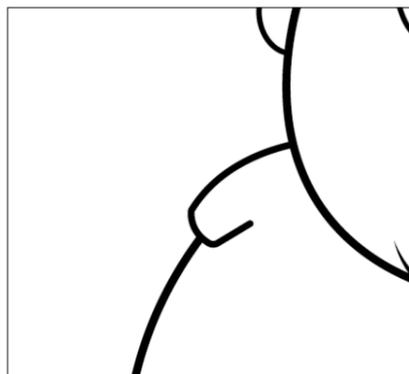
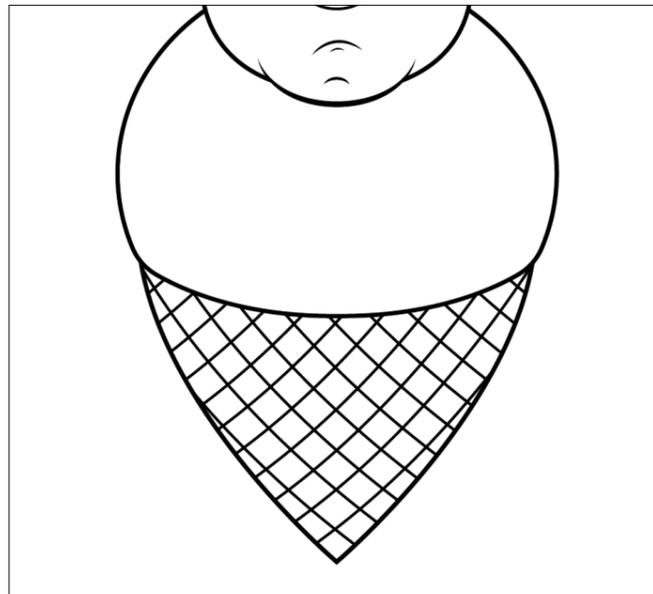


Then to make the texture that would sit within the cone and make it look like wafer I created a series of straight lines with the line tool, these were then copied and rotated 90° to form an even grid. From this point I then went into the "objects" tab at the top of the software and selected "envelope distort" and then the "make with warp" option, allowing me to warp the whole grid in an arc shape. I only did a slight arc for this because I didn't want it to look completely wrapped around the cone as if it were a cylinder shape.

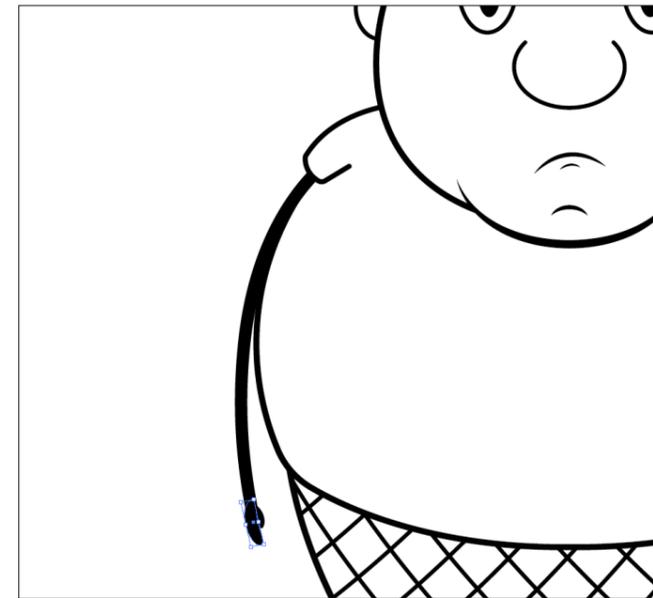


This freshly warped grid was then placed on top of the cone so that I could correctly align it before placing it inside. I had to be careful with this because I didn't want any big bold square corners showing and I didn't want the diagonal lines to be so close to the edge of the cone that they would start to merge together. Once this was good I moved the grid below the cone so the next step would work.

As for what the next step was, I created a clipping mask, this would confine the grid pattern to the area of the cone, while still giving the freedom to go in and edit the positioning of the lines. The way that I did this was by selecting the two elements and then going up to the "objects" tab yet again, then from there I went down to "clipping mask" and then "make".

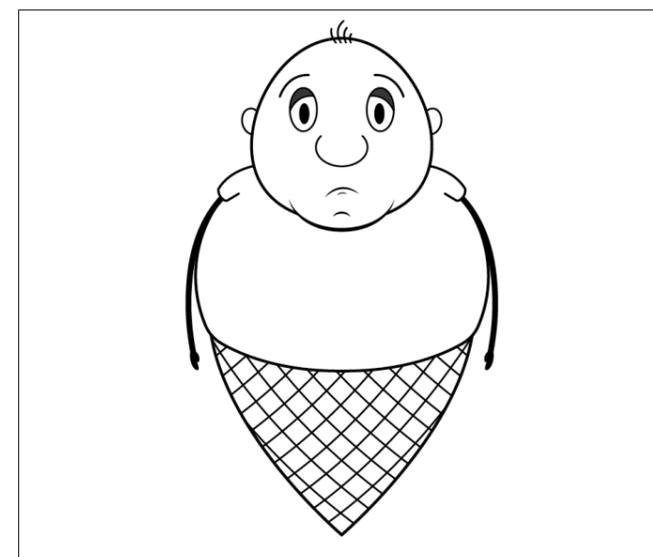
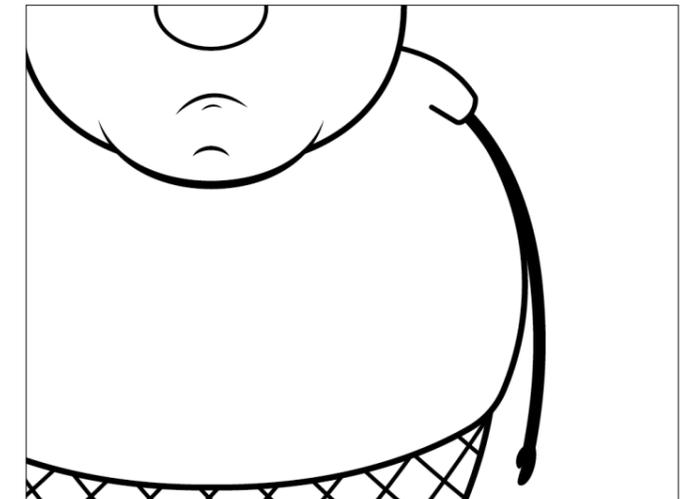


Following this, I went back up to the body and began the creation of the arms. This started with the sleeves, which I made by using the pen tool to make an initial rough shape and then I used both the curvature tool, which allowed me to shape lines by pulling on them and the direct section tool, which allowed me to reposition wrong points. Additionally, due to the fact that this path did not completely connect I placed a rounded cap on the end of the line like with elements before, such as the nose on the face.

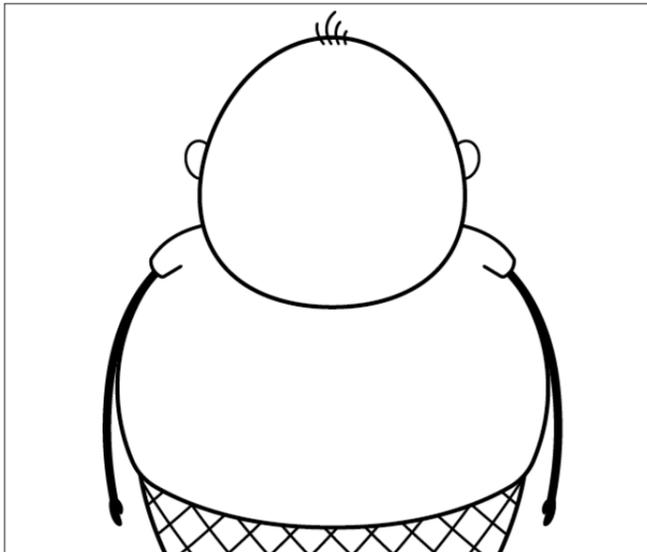


I then proceeded to use the pen tool to create the arm line, which I gave it a thick stroke so that later down the line I could easily move the arm without having to worry about the thickness being consistently the same. Once this was in position I made the hand using the ellipse tool and the direct selection tool, so I could edit the anchor points and make it curve slightly, almost to the shape of a bean. This allows the second ellipse for the thumb to fit in nicely.

After this I copied the arm on the left over to the right side, making sure to position it in the same spot as its counterpart on the other side. The way that I knew these were in the same position was by using the software's rulers to create guide lines.

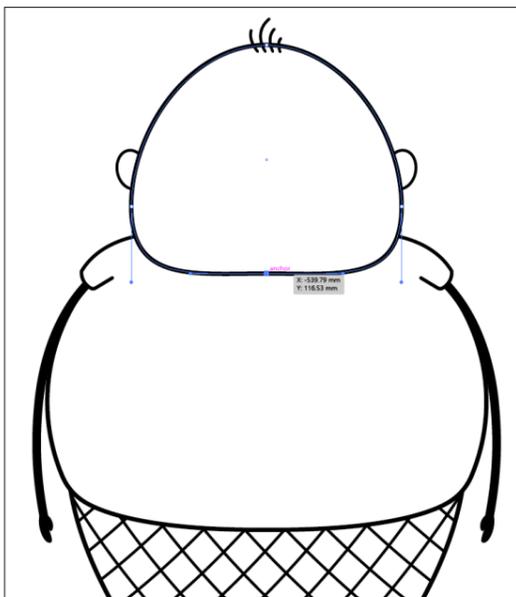
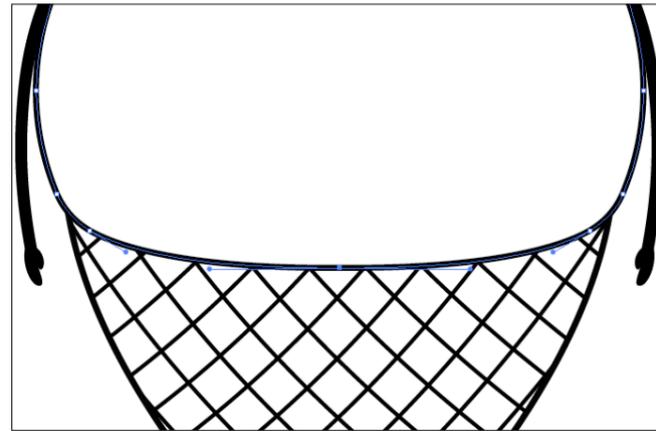


With that arm placement I finished off the outline for the front of this character. I decided not to do the colouring process just yet as I felt it would distract me from the creation of the rest of the character and I may miss something.

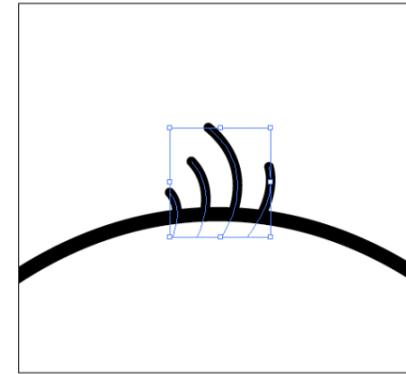


Next, I moved swiftly onto making the back view of this character. This began with me first of all removing all of the facial features that would not be seen from the back, this included things like the eyes, nose, and extra bit of chin that filled out his face. However, I left the ears and hair alone for now.

Then I worked on making his waist look as though it was more fitted to the cone, and less like the front view that had his stomach clearly flowing out. The way that I did this was by using the direct selection tool to move the bottom anchor point that controlled the curve at the waist area.

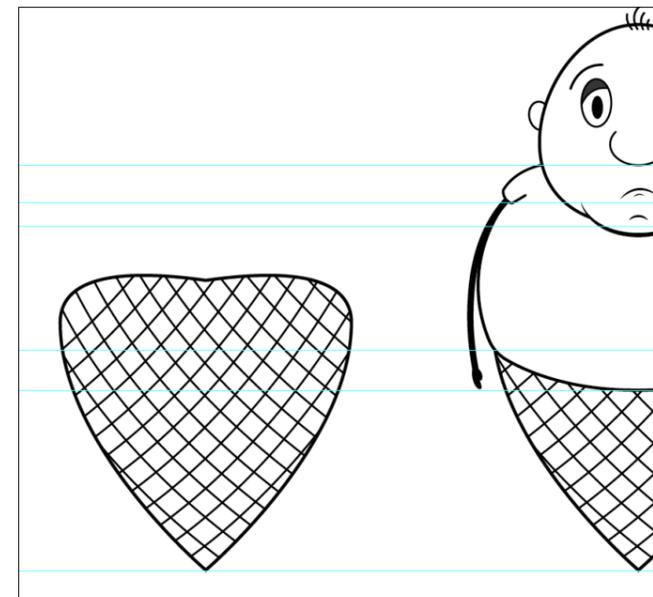
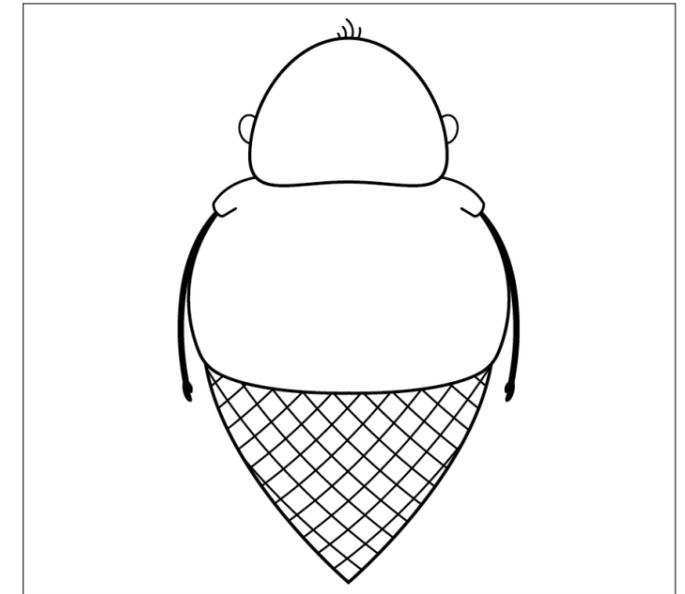


The same technique was then used to bring the back of the head up in order to give the appearance that Scoop's head sat further forward on his body. Additionally, the fact that a neck can't be seen even from the back helps to exaggerate the character's size, making it seem like he has rolls of fat on his neck.

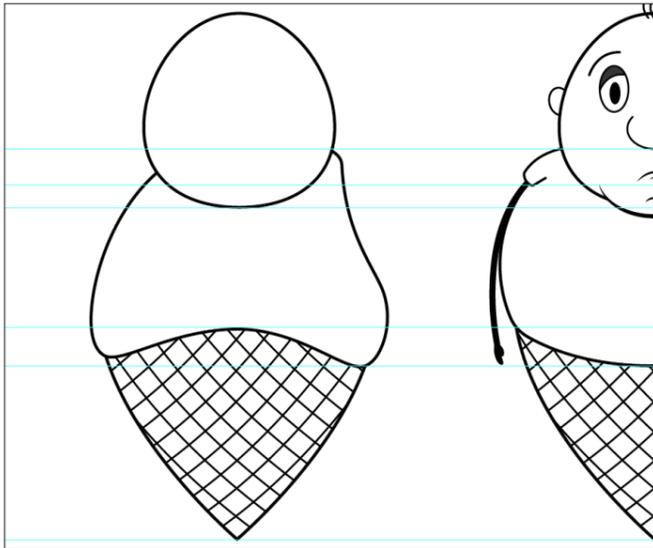


After this I went and edited the hair. What I did here was place it on a lower layer so that it looked as though it was in front of the head and I flipped it, this was because of the perspective change when looking from this side of the character.

This was the last edit that was made to the back, not much had to be done because the back of a character is not overly interesting if its not moving. Additionally, I once again refrained from using colour at this point because the sides still needed to be created.

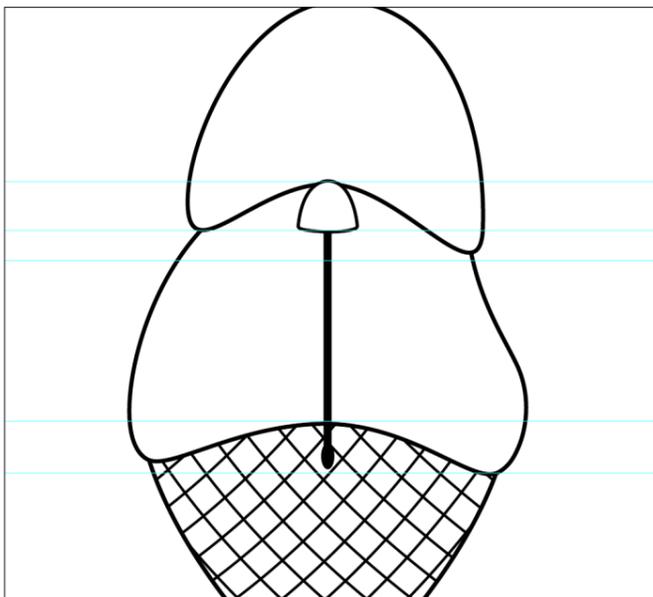
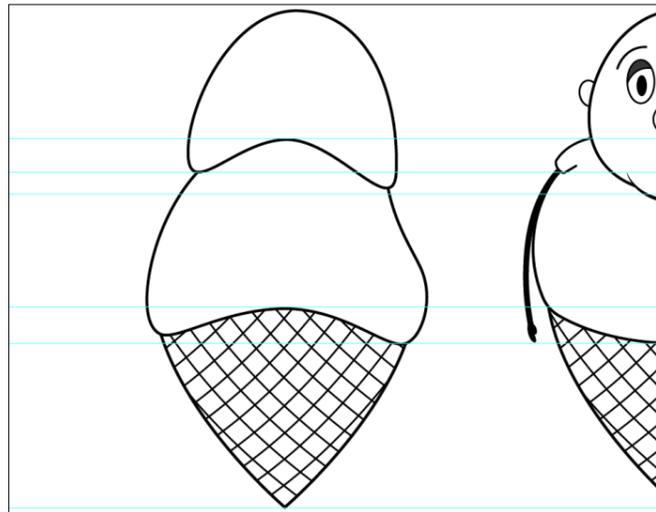


Following this, I started the process of creating the side view. However, unlike the others in order to make sure that I was being perfectly accurate with placement of body parts I used guides to mark out where key parts of the body sat. Once I had these guides I copied over the cone, so that I could build up the character from the bottom.

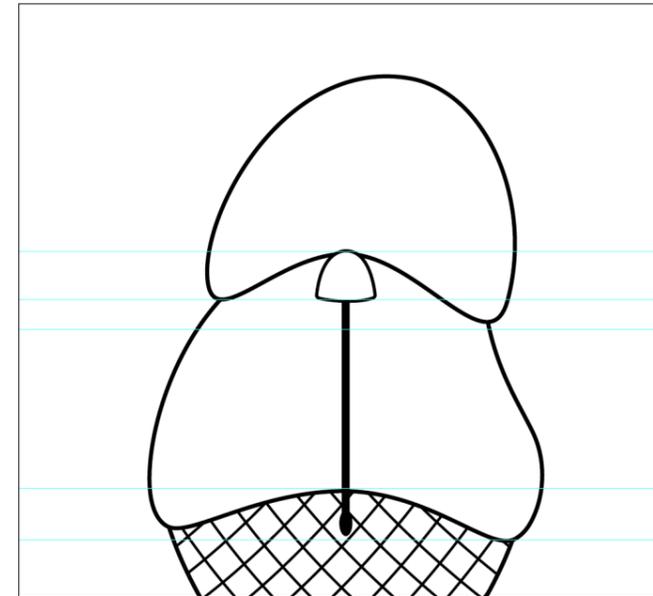


I then started on the body, for this I brought over the previous body that I had made for the front and used the direct selection tool to move points around. I did this until they matched the guides and made it look as though the character was slouching, as well as having his head look like it was sitting slightly forward. To give me a rough idea about where the head would be located I also copied over the front view's head with the body.

Once I was happy with the body, I used the same method of editing anchor points with the direct selection tool in order to get the head to sit on the body. While doing this I was trying heavily to match the guide placements, but doing this ended up making the head look as though it was drooping onto the body and that wasn't the effect I wanted. However, no matter what I tried I couldn't fix it at this moment so I moved on.

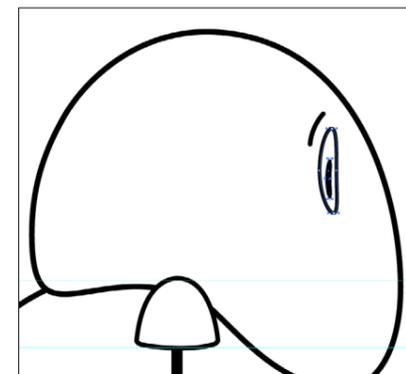
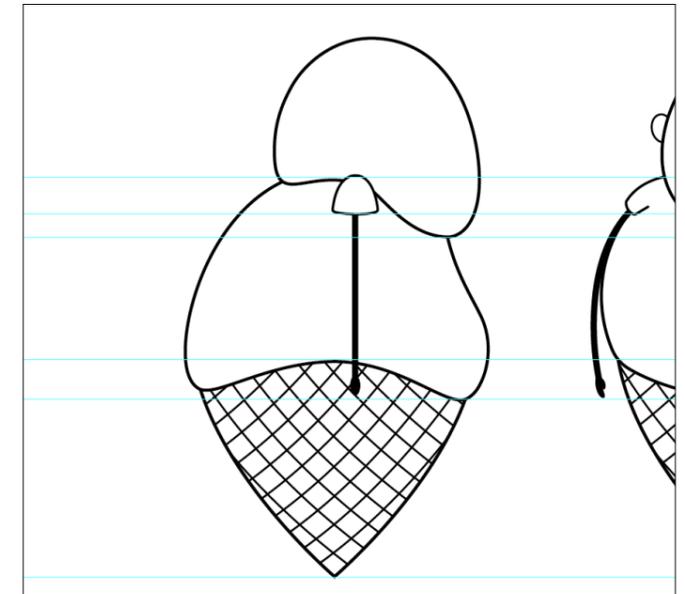


As for what I moved onto, I started the creation of the arm. The way that this was done would be by using the pen tool to create the sleeve, once again paying careful attention to make it adhere to the guides. Then I used the line tool to make the actual arm, matching the stroke that I used on the front and back sides, so that I could edit poses easier later on. As well as this, I used the ellipse tool to place a hand on the end, this time a thumb wasn't needed because it wouldn't be seen front this perspective.

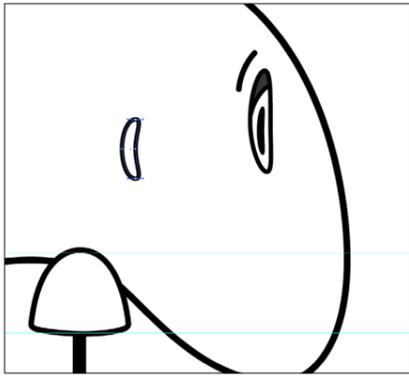


After a while I returned to the head and began to experiment with it, during this time I figured out that moving the head forward solved the drooping problem and looked better aesthetically as well.

I took this knowledge into account and manipulated the anchor points until the head looked like it actually sat on the shoulders. With this said, I was still a bit weirded out by how the head looked as though it could have a skull, even though the character is meant to resemble an ice cream and I intend to have him melt at the end of the animation.

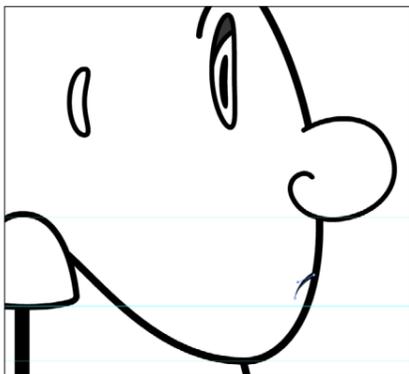
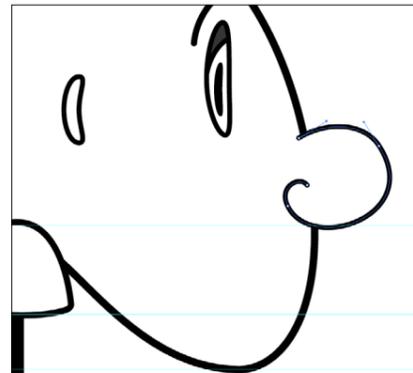


Once the head was right in my eyes I moved over a copy of an eye and an eyebrow, this was easy to position because the height of the character was exactly the same. Once I got these on the head I squashed them and edited the anchor points to give the eyes a slight curve, making them look as though they were more set in the head.



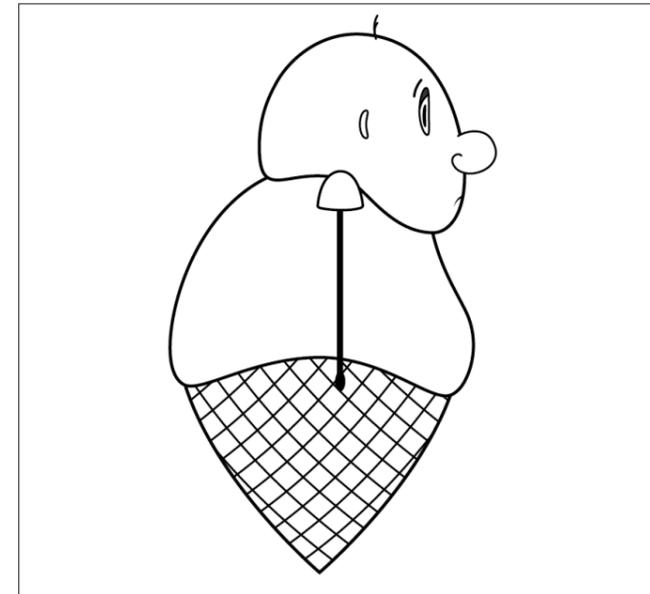
Following this, I used the same method as the eyes to get an ear on the head that curved slightly to show they were going forward. Additionally, I also added the eyelid to the eye and used the blob brush again to block in a bit of colour, so that I could better picture how the character would look.

I then moved onto the nose, this was quite simple to create as it just involved me using the pen tool to rough out the shape that I wanted, then I tweaked the points using the direct selection tool. Much like the version on the front view, I also placed a cap on the path, so that the ends would be rounded off nicely.



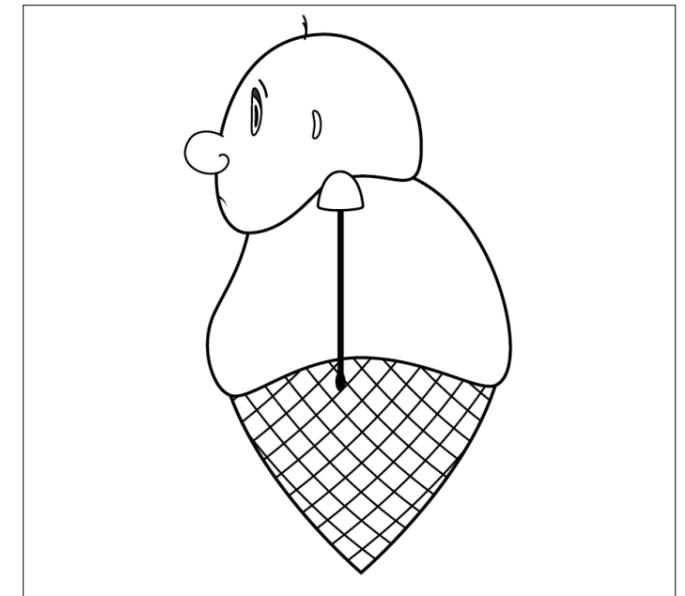
Next I used the pen tool to make the mouth and when I was happy with it I placed a width profile on the stroke to make it taper at one end. I couldn't use the same one as on the front where both ends taper because that would have made the middle section of the mouth become really thin.

Finally, I ended this side view by making a couple of hair lines for the hair, paying particular attention to how they appeared further forward on the head than things like the ears because of how I layered them on the back view.



This resulted in me completing the right side view and now I would need to progress onto making the left side.

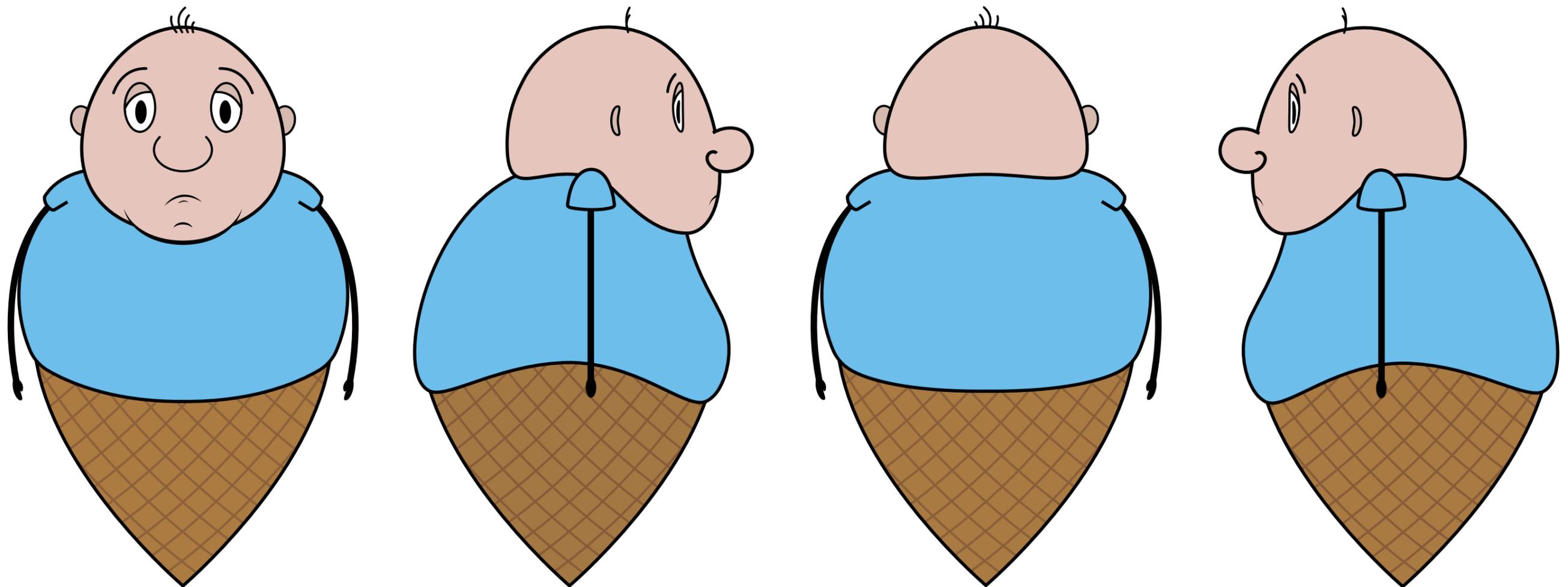
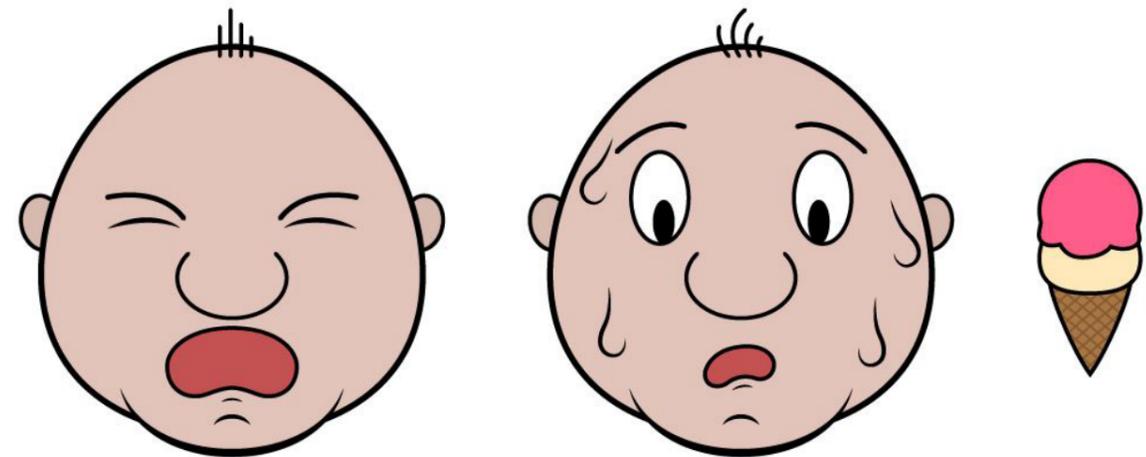
For this side I realised that it would be basically the exact same as the right side view, therefore I ended up just flipping the character horizontally.



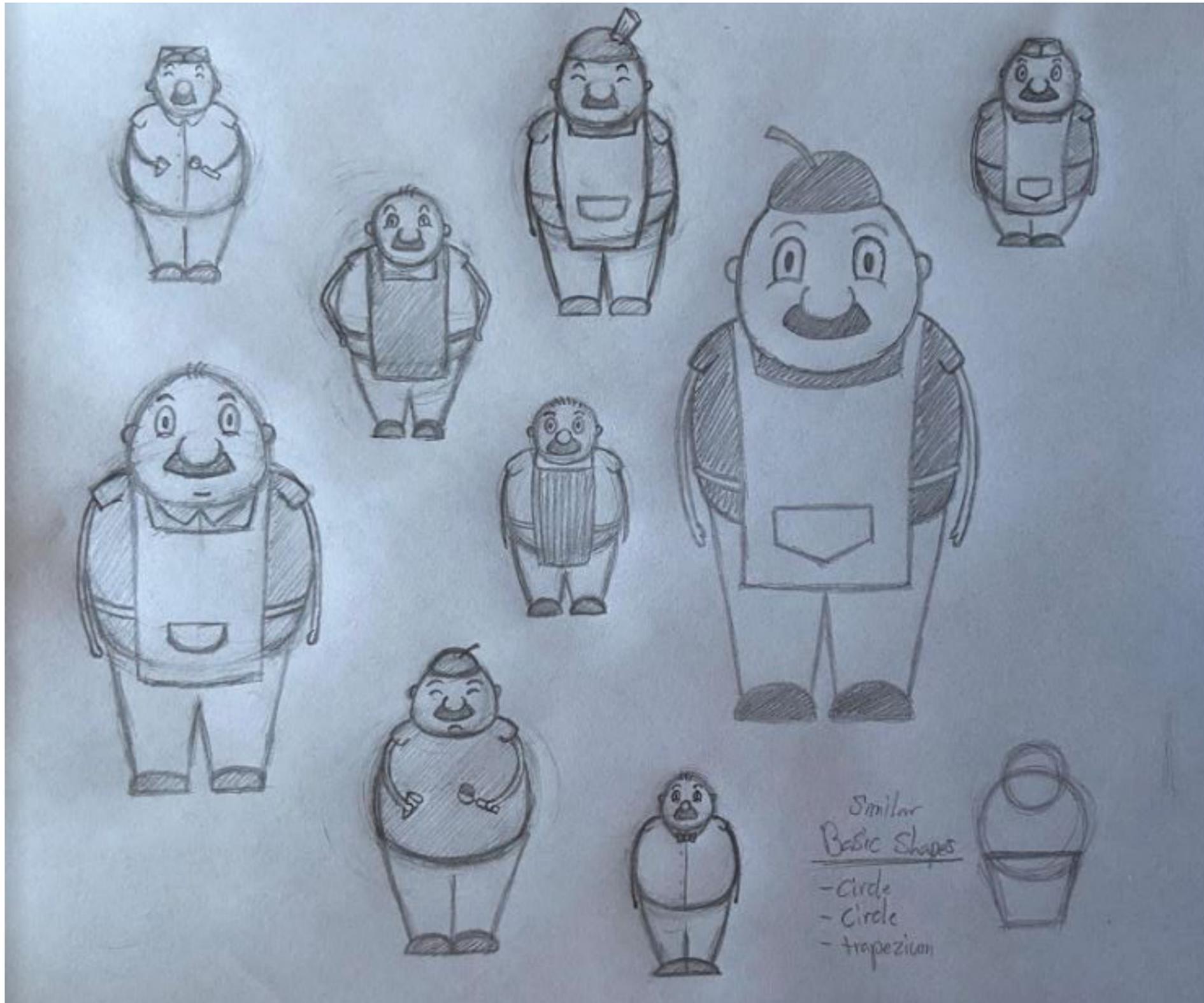
# Scoop Final Design

Once the outlines were finished I proceeded to add colour to the character and arrange them in an order that made them look as though they were turning around. As for what colours I used, I decided to make Scoop's head a skin colour, this was because even though he is a person made of ice cream I still wanted him to look kind of human. Then for the shirt I tried to convey the character's emotions by picking a soft blue that didn't contrast with the skin colour too much, the reason for this was because blue is typically associated with sadness and being down. There wasn't much I could do with the cone, since ice cream cones are a brown colour normally. However, I did change the line work on the inside of the cone to be a slightly darker colour, meaning that it could be seen but it wouldn't be as prominent as the black outline around the character.

As well as this, I also used the same illustrator techniques to create a pair of facial expressions that the character might use, along with the ice cream that he would receive later on, similar to the Gravity Falls sprite sheets.



# Character Design 2



Following this, I proceeded to design the other character in this animation, the ice cream vendor. This time around I was a bit more cautious with my design, since it needed to look like someone that would exist in the same world as Scoop. With this in mind, I broke this character down into basic shapes that were similar to Scoop by using a circle for the head and the body, but then I broke away from this as I introduced legs that would look more like a trapezium.

Going in the opposite direction to the boy this man was designed with the idea of him being a happy/jolly person. The way that I tried to show this was through having his moustache curve slightly to look like a smile, as well as making his cheeks cover his eyes at the bottom since this is something that happens when someone smiles.

Looking at the general shape of this character, I had a bit more freedom to decide how they should look, since they were the first person with legs. Therefore, I experimented with different stances, having the feet together, making the legs rounded, deciding whether they had small or big ankles.

Additionally, another area I experimented with was the clothing, this character wouldn't be moving around as much as Scoop, so I didn't have to worry about the affect movement like walking would have. Due to this I used different shirts, hats, and even tried out an apron, which fit quite well.

Once I had my character to the point I wanted I went through the process of creating a sprite sheet like before.

# Rough Sprite Sheet 2

Bio: Mr. Cherry Age: 65

- Jolly
- Slightly fat
- Owns ice cream stall in the park.

- Scoop is one of his regular customers
- His wife runs their ice cream shop while he used the stall.

Likes:

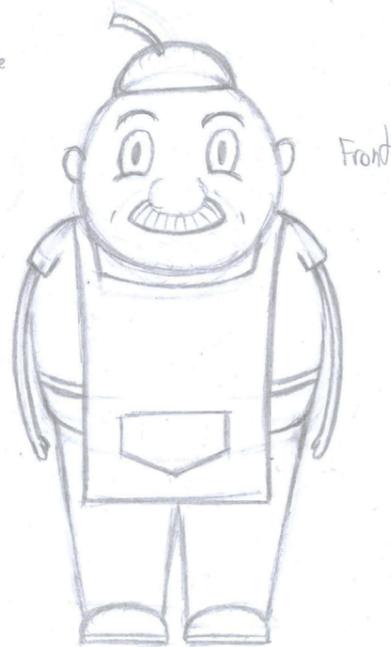
- Keeping people happy
- Nature and animals
- His grandkids
- Seeing/talking to Scoop
- Being with his wife at the end of the day.

Dislikes:

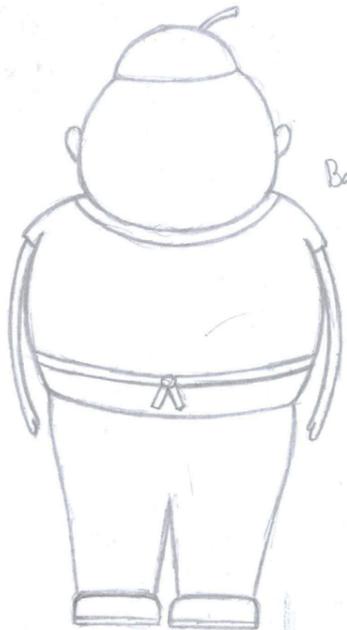
- Seeing people be upset or getting hurt
- Cold weather



Top



Front



Back



Side

## Character Bio:

**Name:** Mr Cherry **Age:** 65

Mr Cherry is a kind and slightly overweight old man who can be seen every day running an ice cream store with his wife. However, during the hotter months of the year he prefers to take his cart out on the weekend and head to the local park, where he tries to spread happiness to those around him. While manning this cart he continues to wear his staple uniform and apron, making him easy for anyone in the park to spot him. His joyful attitude has made him a friend to many, including his regular customer Scoop, who he has watched grow up over many years. During these times he has always tried to cheer him up because he knows how much Scoop wants to fit in and be like the kids around.

When it comes to movement, Mr Cherry waddles along with a bounce in his step as he pushes his cart. However, once his cart is in place he is determined to stand there until he runs out of ice cream to serve to people.

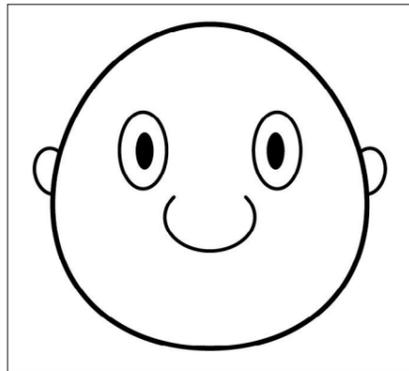
## Likes:

- Making people happy.
- Nature and animals.
- His grand-kids.
- Seeing/talking with his regular customer Scoop.
- Being with his wife at the end of the day.

## Dislikes:

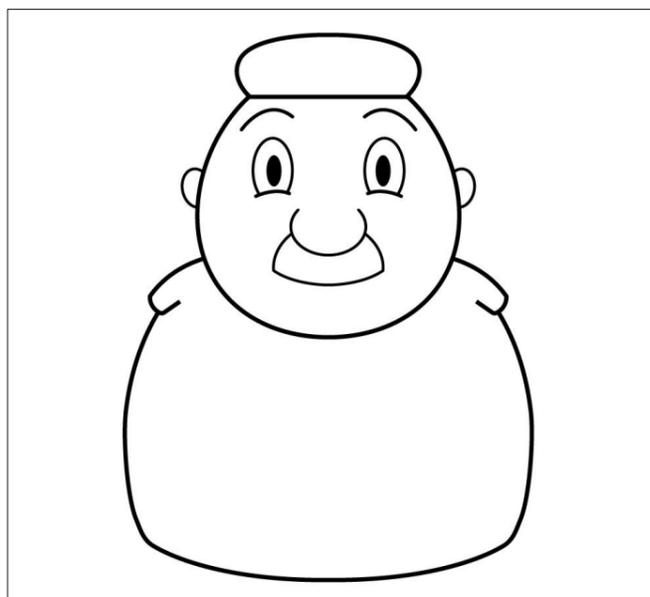
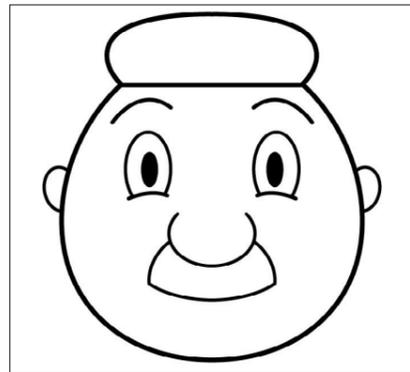
- Seeing people be upset or get hurt.
- Cold and rainy weather.
- When his wife tells him to shave his moustache.

# Mr Cherry Development

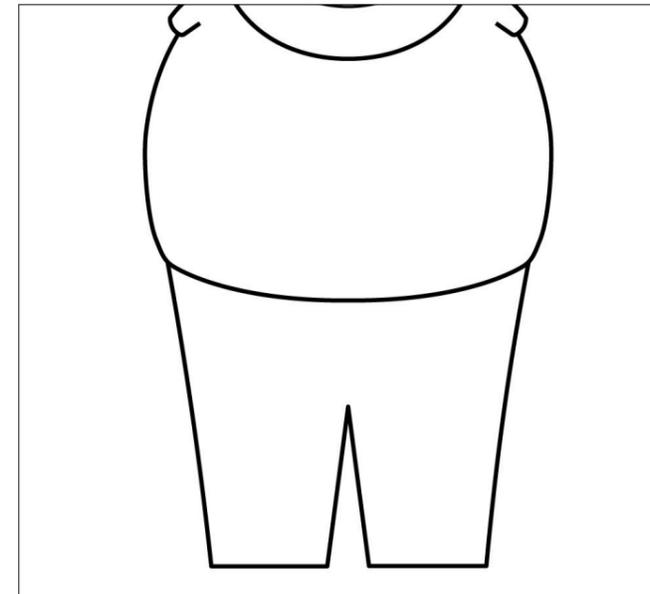


To digitalise the design of Mr Cherry I started out by creating the head using the ellipse shape tool, which I edited the point on the side of to weight the bottom a bit more. However, I didn't go as far as Scoop's head since I wanted MR Cherry to a little more rounded and less fat. Once the head shape was down, I proceeded to copy over features from Scoop's file and position them on the head, these included the ears, nose, and eyes without the eyelids.

From here I used the pen tool combined with pathfinder to add in the moustache and hat, which I ended up changing from the original cherry design because I suddenly realised that cherries on ice cream don't really make much sense. Additionally, I also placed in the happy looking eyebrows and made lines that overlapped the eyes in combination with the blob brush to represent the cheeks.

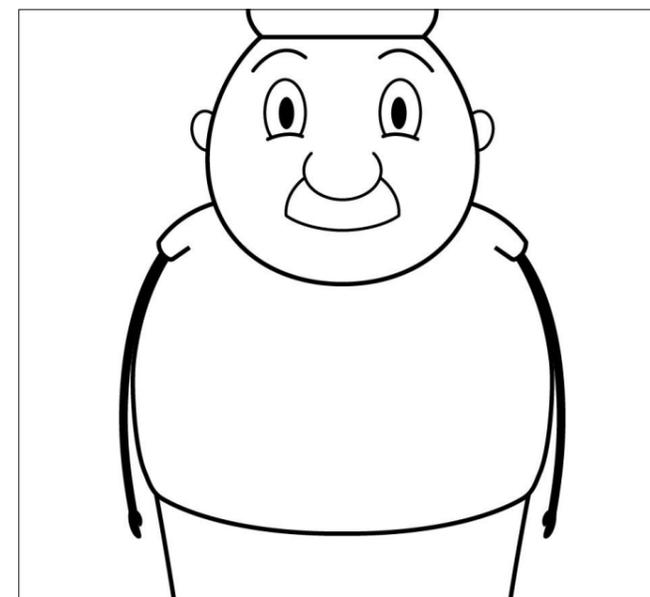
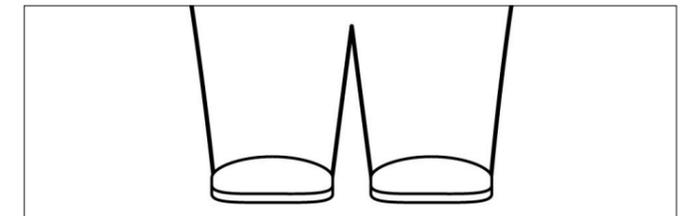


Once the face was finished I moved onto the body, which I copied over from Scoop's file. I then began to use the direct selection tool to edit the body, bringing the sides in and moving his belly inwards more since Mr Cherry isn't meant to be as fat as Scoop, so should have less of an overhang.

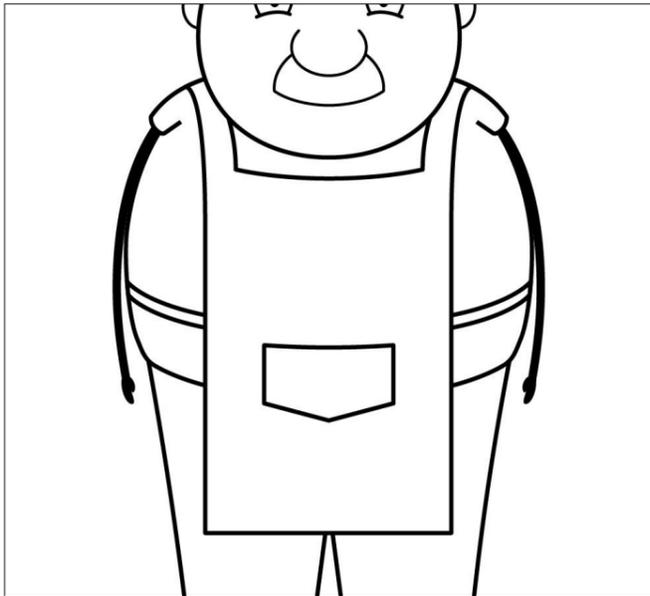


Going down from the body, I proceeded to make his legs using the pen tool, making one half first, copying it, flipping it, and then uniting it with the original using the pathfinder tool. From afar the legs look like straight lines, but they do in fact have a slight curve to them sending them inward a bit.

For his shoes I had a bit of trouble, since after making the main shape with the pen tool I could figure out how to get that line that runs along the bottom for the sole of the shoe. I couldn't make the line even and I couldn't pathfinder 2 lines together. In the end I just had to make 2 lines and leave them unconnected.

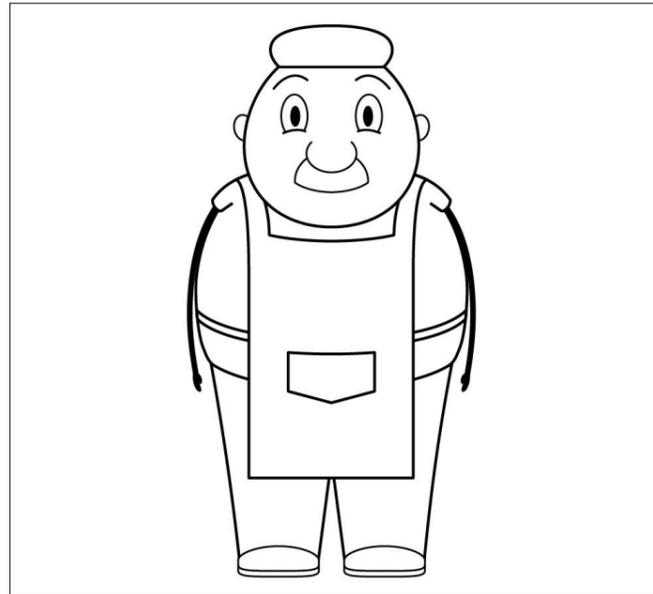


Following this, I went back up to the torso and copied over Scoop's arm, which was then adjusted using the direct selection tool to match the new body shape. This arm was then copied, flipped, and placed onto the other side of the body.

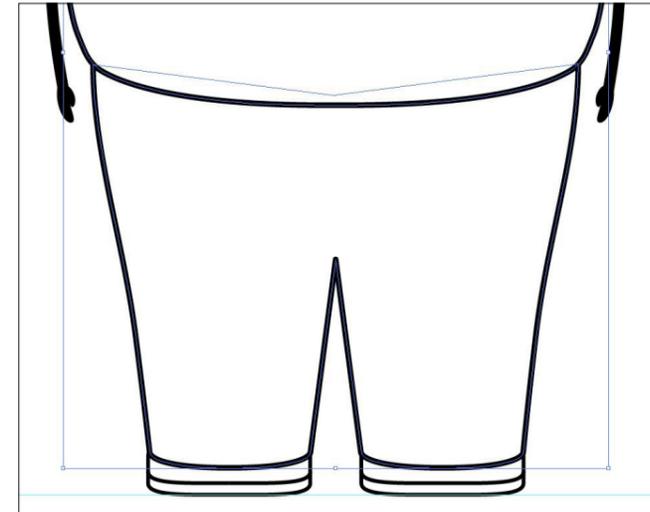
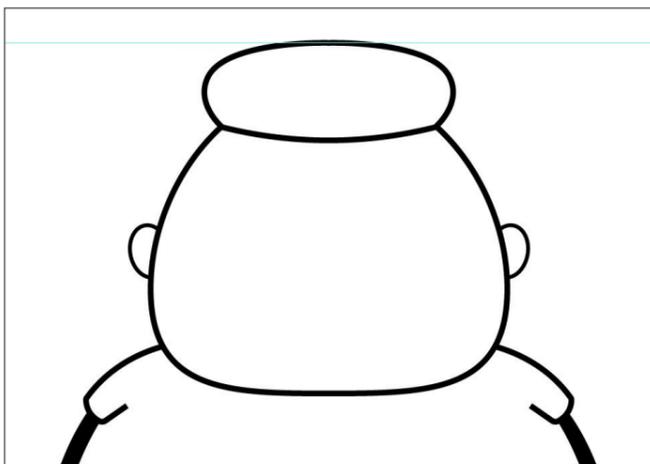


Finally, I added the apron to the design. This was once again done using the pen tool in combination with the pathfinder feature to get everything looking symmetrical. Additionally, in order to get some parts to work I needed to using layering, such as how the apron strap goes straight across the body, but it is covered by the main part of the apron.

Once the front perspective was completed I moved onto the back view. This was started in the same way as the one for Scoop, by copying the needed parts from the front and making a duplicate next to the original.

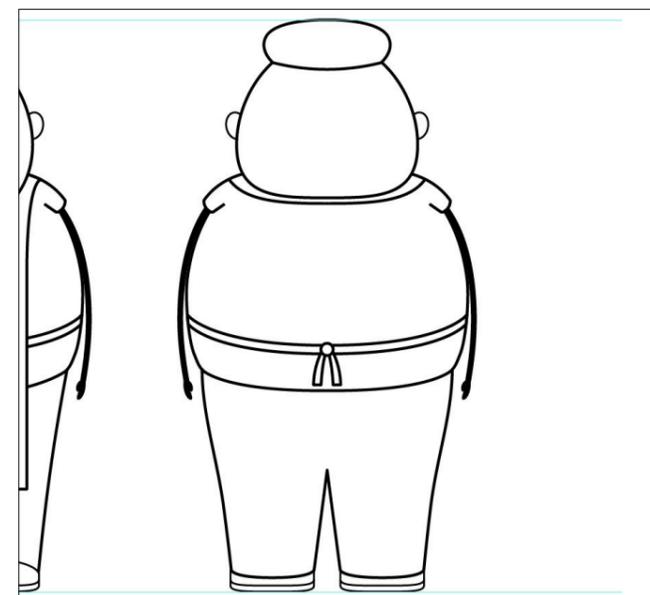
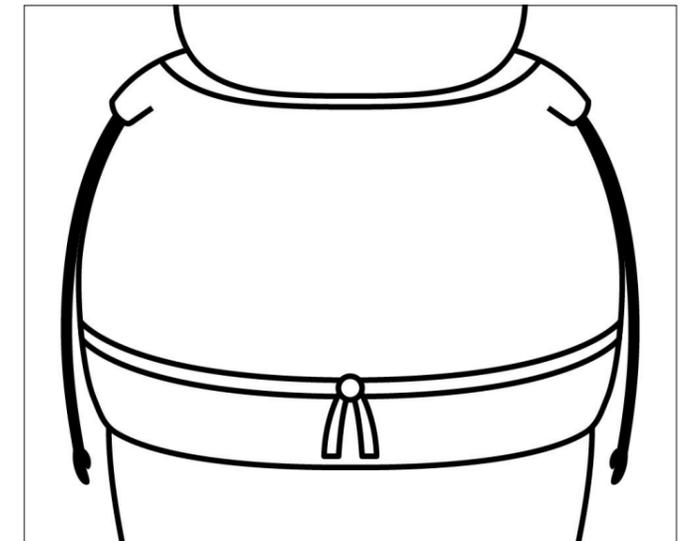


After this I started on the head of Mr Cherry, using the curve tool to drag down the hat so it looked more like it was resting on the back of the head. Additionally, I used the direct selection tool to move the bottom point of the head up, squashing where the neck would be and creating a head that looks similar to Scoop.



Moving down, I adjusted the waist so that the body wasn't hanging out of the trousers. Speaking of the trousers, these were also changed to be a bit wider at the top and the curve tool was used on the ends of the trouser legs, this made them look like they were hanging over the new shoes that I created with the pen tool.

Then I added the apron features. The neck piece was quite easy as it was just a curved line that needed to be made using the pen tool. As for the waist strap, I copied over the version from the front, since I made it go across the body anyway, and proceeded to add circle for the not along with some strap ends.

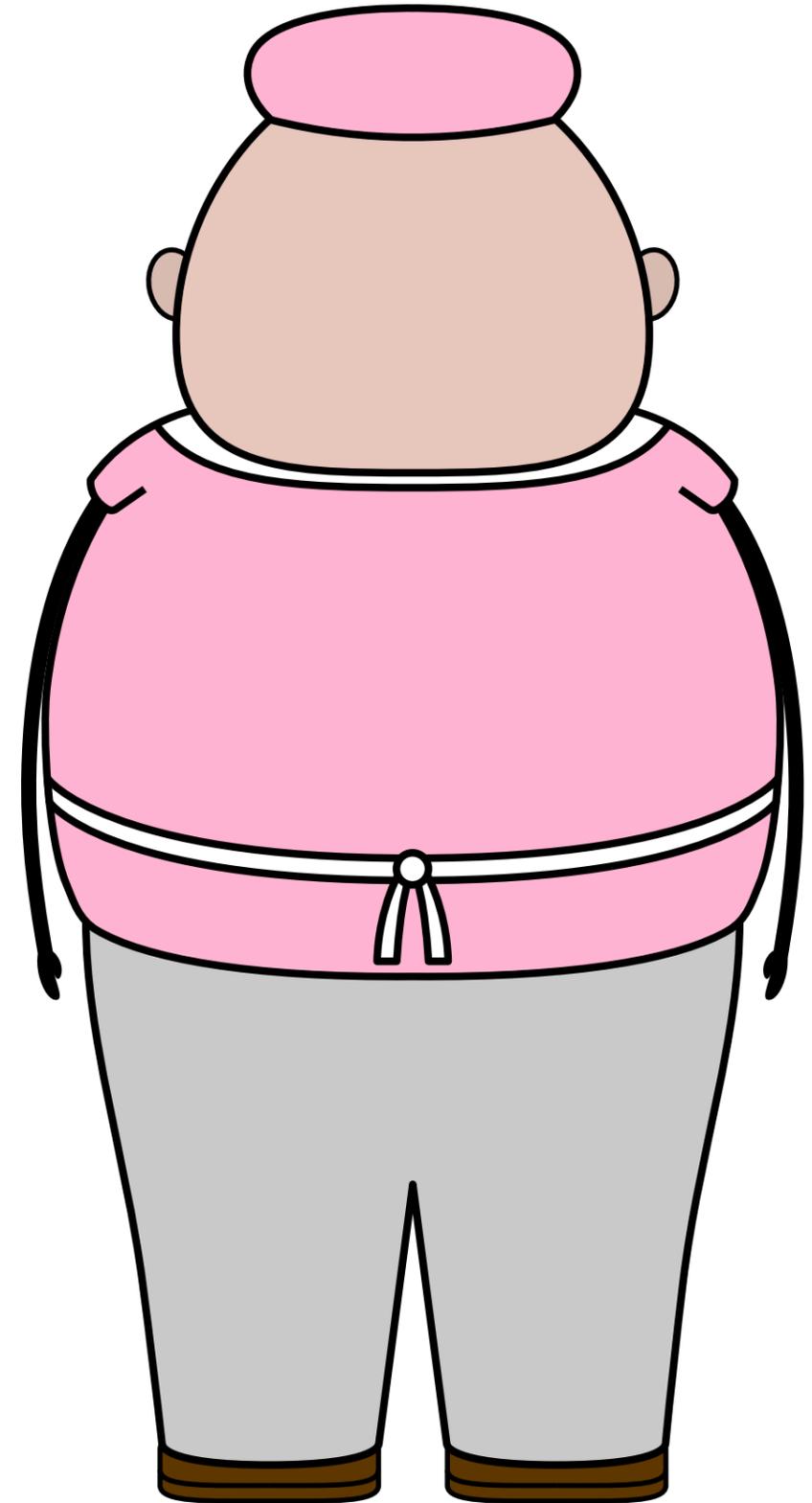


Finally, I looked at the guides that I placed on the top and the bottom of the character to make sure everything was lined up correctly.

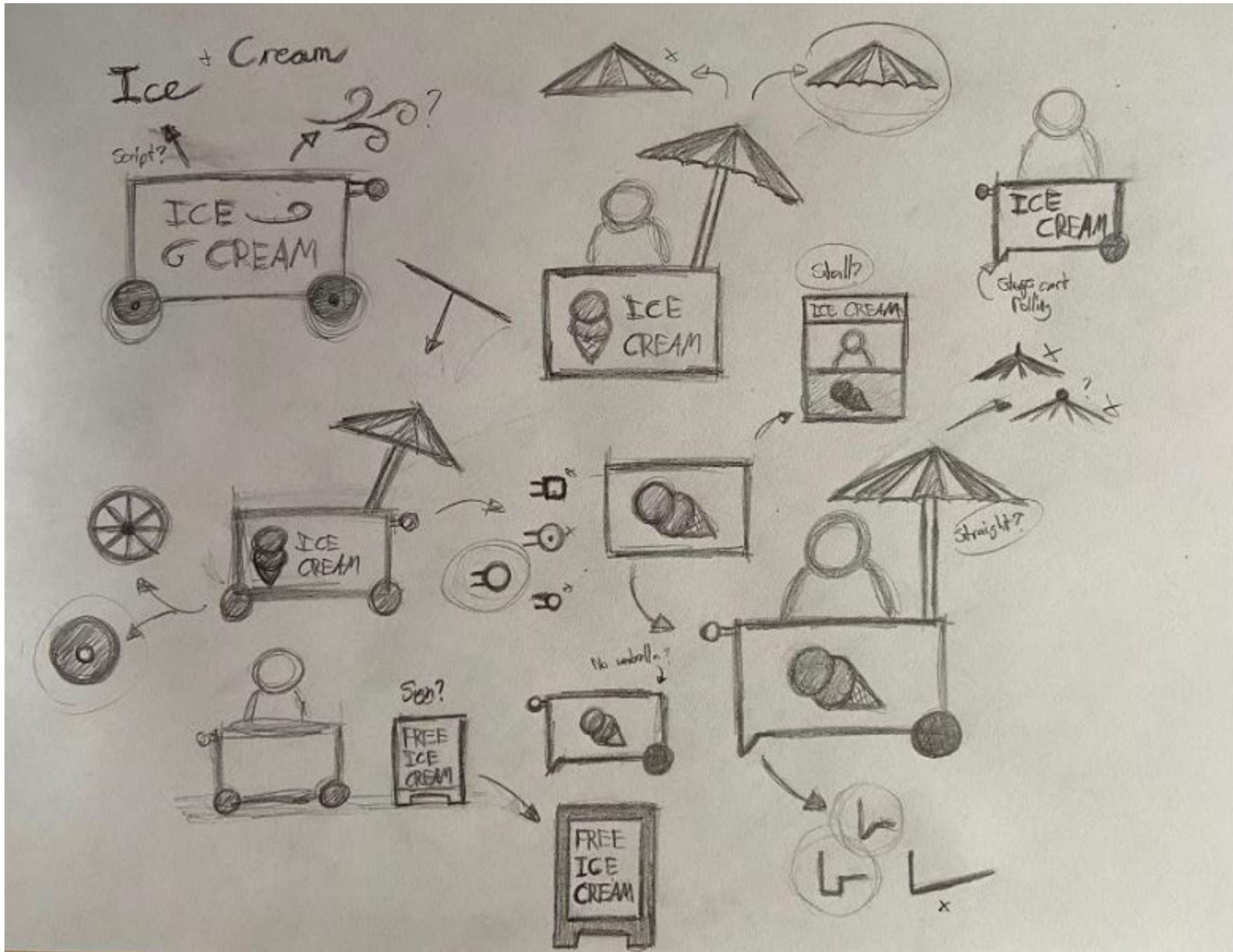
# Mr Cherry Final Design

For this character I didn't need to go overboard and create more angles than the back and the front, since I knew that I'd only ever want him standing behind his cart in the animation and maybe at some point his back would be on show.

Moving on from that point, the character was then organised with the 2 sides placed next to one another, then colour was added. For the colours I was still trying to reflect the character's mood, therefore the colour that I chose for Mr Cherry was pink, a friendly and warm colour. As for the rest of the colours I tried to match the old man aesthetic by using grey and brown.



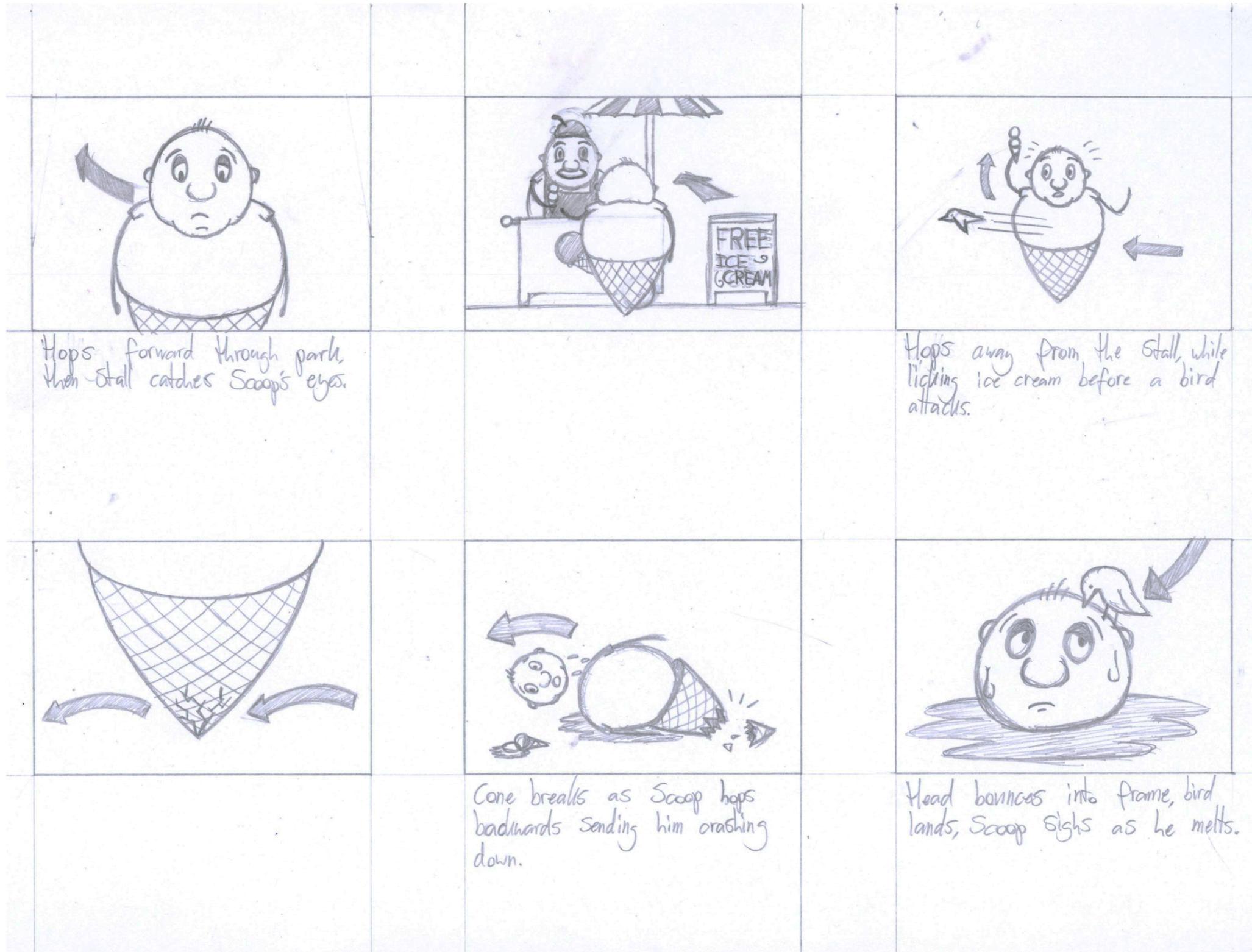
# Mr Cherry Cart Ideas



After Mr Cherry was designed, I thought about how his cart would look, since it would play a big part in his scenes. The process that I went through can be seen from the top left down to the bottom right, starting with a more decorative cart with text and ending up with a more simplistic design.

Along the way I also thought about how I could change different features, these included such as the style of wheels, umbrella decoration, and the stopper that I ended up putting on one side of the cart to name a few.

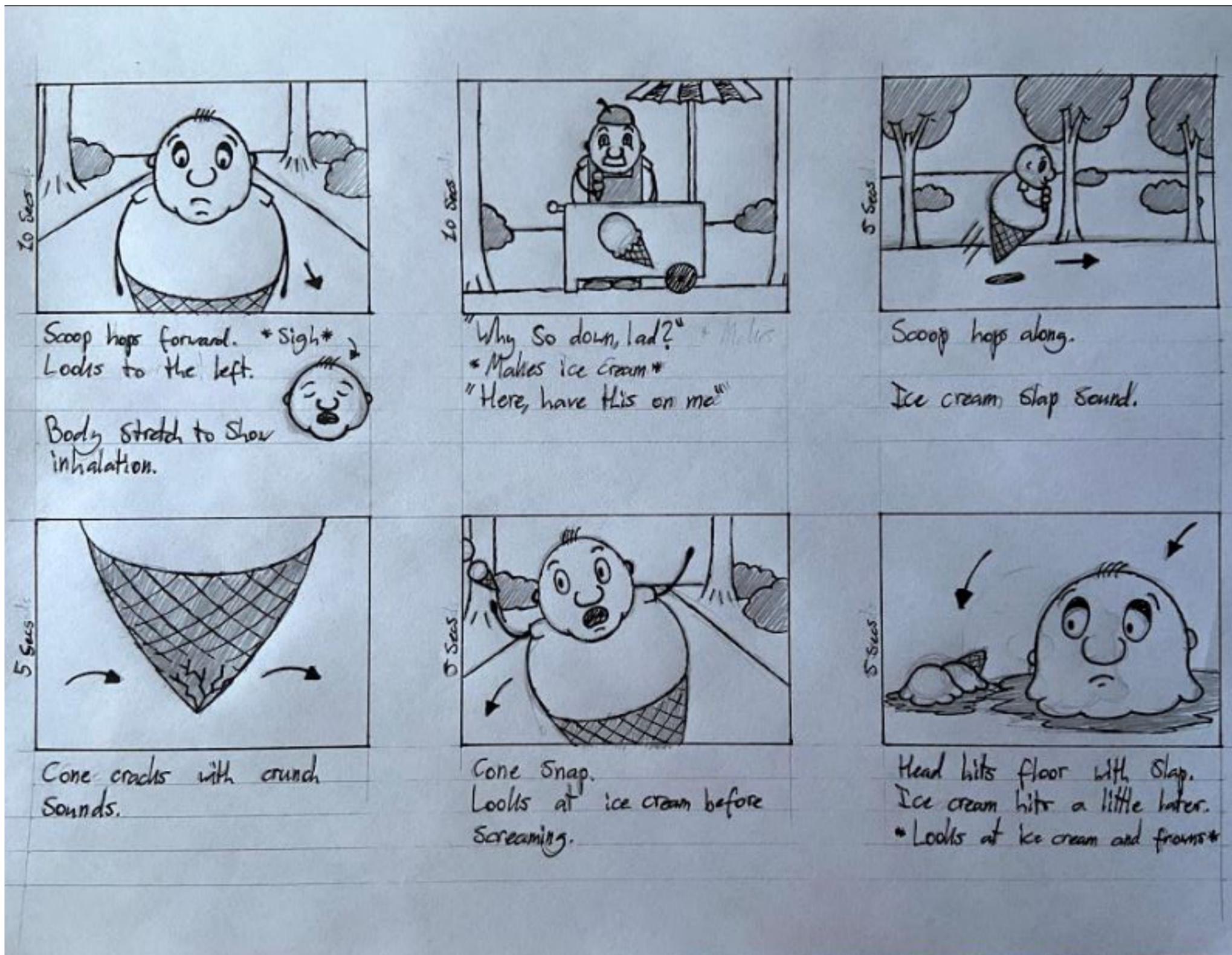
# Storyboard 1



Following the character designs, I created a storyboard, attempting to mimic features from my Adventure Time research. This can be seen by how I have used arrows to show movement in the scenes, along with notes that say how certain parts will move.

However, unlike the Adventure Time storyboards where there was a new panel for every time a character did something, I only had 6 panels total showing the key moments in the story. This made it more manageable to see what was going on and it meant that I wasn't caught up in getting small details correct.

# Storyboard 2



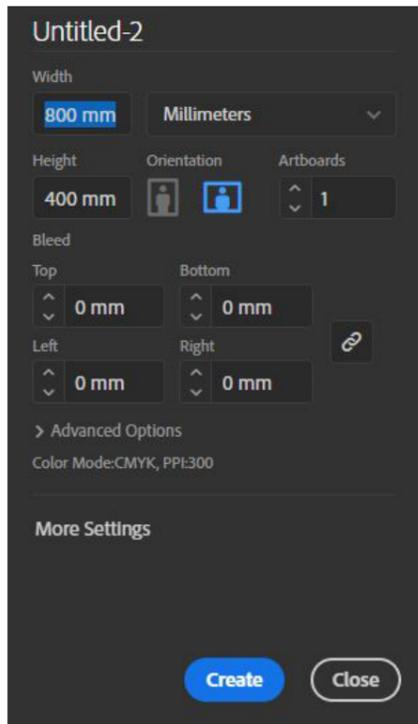
After reviewing the first storyboard I decided that the story for this project was a bit odd and could be improved. The odd part was that a bird would attack Scoop for his ice cream, it just seemed a bit random and out of place. Therefore, I switched that out for Scoop happily hopping along, then his cone begins to crack, resulting in it snapping and him falling.

Additionally, this second storyboard was a bit more detailed and followed the ideas from my research much more closely. This can be seen with how I have actually thought about the backgrounds and the arrows for movement are much less intrusive. Additionally, I have included drawings in the notes to show what will happen in the scene and I have added in speech for the Mr Cherry panel.

Timing was also something that I thought about this time around as well, since that is an important part about planning an animation. These rough time stamps can be seen on the side of each panel.

On top of all of this, the overall design of the storyboard is more like the research, with how there is a mixture of both pen and pencil to show bold outline and shading.

# Background 1

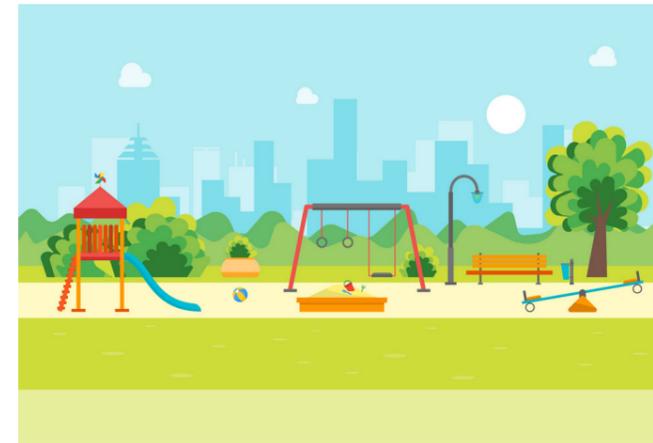


After making the storyboards and thinking about the background that would be used, I moved onto creating each scene. The first of these was the side angle of the park that would be used for both the shots with Mr Cherry and Scoop hopping along with his ice cream. To make this, I started out by going back into Adobe Illustrator and making a new document. This originally had the preset of an A3 page, but since I wanted some more room to work with I changed the size to 800mm by 400mm.

In hindsight this wasn't the best idea, since the animation would be working in pixel values and the size I used was far too big. However, even as I found this out later on I didn't change it because I knew that I would be able to resize the background in Adobe After Effects to fit the dimensions of the video.

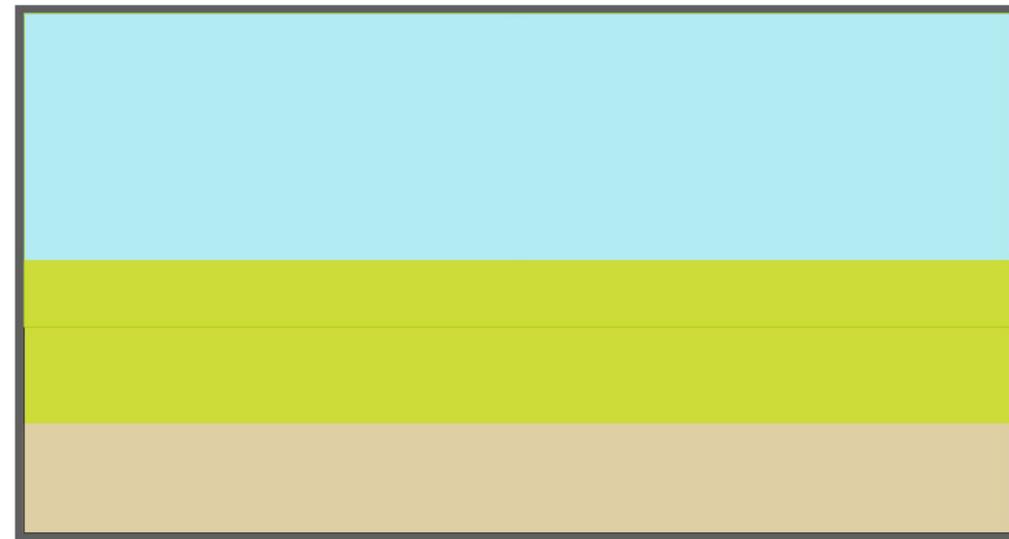


Once I created this document I was left with a large empty space that needed to be filled, however I wasn't overly sure about what direction I wanted to go in for the design. Therefore, to overcome this problem I went to search for cartoon park designs, with the main idea in my mind being that the background would be similar to the pattern inside of Scoop's cone. By this I mean that I didn't want the background to have a bold outline, this would direct more focus towards the characters and push the background into the back.

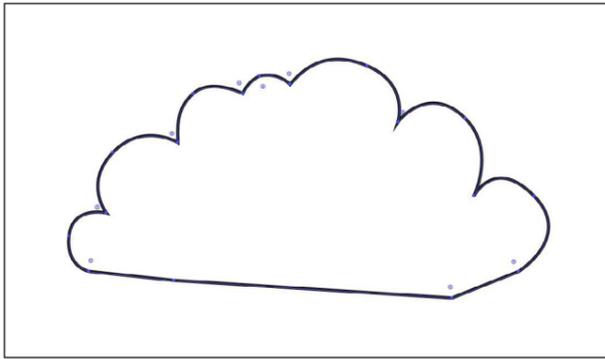


(Bigmouse108, n.d.)

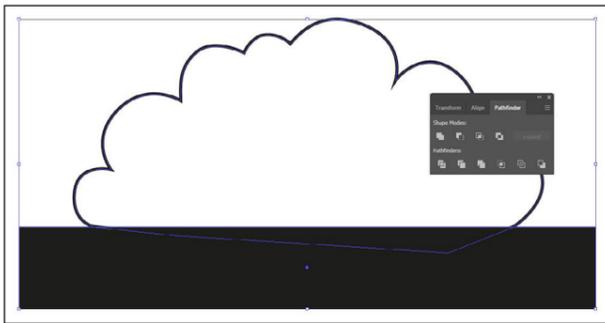
After searching for a while I found this simplistic image on Stock Vectors that felt as though it would work perfectly for my animation. However, rather than take the content within this image, I opted to just use the prominent colours and the idea of strips of colour for the grass, path, and sky. This was because, like I mentioned earlier, I wanted the background to be simple and not be the main focus of the animation.



Taking this information from the reference image, I proceeded to create 3 rectangles to divide up the shot into a path, grassy area, and sky. As for which colours I used from the image, I only took the ones for the sky and the darker grass. However, when it came to the path I picked my own colour because I felt that a dirt path suited the scene for than a slightly lighter green grass colour, while doing this I made sure to use something that was in the same range as the rest of the colours in the scene so that they wouldn't clash.



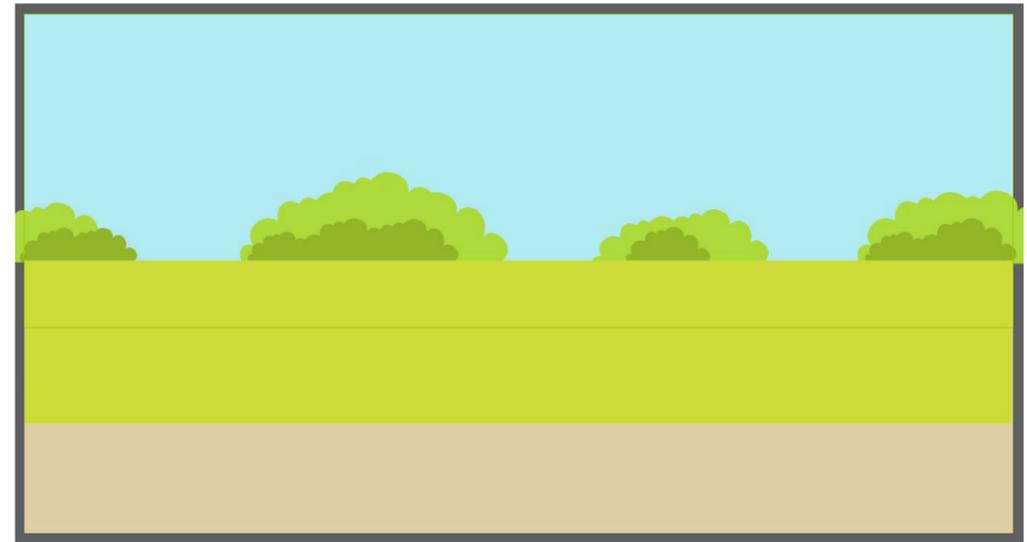
Next, I started to add nature to the scene, these would come in the form of both trees for the foreground and bushes for the background. To make the bushes I used the pen tool to create something that looked a bit like a cloud on top, with the bottom of it being a bit more rough.



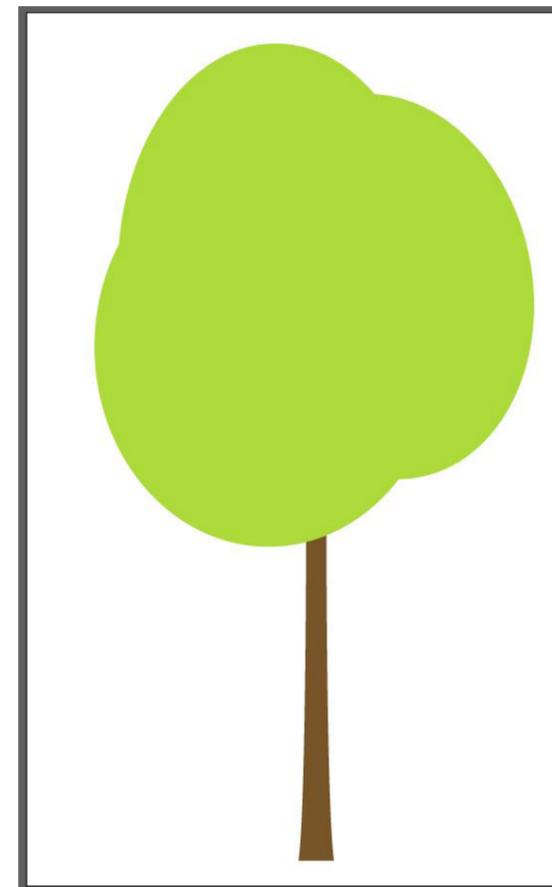
The reason why I left the bottom uneven was so that I could place in a rectangle and use the pathfinder feature to flatten the base. This would make the bush sit more flush on the grass and match the straight edged rectangles that split up the different areas.



This bush was then given a light green fill and the stroke was removed, allowing me to place it on the main grass section of the background along the horizon line. However, rather than just repeating the same bush by itself I copied it and collaged different sizes and orientations of the bush together to make variations, this meant that I didn't need to make a new bush design every time I wanted to put one in, saving me time.

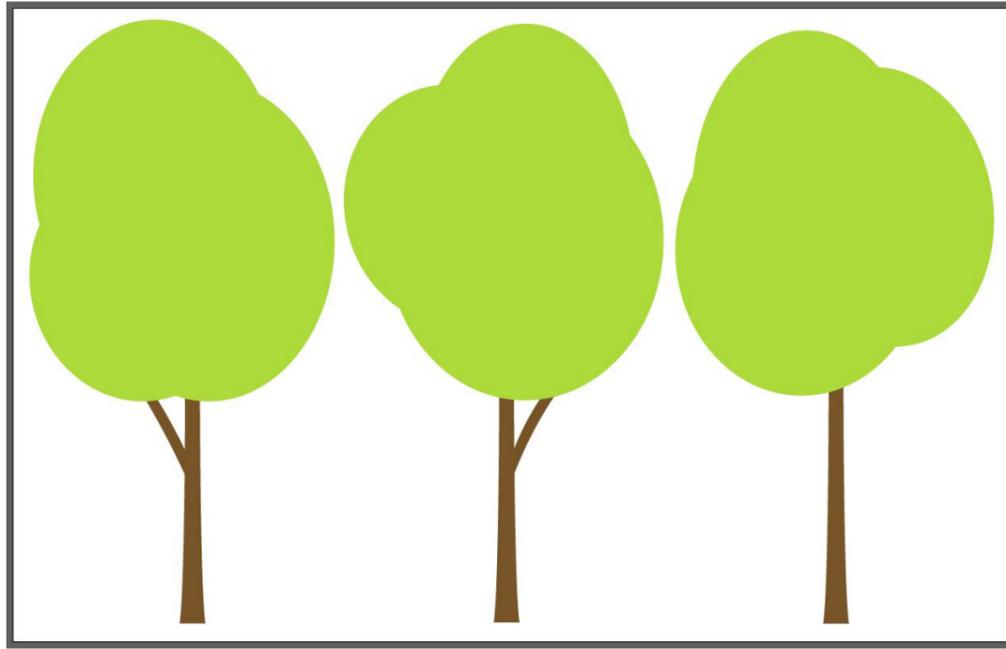


Following this, I went through the same process of collaging the bush together, only this time I gave them a dark green fill and tried to make them appear smaller than their light green counterpart. The purpose of these was to create contrast along the horizon line, therefore making the background feel more layered together, rather than something flat and boring.

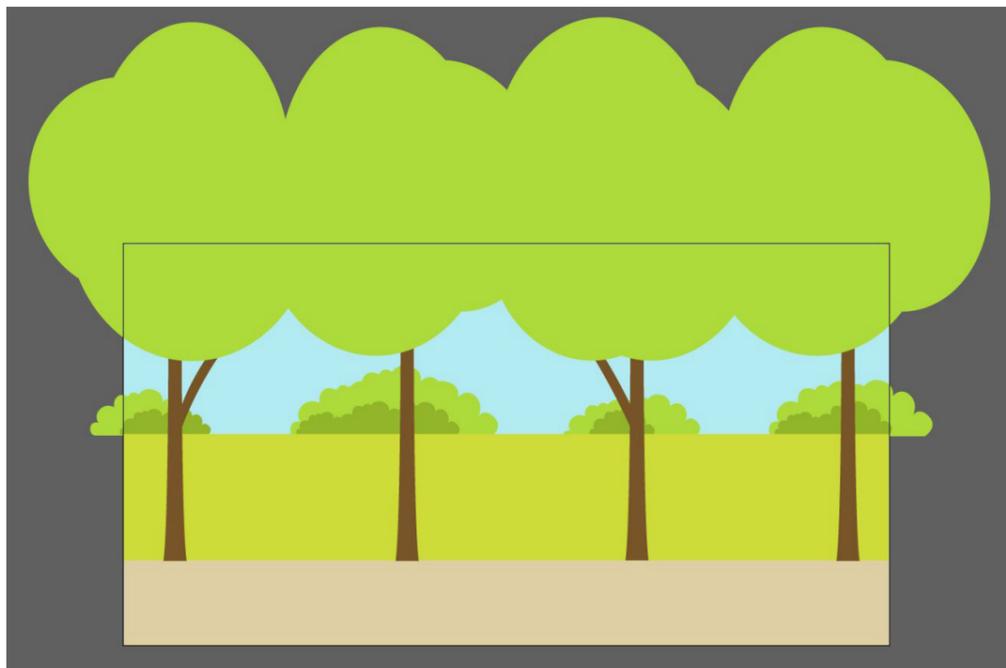


Next in the process came the trees that would appear in the foreground of the scene. To make the first one I started with the trunk, this was made using the pen tool by drawing out half of the trunk and then uniting it with another version of itself using pathfinder. As for the leaves, I wanted to mimic to cloud idea that the bushes used, but I also wanted to make use that these would be simple to animate, therefore I minimised the shape down to just 3 ovals created using the ellipse shape tool.

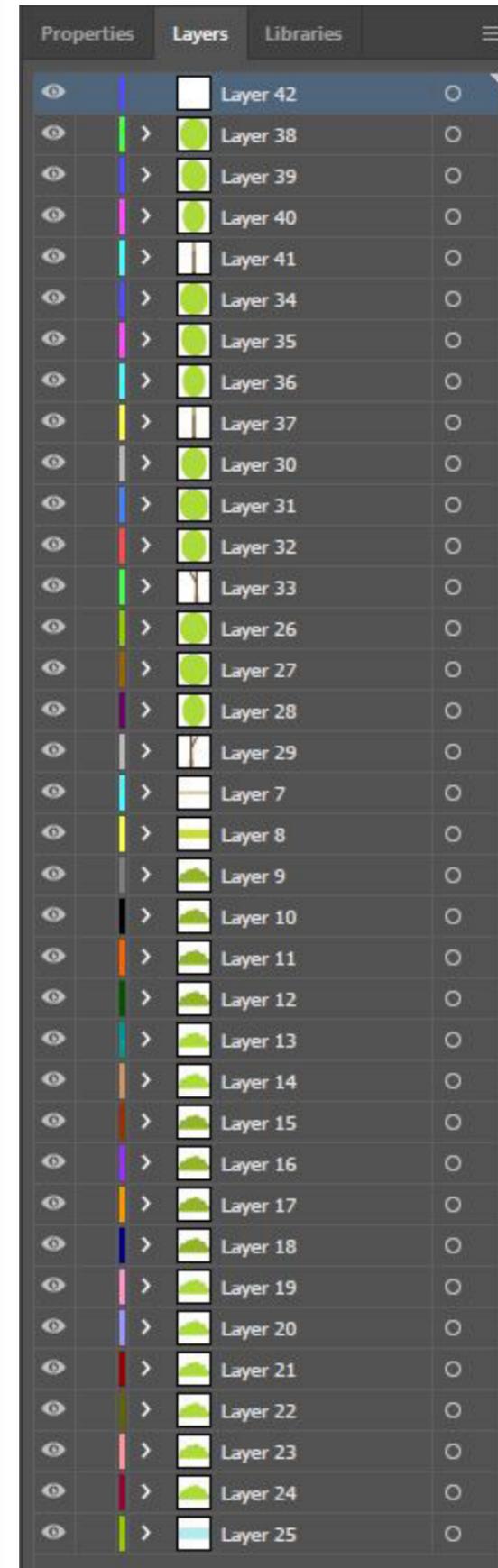
Colour-wise the leaves were made the same light shade of green as the bushes, while the trunk was turned into a brown that matched the value of the other elements.



Once this first tree was complete, I went through a similar process to create 2 additional variants, which unlike the bushes were actually designed to look different. This meant that the leaves would appear in different places and would look more unique when it came to the point of animating them.



These trees were then placed into the scene, with just the bottoms of the leaves being visible because if I were to fit in the whole tree Scoop would look far too big when he hops through it. Additionally, while I only had 3 trees to work with I placed in 4, this was because I wanted to fill up the scene more and as long as there was some variation duplicates wouldn't be all that noticeable.



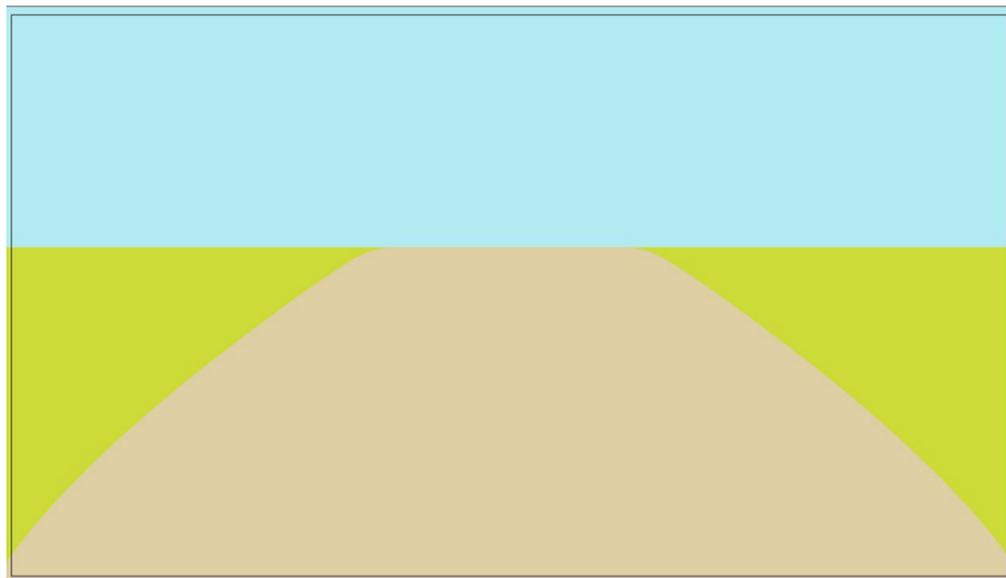
Finally, I finished off this background by separating all of the features into their own separate layers. The reason for this is because Adobe After Effects brings in all of your layers as flat images, meaning that if all the elements are on 1 layer I won't be able to make anything move.

This is something that is done for any asset that is brought into the animation.

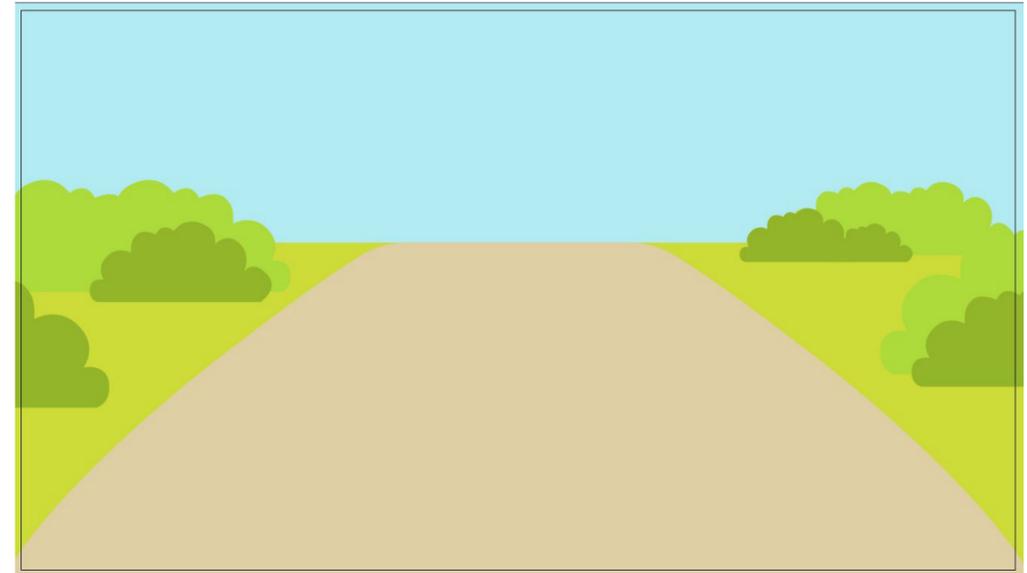
# Background 2



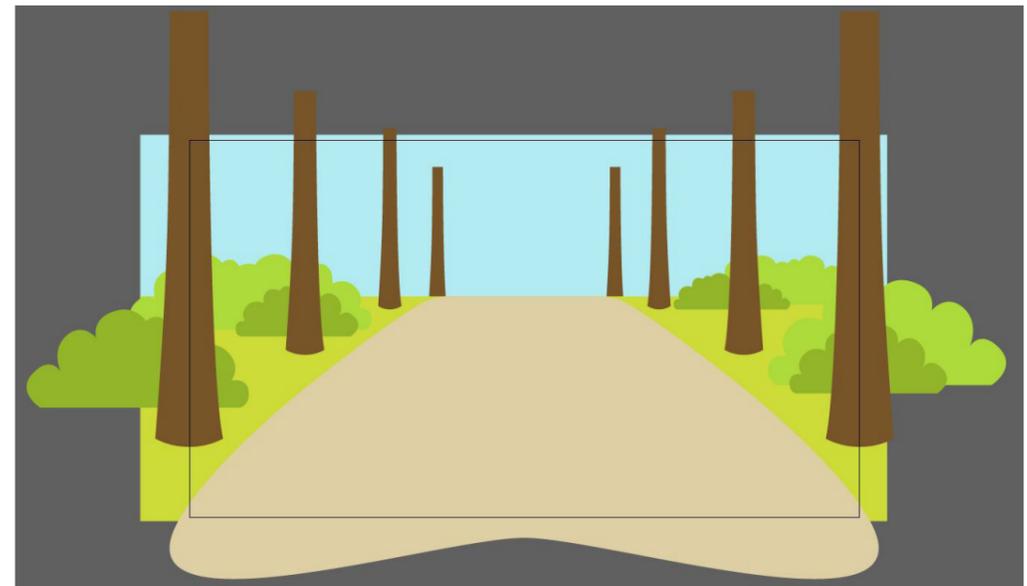
For the next background I needed an eye level shot of the park looking down the path. To create this I made yet another illustrator file, but rather than using strange sizes I made the document 1920 pixels by 1080 pixels, which is the exact size that the video will be displayed at.



Inside of this document I proceeded to put in a rectangle for the sky and grass, which I got the colours for from the previous background. As for the path, I created this using the pen tool to get the main body of it down, followed by the pathfinder feature to make it symmetrical. Then I filled it with the same cream colour as the path on the first background.



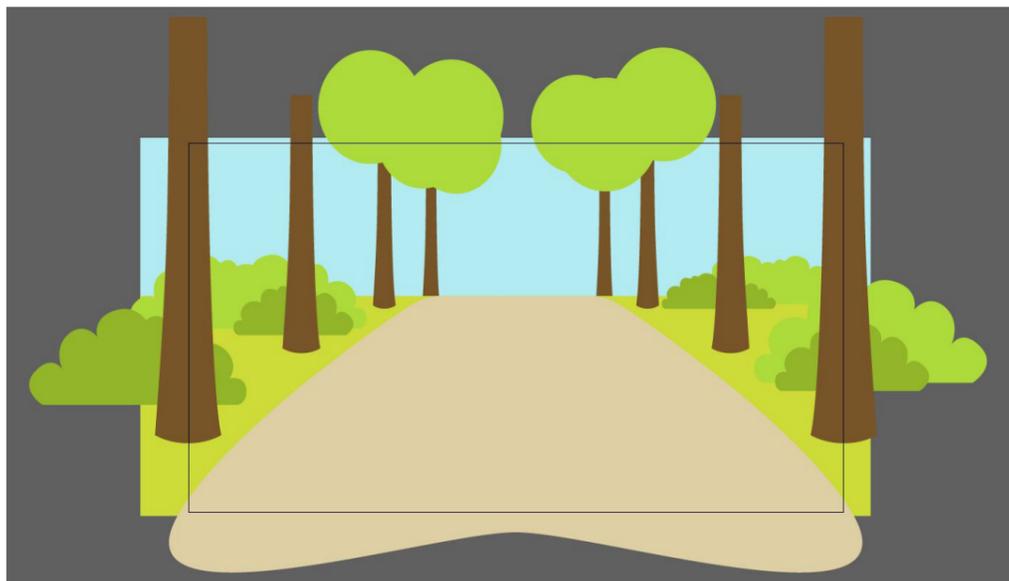
Once the ground was in, I could add the bushes that I collaged before, however instead of placing them along the horizon line I positioned all around the grassy area. Additionally, I made the darker bushes that appeared in front move slightly down from the lighter variants, this showed the viewer that there was a gap and therefore meant that they were layered.



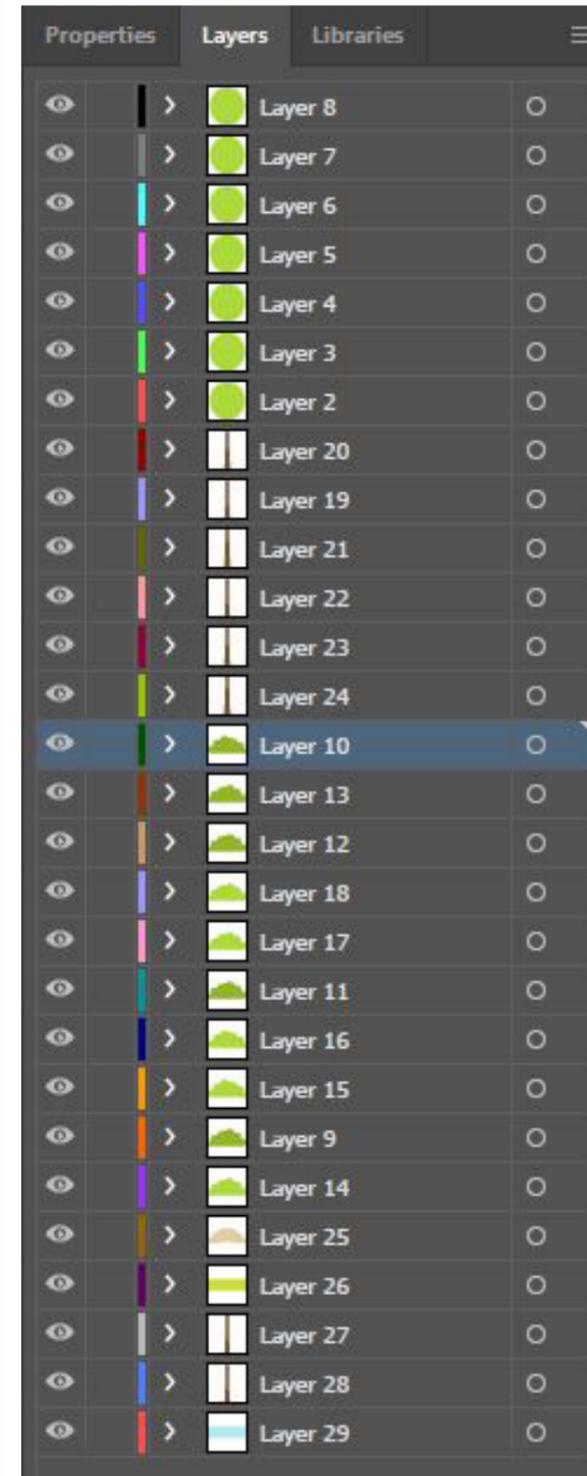
Similarly to the other background, the bushes were then followed by the trees, which I created solely using the pen tool to get a bit more of a natural and uneven trunk design. These trunks were then spaced along the grass, getting smaller and smaller with the last pair being placed underneath the grass layer to show that there was more of the park beyond the horizon.



I then added the ovals that would become the leaves of the trees, but this time around I only placed them where they would be visible. This meant that the closer trees didn't get them and I wouldn't have a cluttered Illustrator document.

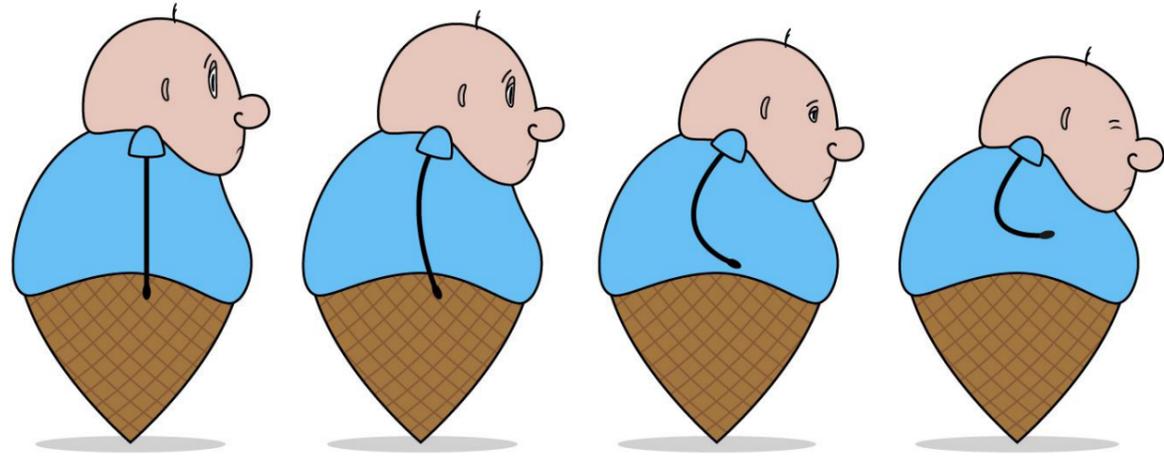


Once one side was done I moved to the other and created a different arrangement of ovals for the leaves, this would stop them from looking identical and make it seem as though the trees haven't been repeated.

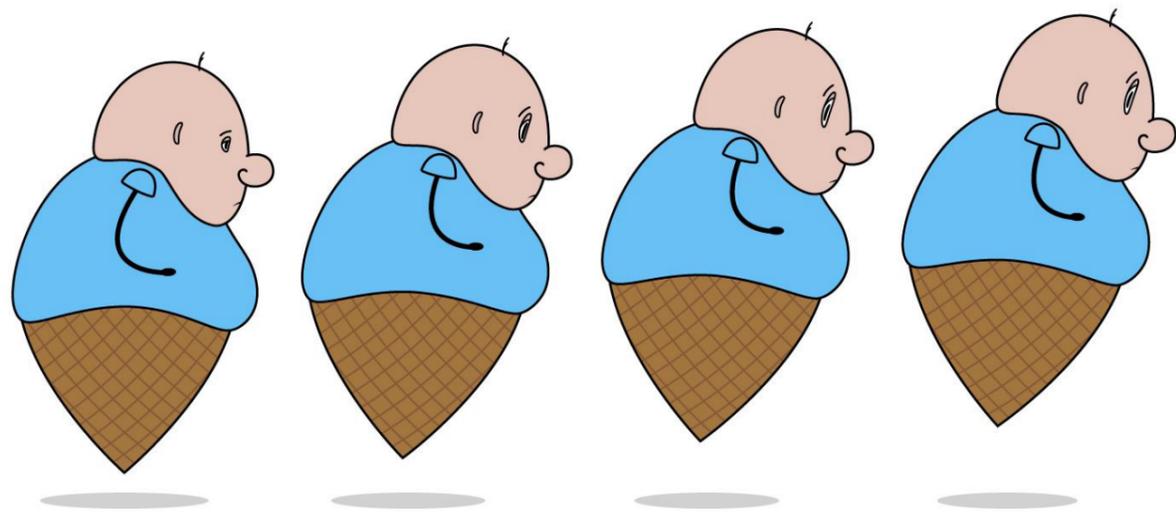


Finally, I went through the same process as before of moving every element to its own layer in order to make the animation actually possible.

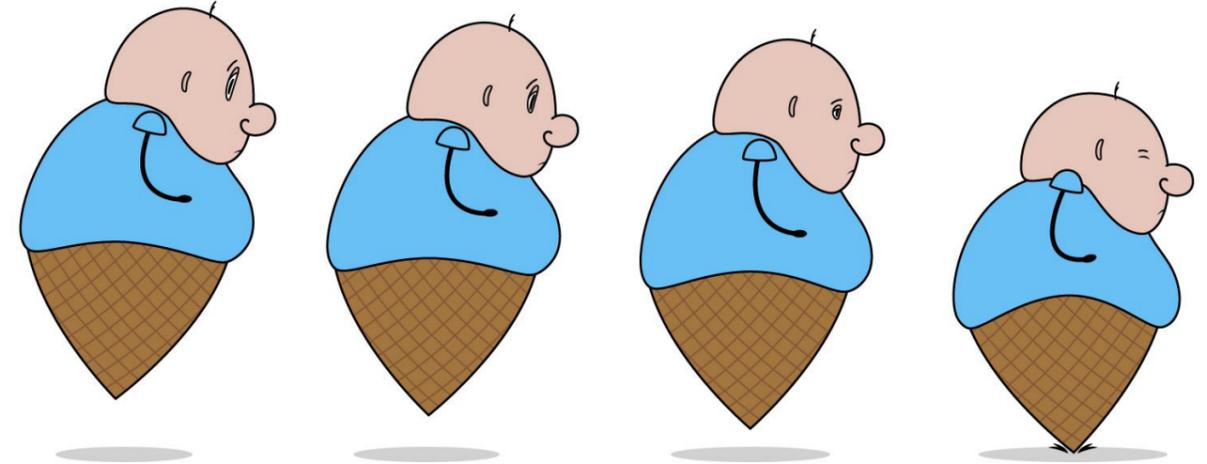
# Walking Cycles



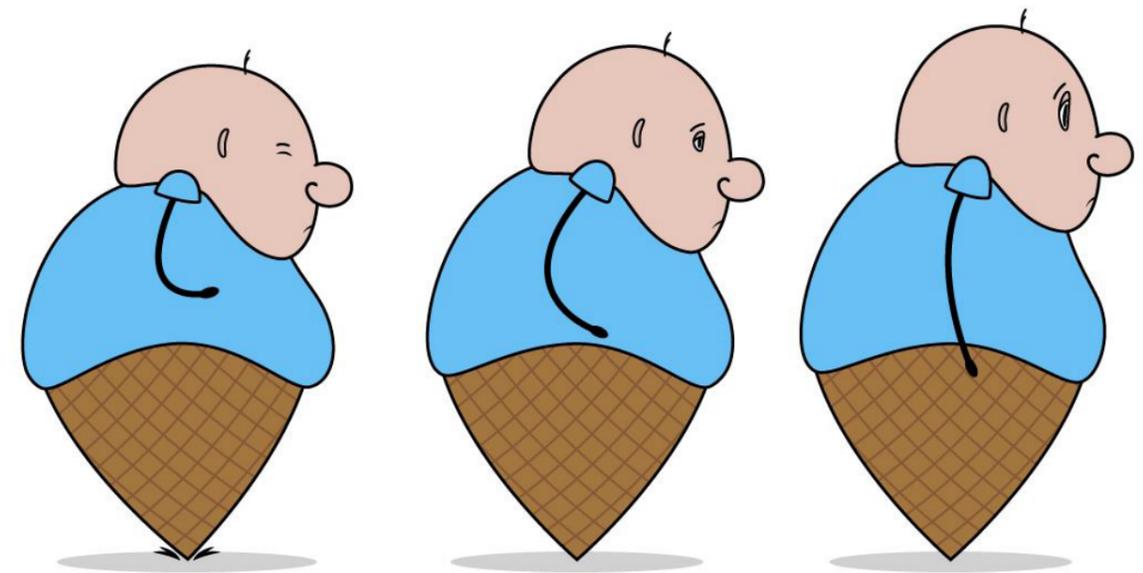
Now that the flat designs had been complete I moved onto creating the walking cycle for the sprite sheet, this is how the character will move, shown in a frame by frame breakdown. On the far left, the original sideways idle pose can be seen, then using this as a reference I copied it and began to make small adjustments to show to wind up for the hop. This process was then repeated until Scoop was in his bracing position. As for what adjustments I made, they included closing the eyes, move the arm and shoulder, and making Scoop squash down so that his chin was at his stomach.



Moving onto the release, Scoop gets lifted off of the ground, making his shadow smaller and his body tilt forward slightly. Additionally, due to the upward momentum his belly begins to lift up as he gets to his highest point.

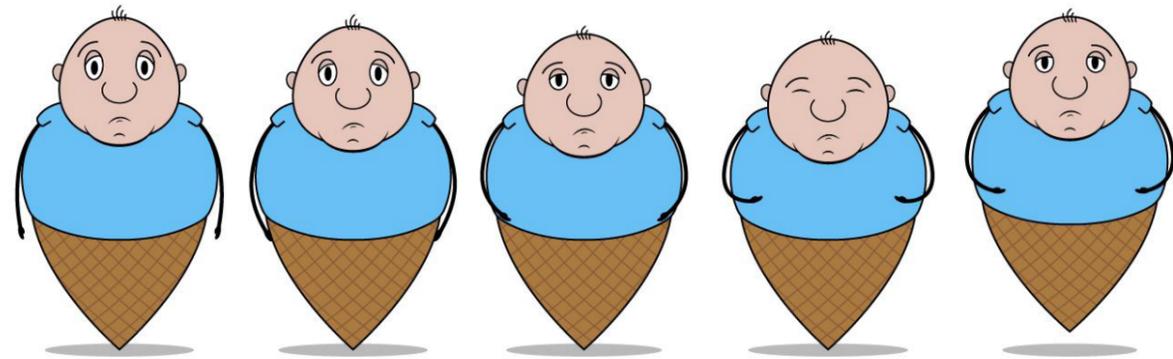


As the descent happens the I was able to copy over the frames for the start of the jump and make small manipulations to the character. These included softening the tilt and making it start to go backwards slightly, and having the belly start to come down a bit before the crash. Speaking of the frame that makes contact with the ground, I had this tilt back quite a bit to make it look like he was stopping himself from falling over, which can also be seen with how there are impact lines around the base of his cone. Additionally, I had his belly fat fling down to emphasise the impact.

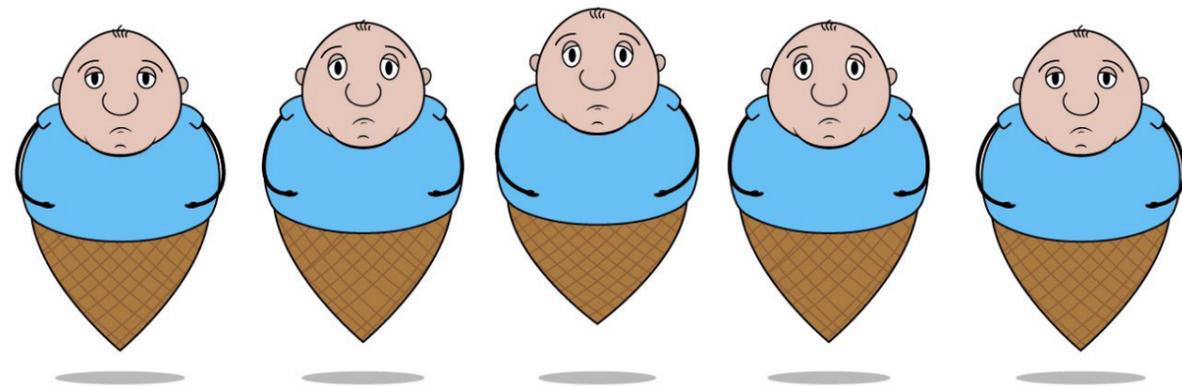


After this, I did the recovery frames that took the character back to the second frame in this entire sequence, allowing it to be looped back to the first frame.

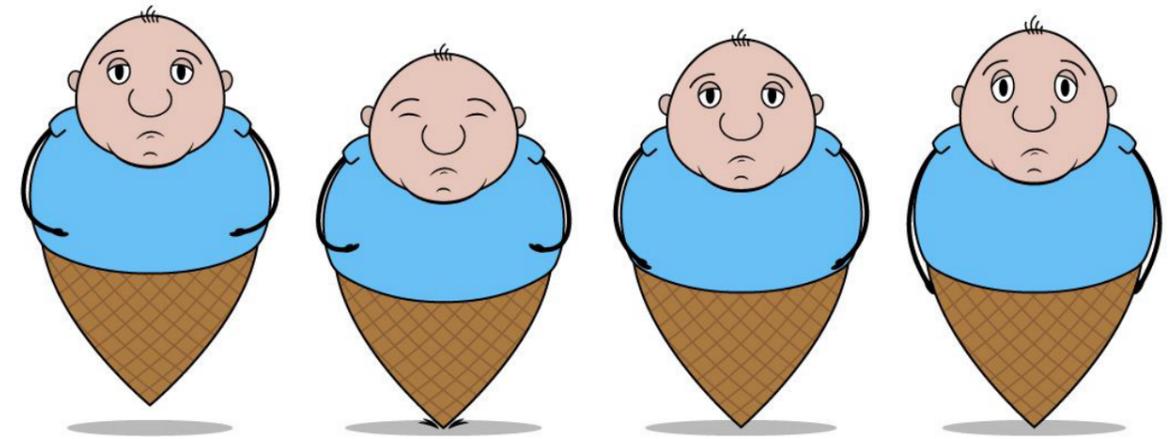
Once the sideways hop was complete I moved onto the forward version that has him hopping towards the camera, this would be the one used in combination with the background that looks down the path in the park with trees on both sides. When it came to creating this cycle I had a bit of an easier time with it, since I knew that the total amount of frames would be 14 and I already knew how everything was positioned from the side angle, making it easier to convert.



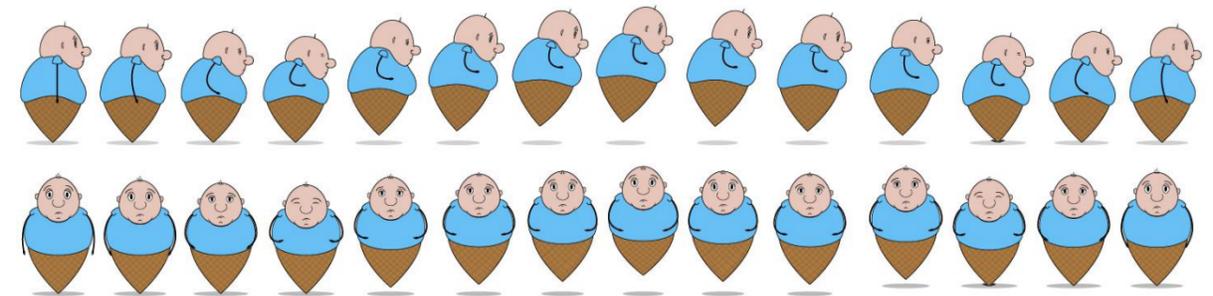
The process for the creation of these frames was very much the same as before, starting out with the idle stance as the beginning frame, copying it across, and slowly adjusting the different features as he winds up his jump. The main feature that I had to be aware of for this angle was how when the head tilts down the hair needed to change position.



Then during the jump frames I couldn't really show the forward tilt, so what I did instead was squash the cone so that less of it was being shown to the viewer, making it seem like it was being hidden by his body.



Finally, I created the frames for the crash and the recovery from the hop just like before, so that the jump could be looped.



Once these were both ready, I proceeded to separate the cycles and put each frame into its own layer, therefore preparing them for the animation process. Then to make sure that I didn't get confused about which of these was which I renamed each layer in the order that they appear in the cycle, ranging from 1 to 14.

# Animation Research

Before the animation process could be started inspiration would be needed, therefore the following animation was looking into, since it showed similarities to this project's designs and basic plot.

## **Pusheen: Trick or Treat**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRPqU2VaffY>



(Pusheen the Cat, 2019)

### **Narrative:**

When it comes to the narrative structure of this animation it is linear as it follows the main character going through the process of trick or treat during Halloween. This kind of storytelling works for this because the animation itself is quite short, with the story portion lasting just under a minute, therefore allowing for a smooth transition to the end. Additionally, it seems that this animation also attempts to use a slight bit of humour with how after the main character gets given a sweet a secondary character, the mouse, pops out of the bucket and asks for its own sweet. This works because this secondary character is both unexpected, because it would not usually be seen with a cat, and it forces the clearly reluctant homeowner to give up another sweet.

As for how this links to my own work, I also intend to use a linear narrative structure to tell the story. This can be seen in the exposition with how my character, Scoop, is introduced as a sad person initially, but then in order to cheer him up he is given a free ice cream by the friendly Mr. Cherry. After this, his cone begins to crack as he hops along, until the climax where his cone snaps and him and his ice cream are sent flying. Then the piece ends with him reverting back to his sad/depressive state as he sees his ice cream ruined.

### **Animation Techniques:**

The method of creation for this animation was digital and involved hand rendering individual frames. Using this method allows the animator to have much more control over the way elements appear in the piece as they can manipulate and edit them to create certain effects, such as to emphasise a character's movement. However, there are times when this method hasn't been used, such as when transitions are needed between frames, in these cases effects are used in post-production. The result that using this method has on the animation is that the final piece is much smoother than it would've been if the artist had chosen to use something like stop-motion instead.



(Pusheen the Cat, 2019)

This animation doesn't actually use lip sync because there are no voice lines to sync with, but the main character's mouth does move. The reason behind this was to give more value to the expressions that the character does. As for how this was done, there would've been multiple frames that went through the process of the mouth opening and closing.

For how these techniques link to my own project, I intend to use Adobe After Effects for the majority of my animation as it involves a lot of flat basic 2D shapes. This is especially true when it comes to the background because of how the elements don't even have borders, they are just simple boxes with no detail.

### **Visual Elements:**

Looking at the style of Pusheen: Trick or Treat, they have gone for something very simplistic. With this said, the minimal nature of it does not detract from the content, in fact it adds to the cute style that they seem to be going for and makes it feel like an animation for kids. Additionally, something else that gives off this child friendly feeling is that there are no pointed corners, everything is rounded off, making the world seem soft, like the round fat cat.

As for the colours that have been used, everything other than the main character appears to be done in varying shades of purple, yellow, and orange, the classic colours of Halloween. Additionally, the types of colours used are very flat with minimal shading, this not only adds to the simplistic style but it also makes it easier on the animator as they don't have to worry about lighting like a 3D animator would have to where shadows are needed to show depth and form of a character.

(Pusheen the Cat, 2019)



These are both elements that link to my own work due to how I use specific colours on the characters to show their emotions. This can be seen with how Scoop appears with a cold blue top to emphasise his sadness/depression and how the ice cream vendor has more warm colours to show his jolly and kind nature. As well as this, there is a link with how flat colours are also being used in my animation in order to aid the simple style that I have gone for.



(Pusheen the Cat, 2019)

Now analysing the line art in this animation, all the elements appear to have a thick and consistent line width, this includes the elements that are quite small, meaning that they could easily get swallowed up by the outline. However, this risk makes the animation process easier because the animator doesn't have to worry about the line's width changing with the viewer's perspective. On top of this, it really helps to add to the simple aesthetic that the artist has gone for because creating multiple line widths would complicate the process.

The idea of consistent line widths is yet another feature of this project that links to my own, with how I have a black outline around almost all of my character's different elements. However, the only difference is that I have occasional tapered lines for features that blend into the character like his chin and the thickness of line changes for different body parts, even though on that element it will be consistent all the way around.

The final visual element that is worth commenting on is the fact that the characters and key elements all have a slight bounce to them, by this I mean that the outline around them jitters slightly every frame. The reason for this is most likely to attract the viewer's eyes to the characters and elements like the bowl of sweets, as well as a way to distract the viewer from the fact that the background is basically completely static.

#### Sound:

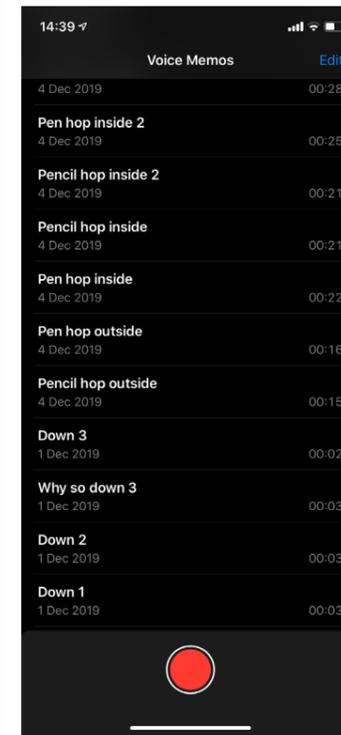
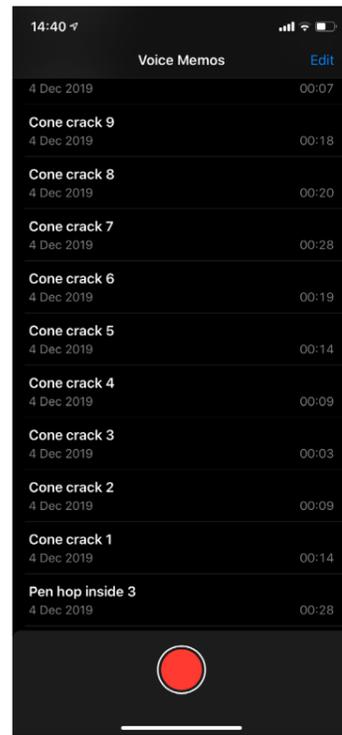
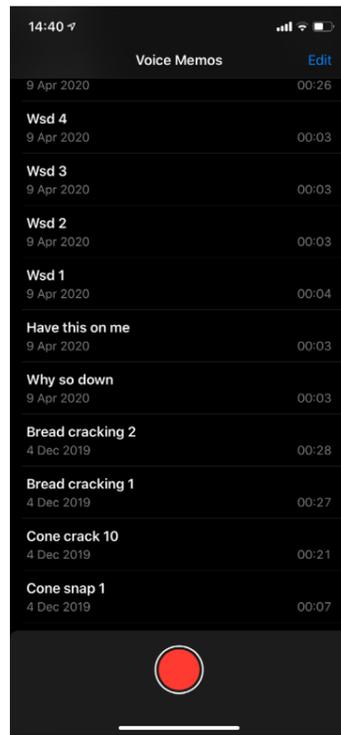
As for the sound in this piece, there is a music track that runs throughout the whole animation, ignoring the parts at the start and end with text. This track is used to set a spooky atmosphere that matches the theme of Halloween, however its not trying to be creepy, it still has a cheerful feel around it. Additionally, this music is also used to help the cuts from shot to shot as a lot of the switches happen on the beat. With all this said, music is not the only sound that is present, there is also what would probably be called ambient sound, for things such as the door opening, the rustling of the sweets, and the sound of characters like the mouse. However, these sounds are only heard occasionally to add depth to the piece and draw the viewer's attention while the music track carries it.

When it comes to the relation between this and my own work, it is similar in the way that I attempt to direct the viewer's attention at Scoops cone through the use of cracking and snapping sounds, or the ice cream landing with a splat sound. However, I don't know at this point in time if I will be placing anything like music over the top of the story. To do that I would need to make sure that it was copyright free and wouldn't affect the animation negatively.

#### Artist Info:

This animation was created by the company called Pusheen Corp. They originally started out by creating a series of digital comics in 2010, which picked up a fan base and moved to the creation of gifs involving the main character, Pusheen the cat. Then in the year 2013 they were picked up by Facebook and their new chat sticker feature that was being released. This allowed them to submit several licensed sticker designs that proceeded to get viewed and used by multiple people all over the world. This then helped the company to grow and branch off into different sections such as animation. As for how this piece shapes up to the rest of their work, it appears to be pretty in-line with what they've done both recently and in the past, with the same characters from this animation showing up in others and the animations lasting a similar amount of time as each other, around a minute. The only major difference would be the fact that the background isn't always as static as it is in this project and occasionally there is layering going on to place Pusheen into the scene. Additionally, the colour schemes of the animations are not always trying to set a theme or tell the emotions of the character, instead they tend to just stay bright and cheerful.

# Sounds Effects



After looking at the Pusheen animation I began to sort out my sound effects. The reason for this is because it is far easier to animate with edited sounds in mind, rather than watching the final animation and trying to record audio that syncs up with the movements.

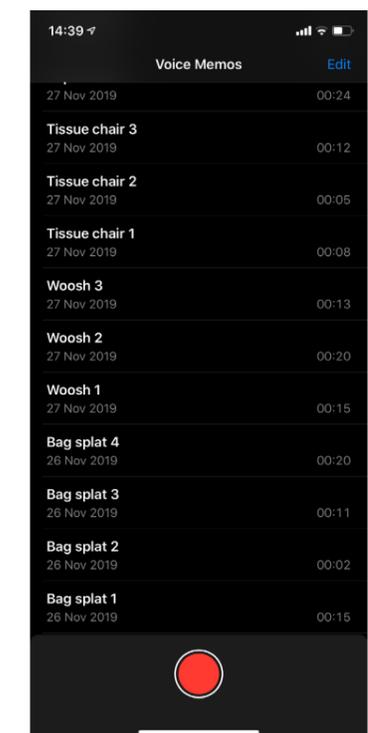
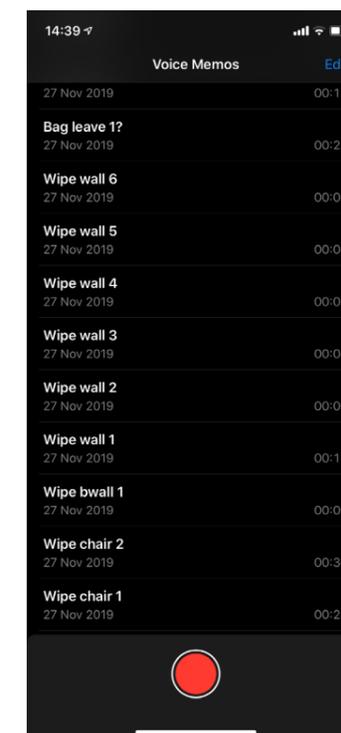
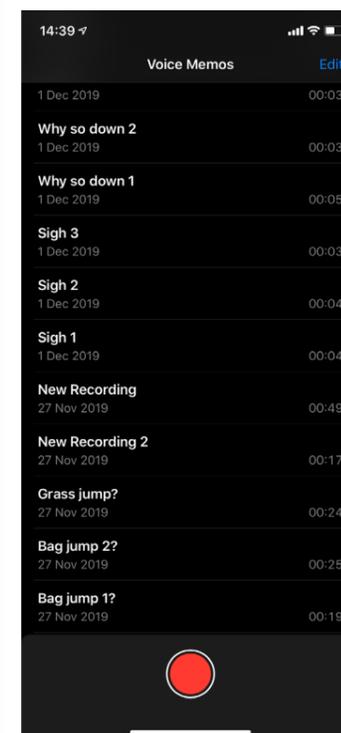
As for what these sounds were recorded on, I just used the Voice Memos app on my phone. Preferably I would have used a proper microphone in a studio designed for creating sounds, but due to the COVID-19 situation this wasn't an option. I do understand that on these memos the recording times date back to November 2019, but that was when I was originally testing out sounds out with the first storyboard in mind.

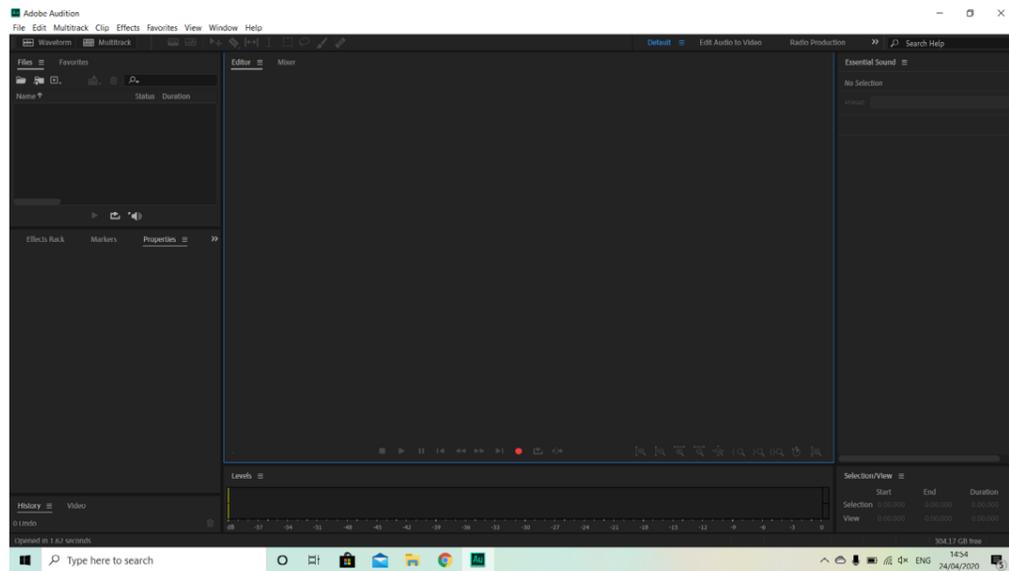
During this earlier period, I used many different objects to get different sound effects. A few examples of these would be the slapping sound for the ice cream when it falls and during the jumping. To create this sound I originally tried filling a bag with water and dropping it to get a large splat, but on the recording the crinkling of the bag could be heard. Then I tried throwing both wet tissue paper and wet wipes at solid surfaces like walls and tables, these produced a nice slap sound but they felt more like someone was stepping in a puddle. Finally, the best slap sound that tried was by wetting my hands and smacking 2 fingers against the palm of my hand.

Experiments like this were then carried out again and again, such as trying to get the cone cracking sound by using a mixture of real wafer cones and burnt toast, or the hop sound by tapping pens and pencils on different surfaces, jumping on different terrains outside, and trying to make thud sounds with my hands.

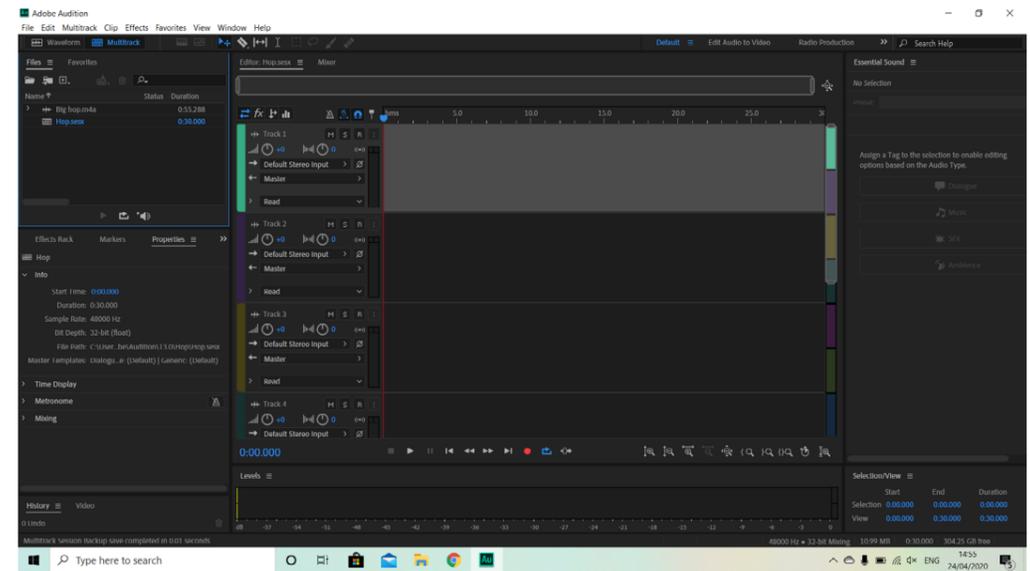
Once the basic sound effects were obtained I moved onto recording voice lines, such as Scoop's sigh, what Mr Cherry says, and the scream when Scoop falls. These were simple enough to make, since all I needed to do was say the line or do the action multiple times in a single recording to give myself a range of samples that I could choose from and mix together.

The only issue I found with this was being in a room quiet enough to record these, the reason for this is because when saying a long sentence it is harder to block out background noise like I could with a single short sound effect. Luckily, I found quiet times in the day and used a room that was full of objects, so there were very few large flat surfaces for sound to bounce off of and create echoes.



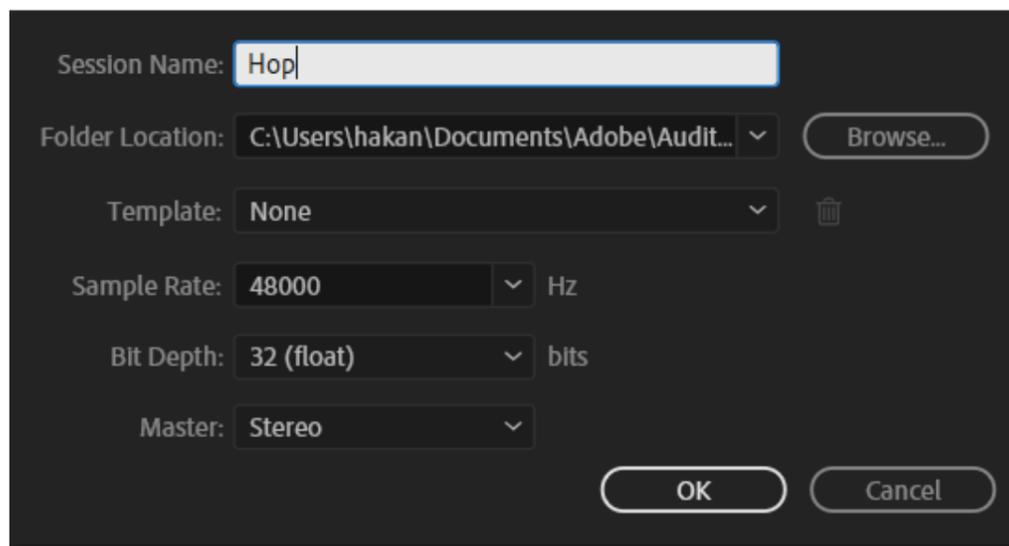


Following the creation of the sounds on my phone, I uploaded them to my PC and placed them into a folder, there was no real reason to contain them in this other than to keep them all in one place. Additionally, rather than just moving the sounds that I thought were the best, I uploaded everything to make sure I could use other sounds if I wanted to. Once I had a folder full of these, I opened up Adobe Audition, this is what I would be using to edit all my audio.

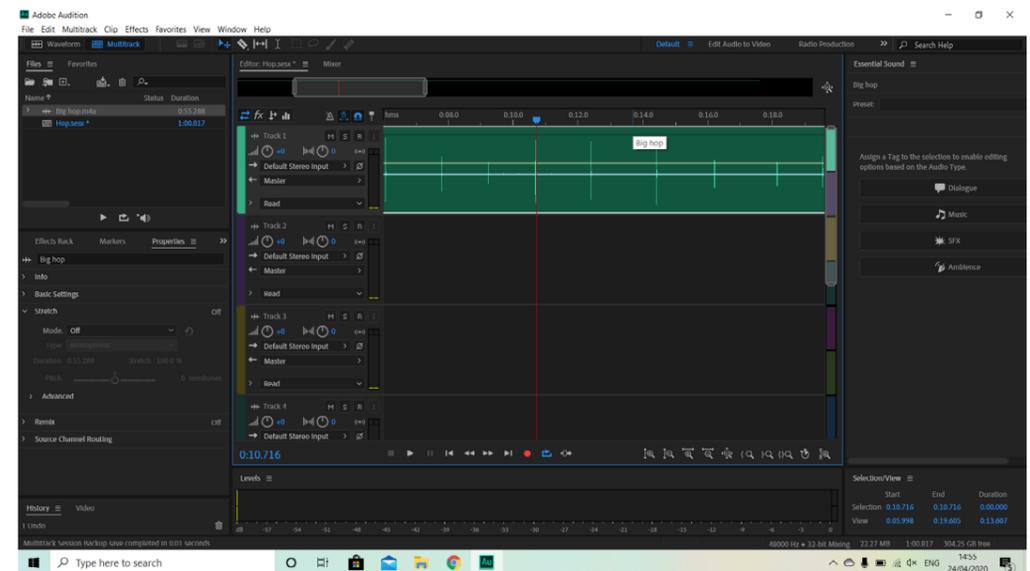


After the multi-track was open I dragged the raw sound file that I wanted to use into the top left panel, this is where all of the assets are stored and where I can explore all of my files. This makes it easy to drag and drop in copies of certain sounds that need to be repeated multiple times on longer tracks.

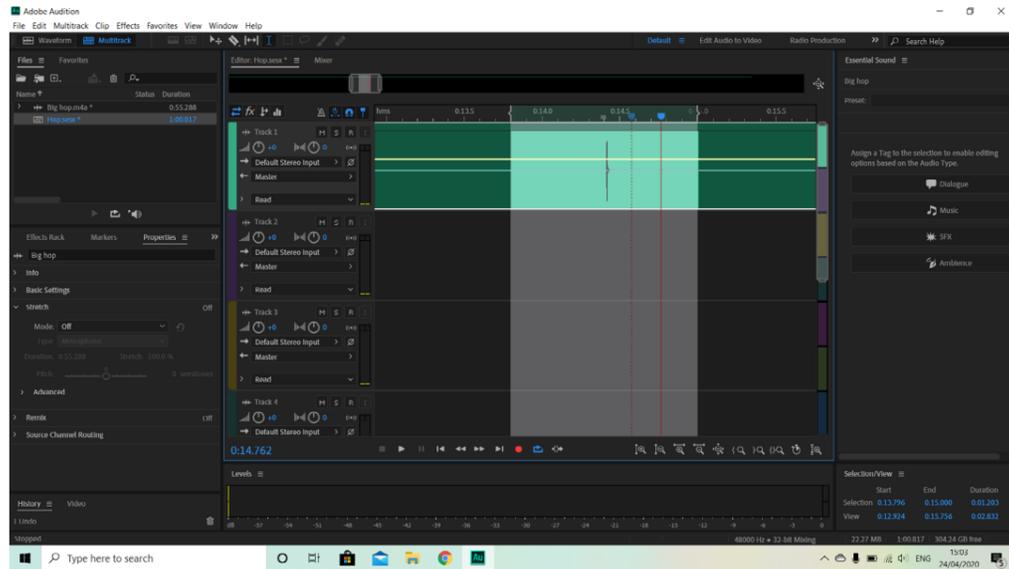
### New Multitrack Session



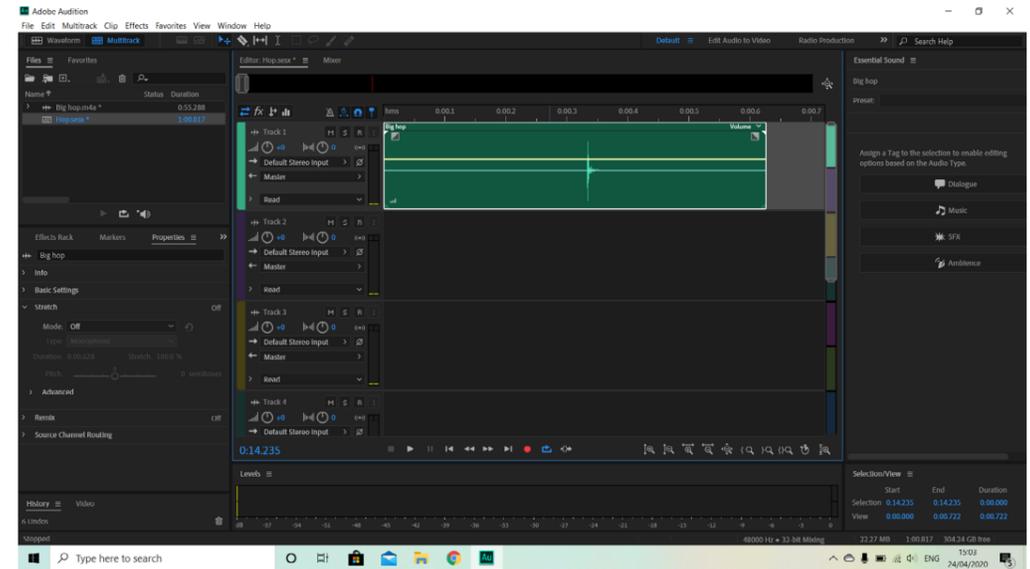
I then proceeded to create a new multi-track session for the hop/jump sound, this is the place where all of the sounds would be edited in a non-destructive way. What I mean by this is that I won't be directly editing and ruining the original audio file, instead I will be able to save and export the multi-track to create a new audio file. As for the settings on this multi-track, I used the defaults information, since from what I remember on the lessons for this software this was all correct.



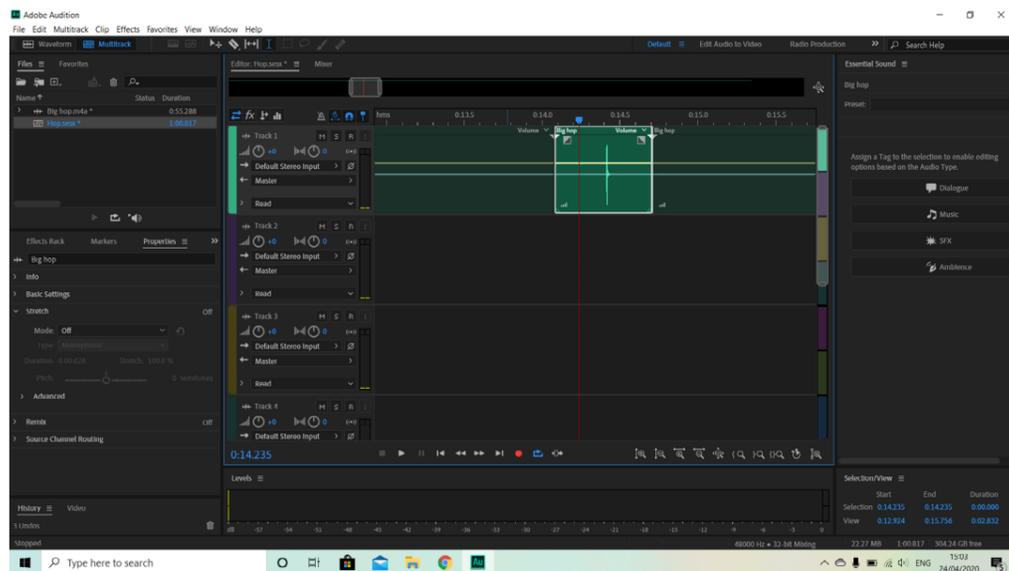
With this said, I then dragged the audio file that contained the large sample of hops into the first row of the multi-track. Once these were in place, I listened through the sounds multiple times to see which sound would work the best. These hops were the ones created using a ball-point pen on a table.



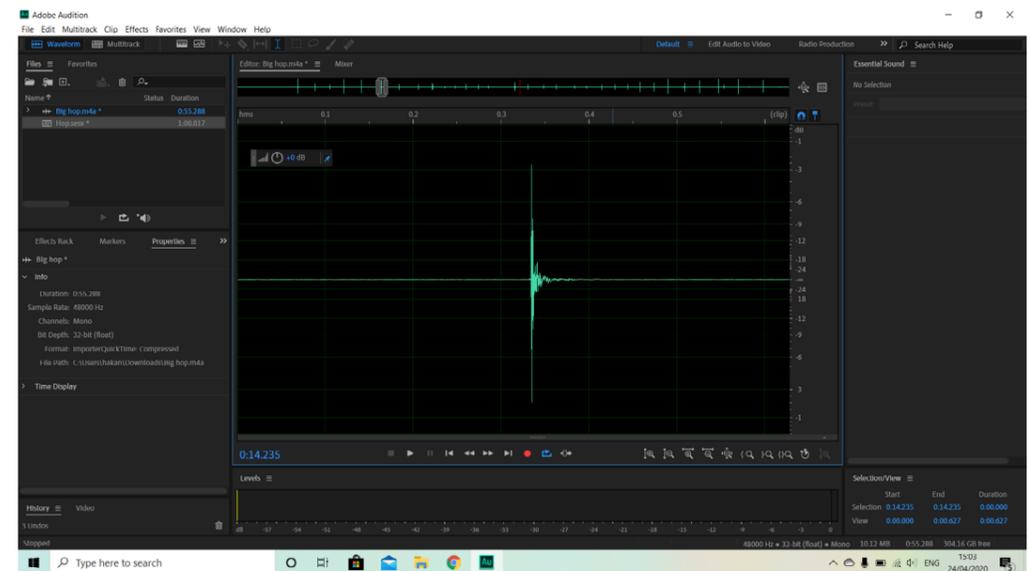
Eventually, I found a hop that I liked the sound of, it had minimal background noise and unlike a lot of the other versions the pen couldn't be heard when it was lifted off of the table.



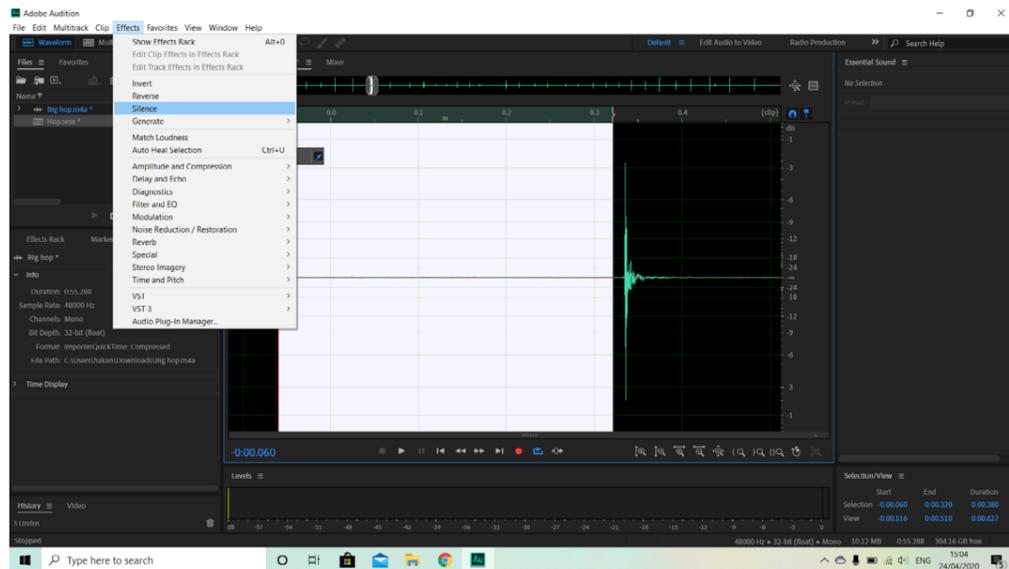
This short clip was then brought to the start of the track, where I proceeded to zoom in by shortening the grey block that sits inside of the black rectangle above the row that my sound is contained in. This allowed me to see the sound far more clearly and gave me more room to work with, which is essential when dealing with such a short sound effect.



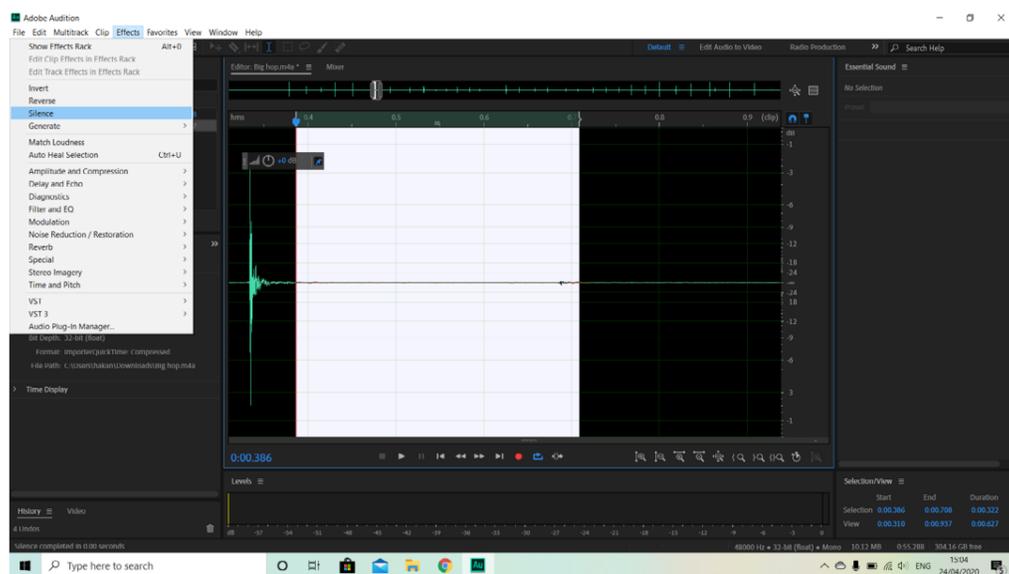
To pluck out this specific clip of sound I used the razor tool, this allowed me to cut the audio track wherever I wanted. Therefore, I placed a cut either side of the sound, making it its own short track, and then I deleted the other ones that I had no use for.



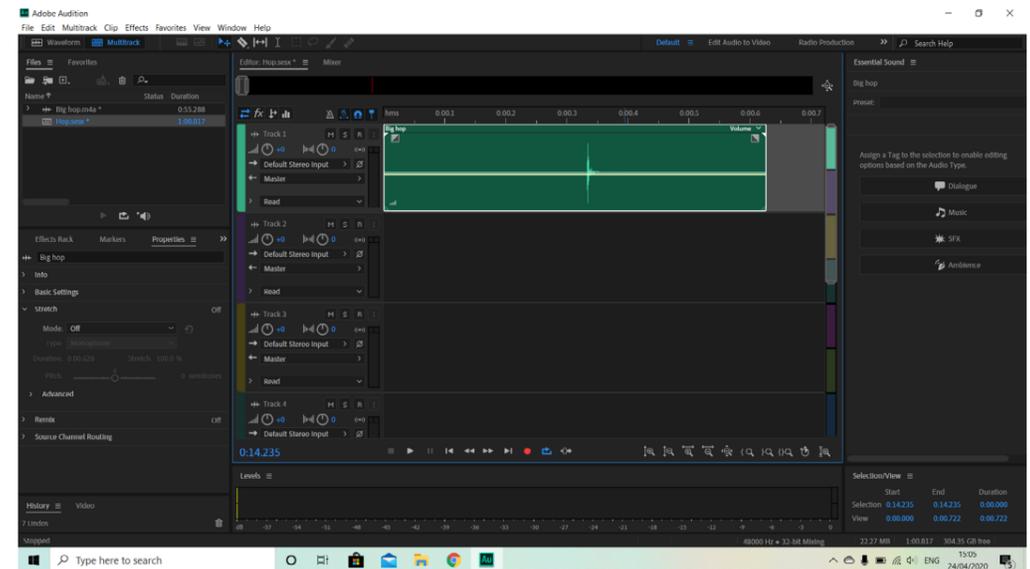
Now came the editing process, to do this I double clicked the clip to bring me into the 'Waveform' view of the sound's original audio file. However, rather than showing me every sound in the sample of hops that I made, it focused me onto the sound that I was using. This allowed me to see the little spike of sound much closer than before and this view also opened up a menu of effects that were previously greyed out on the multi-track view.



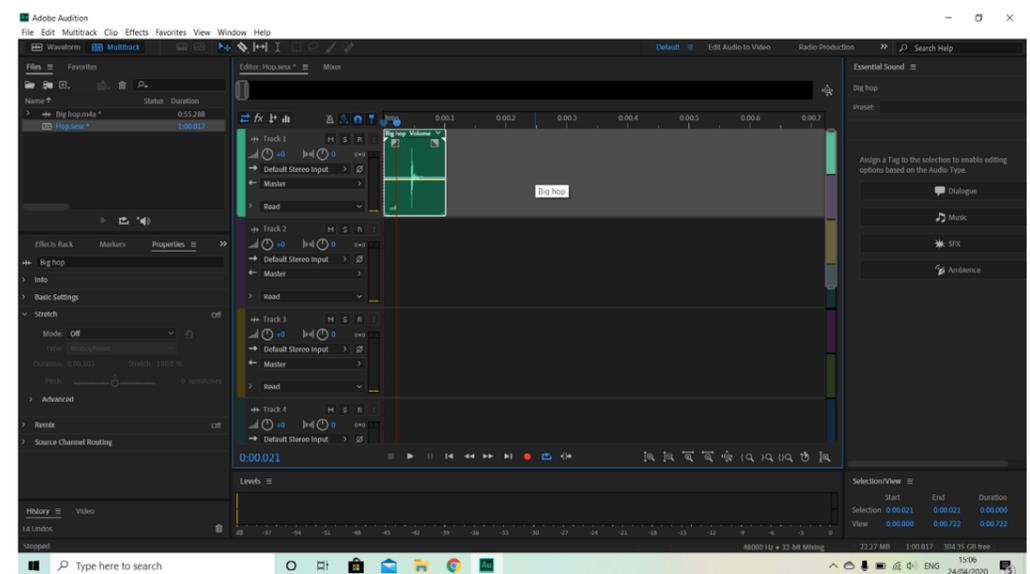
Due to the fact that this audio was quite clear already there wasn't much that I needed to change, therefore the only edit that I made was silencing the background noise that was picked up before and after the sound was made. The way that I went about doing this was by using the time selection tool to highlight the section before the sound, getting close to the spike but not so much that it cut some of the sound off. Once this area was selected, I went up to the 'Effects' tab at the top and chose the 'Silence' option, removing all audio from the highlighted area.



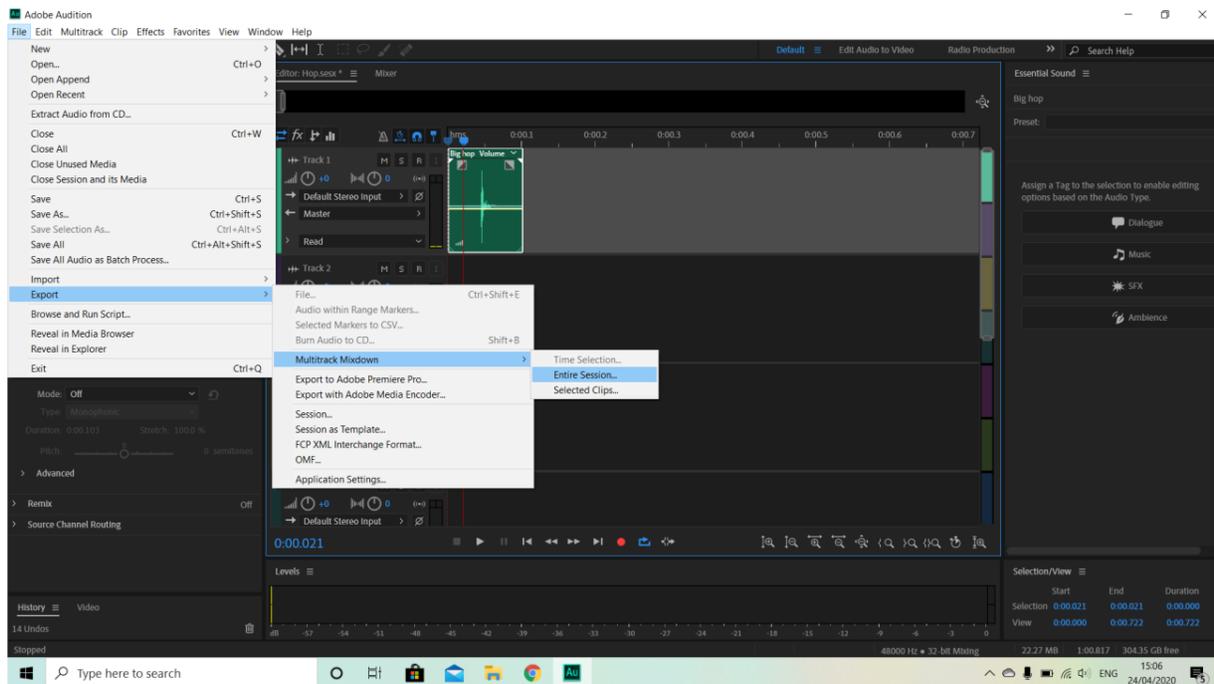
This same process was then repeated on the section after the spike, leaving just the sound effect intact. However, doing this part was a bit harder than the previous segment, the reason for this was because the spike dwindles off slightly and if I cut too close it would make the hop sound like it was cut short. Therefore, to avoid this I listened to the clip multiple times after silencing it to make sure I did it correctly, undoing and trying the effect again if it was too close.



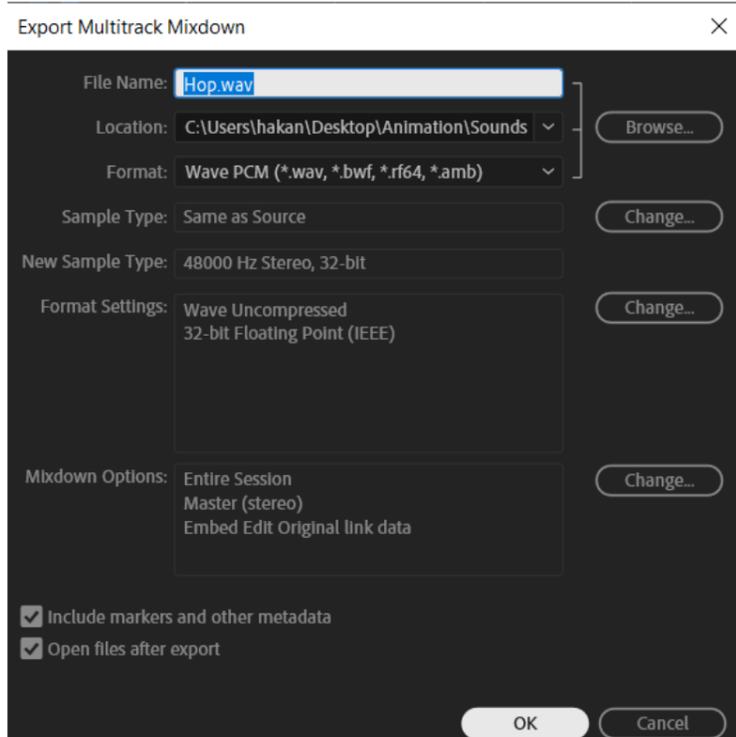
When returning to the multi-track I noticed that the hop was a bit on the loud side, with the bar at the very bottom of the software showing that the audio was peaking at -9dB. Therefore, to change it to a more reasonable -12dB or higher I selected the clip and moved the yellow line that was running through it down, this controls the sound of the track and moving it to where I did made the hop a lot softer.



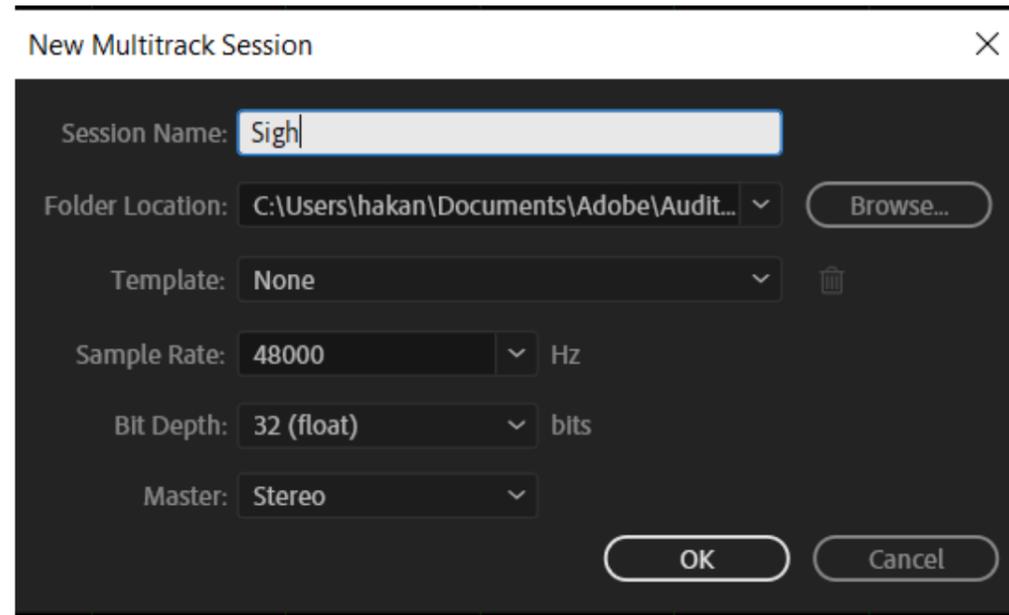
Finally, this clip was trimmed again using the razor tool so that there would be less dead sound in the final file, making it easier to line up with actions later on. The additional parts of the track were then removed and the clip I wanted was placed at the start of the track again.



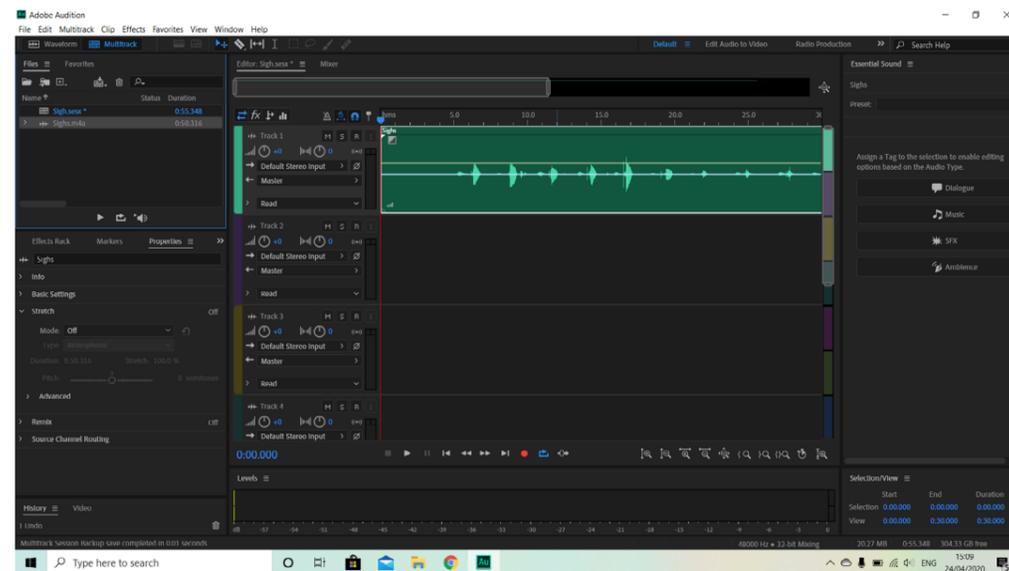
Now that this sound effect was edited, I exported it. To do this I simply went into the 'File' tab, moved down towards 'Export', then 'Multi-track Mixdown', and selected 'Entire Session...'. This then brought up a box for exporting.



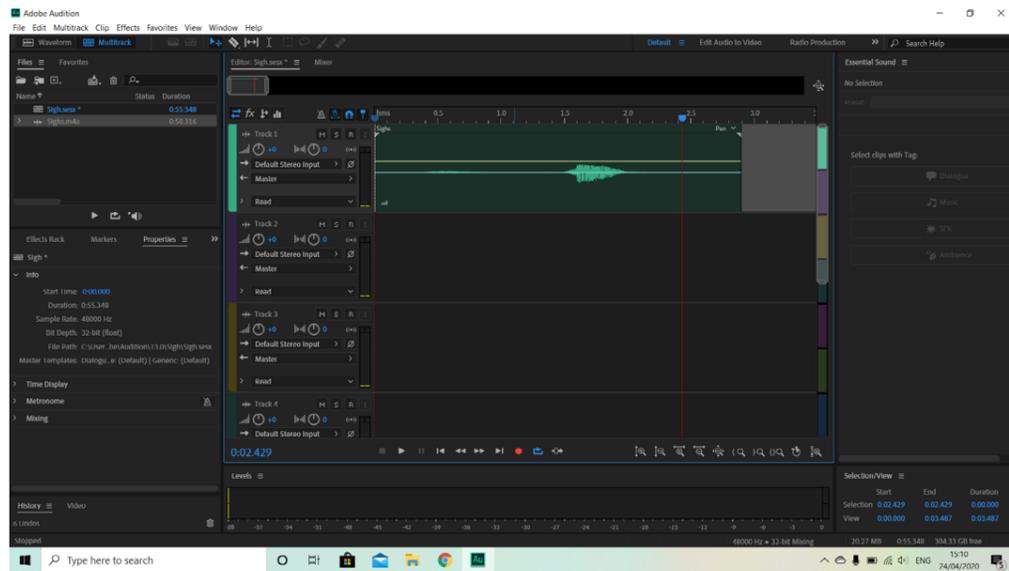
Inside of the box I was given the ability to change many settings, but all I did was edit the name to something more appropriate and choose a new location for it to be saved. In this case, I saved the file to a folder that would house all of my audio called 'Sounds', this sat inside of my folder for this whole project and would later need to be moved to the assets folder of the actual animation.



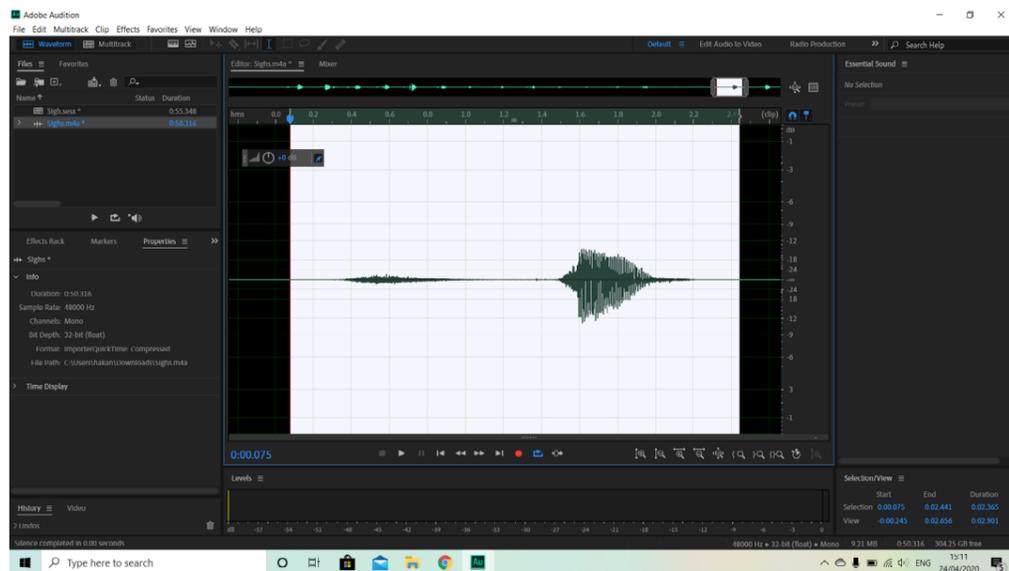
Following this, I continued to edit the other simple singular sounds that were recorded well, but eventually I came to the audio for Scoop's sigh. This was a bit more of a complex process, so I am including its creation process. To begin this I started by yet again making a new multi-track session, naming it appropriately and keeping the same settings as before.



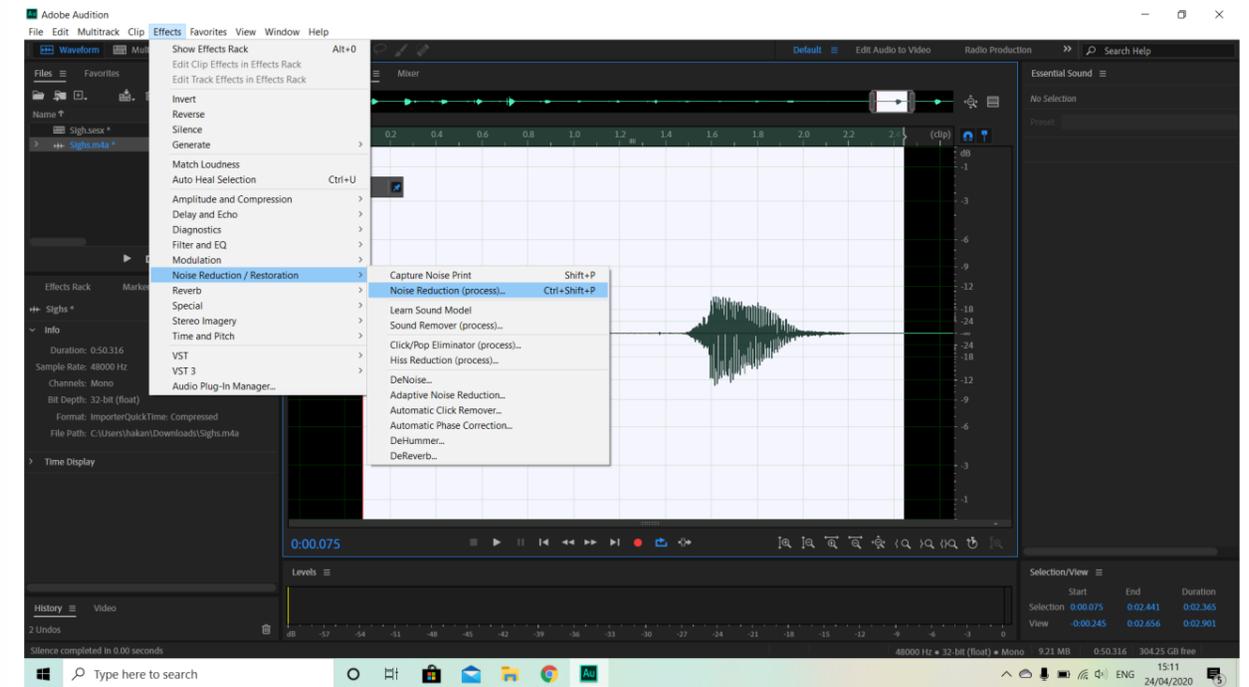
Similarly to the hop sound, I imported the raw audio file into the top left panel and proceeded to drag it out into the first row of the multi-track. Additionally, I listened to it again and again, making notes on what samples could be used.



Once I narrowed down the sigh that I liked the most, I used the razor tool to make cuts on both sides of the sound, removing it from the rest of the track. The unneeded audio was then removed and the clip I wanted to work on was placed at the start of the multi-track session, where I then zoomed in on it to see more clearly.



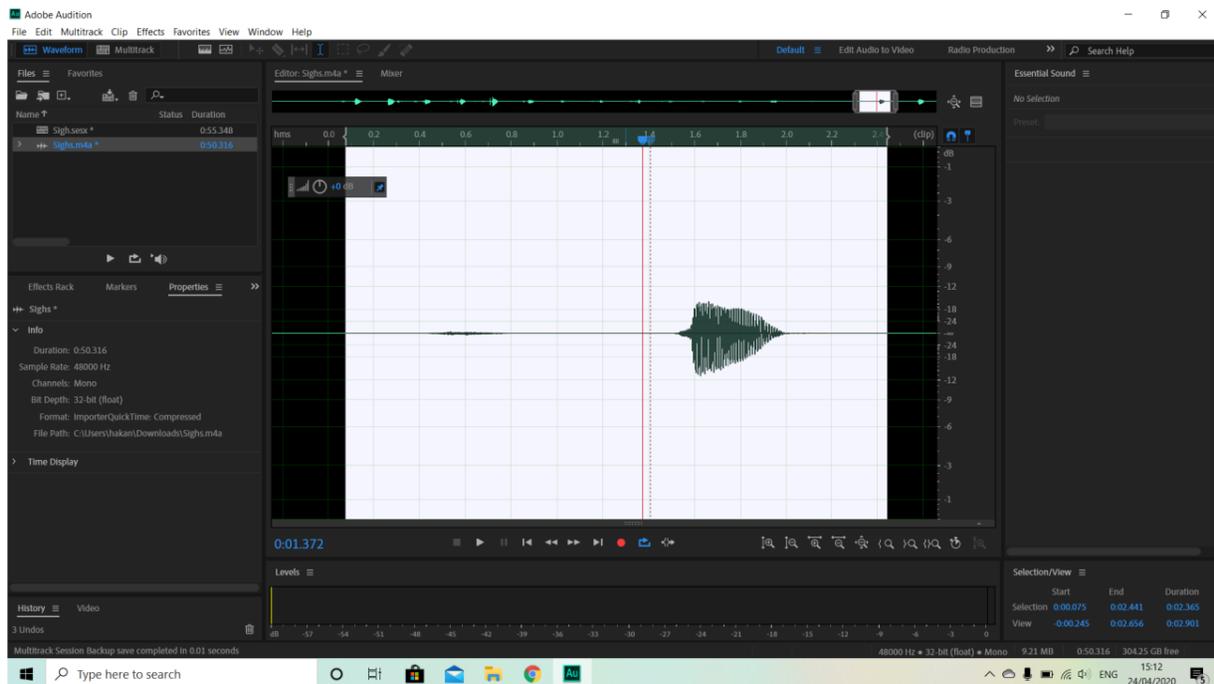
From this point, I went into the waveform view and silenced the before and after areas of the clip, getting as close to the audio as I could without ruining it. Then I highlighted the section I was using and listened to it to make sure it sounded clear.



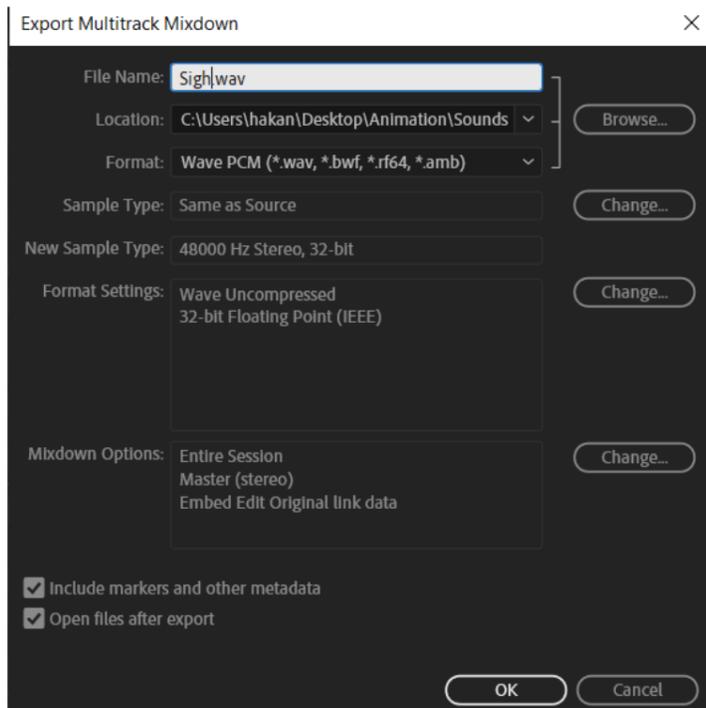
The next edit that I made after this was to reduce noise, since longer clips have more time to pick up background sound that can't be cut out. The way that I did this was by choosing the 'Noise Reduction (process)...' option inside of the 'Noise Reduction/Restoration' effects menu. This then brought up a large box that looks complicated, but after playing around with it is simple enough to understand.



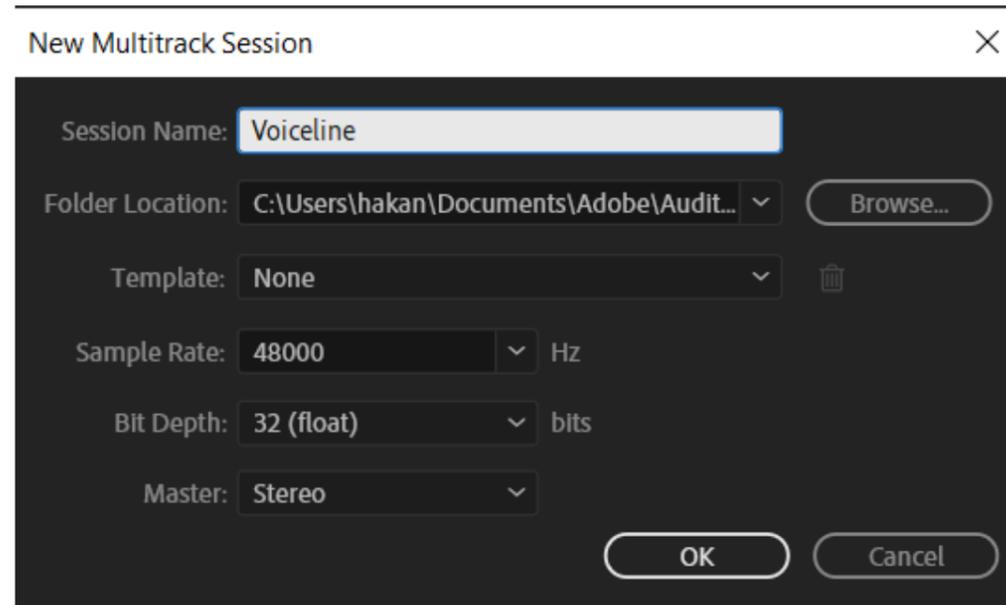
Inside of this box the first action that I had to do was capture a noise print of the section that I highlighted, this then showed the audio levels for the specific clip. Following this, I then played with the sliders at the bottom until all I could hear was the sigh and very little of the humming in the background. Additionally, to speed this process up I clicked the play button in the bottom left corner and selected the looping option next to it, this allowed me to have the sigh constantly playing in the background as I was editing it.



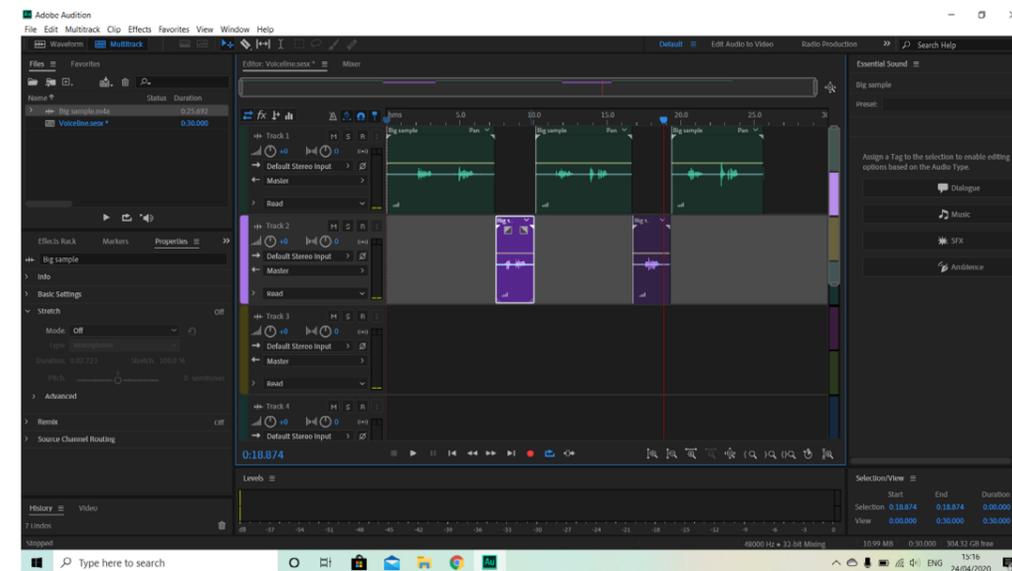
After this effect was added the waveform was visibly smaller, with the inhale to start the sigh being very small. This led to the version on the multi-track view almost being invisible, but I was still able to roughly cut down the sound like I did with the hop, making it have less dead audio later on.



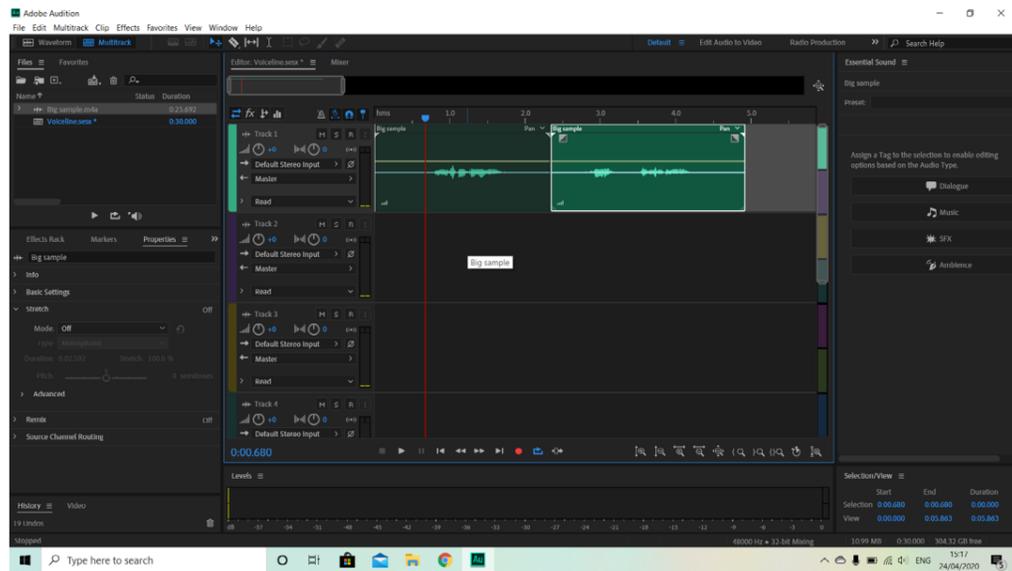
Finally, I went through the process of exporting this sound, giving it a relevant name and the same location as the sounds that I had made previously.



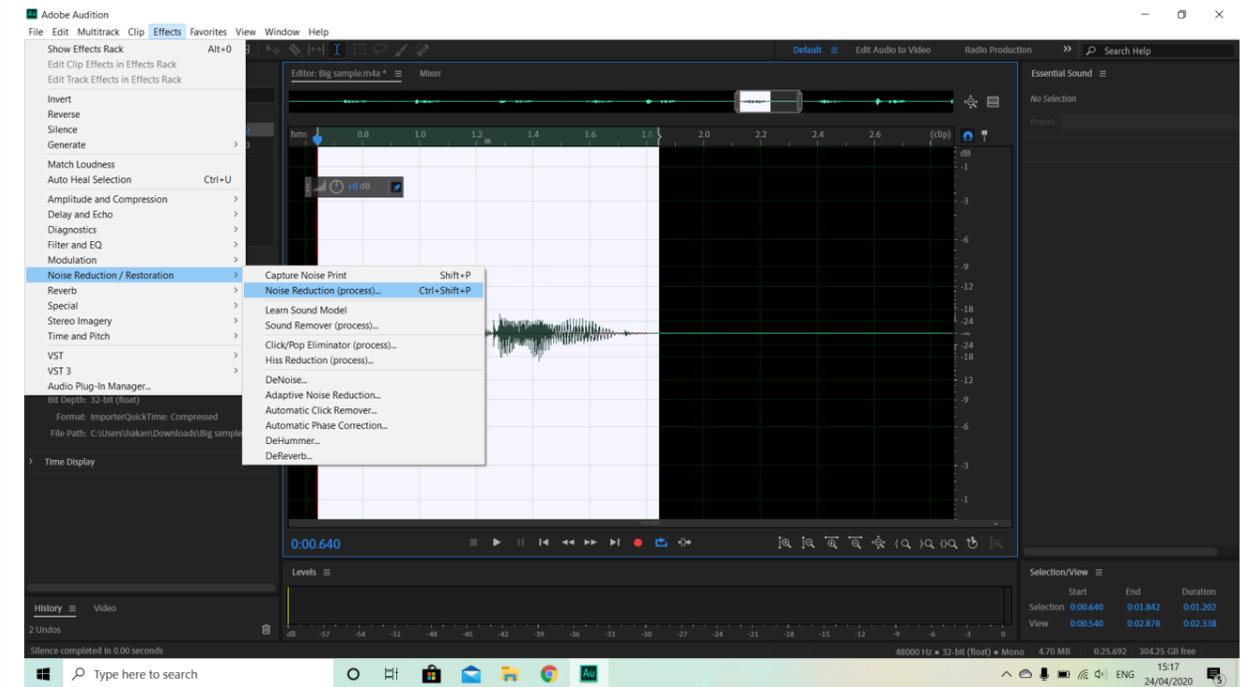
Another complex sound file that I edited was the speech for Mr Cherry, where he asks Scoop what's wrong and gives him a free ice cream. There are 2 ways that I could do this, I could either make a file for each voice line or I could place them in the same file and make a realistic gap between when they are said. I chose to go for the second option, so this is the process I went through after making a new multi-track session called 'Voice line'.



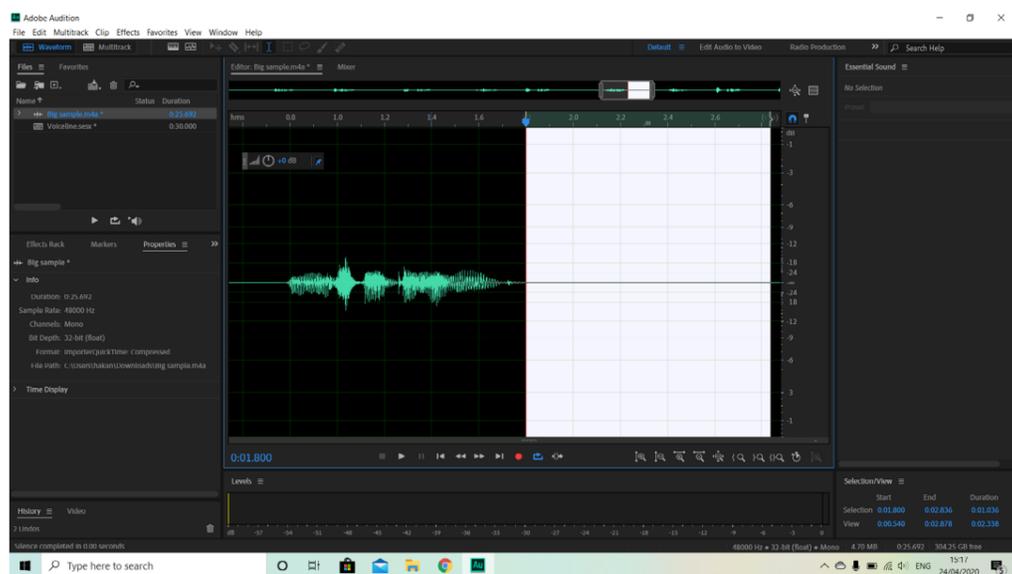
I then went through the process of bringing in the raw audio and placing it on the first track, followed by listening through it all to see what samples I could use. In the end I grabbed the audio from 2 very different places in the track, which I used the razor to cut out. These were then moved down to the second row so that they were out of the way and I could delete the sounds that I didn't need anymore.



These audio clips were then placed onto the first row and arranged in the correct order. Once in the right order, I zoomed into the clips and proceeded to trim them to get the timing between the 2 voice lines correctly spaced.



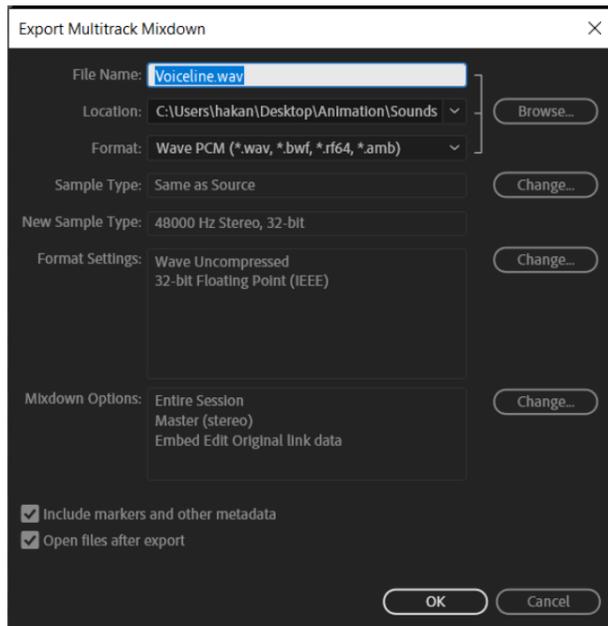
Next, I highlighted the audio and used the effects menu to navigate to the same noise reduction option that I used on Scoop's sigh. This would be used in the exact same way, to reduce any background noise that I can't remove using the silencing feature.



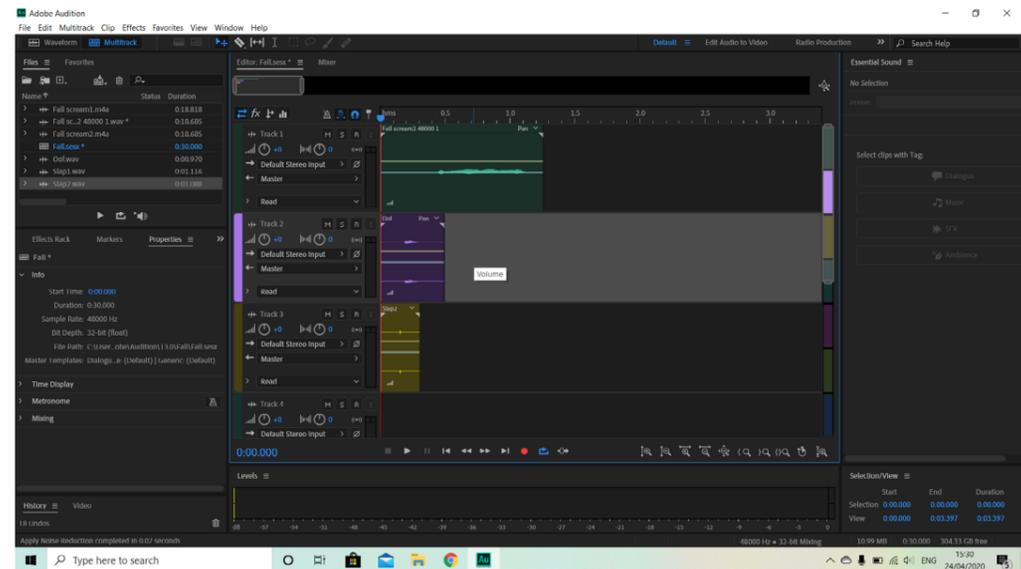
Following this, I went into the waveform view of each voice line and highlighted the fuzzy dead space before and after the sound, which I then used the silence effect on them. This would stop them from making any buzzing or humming noises that might have been picked up during the recording.



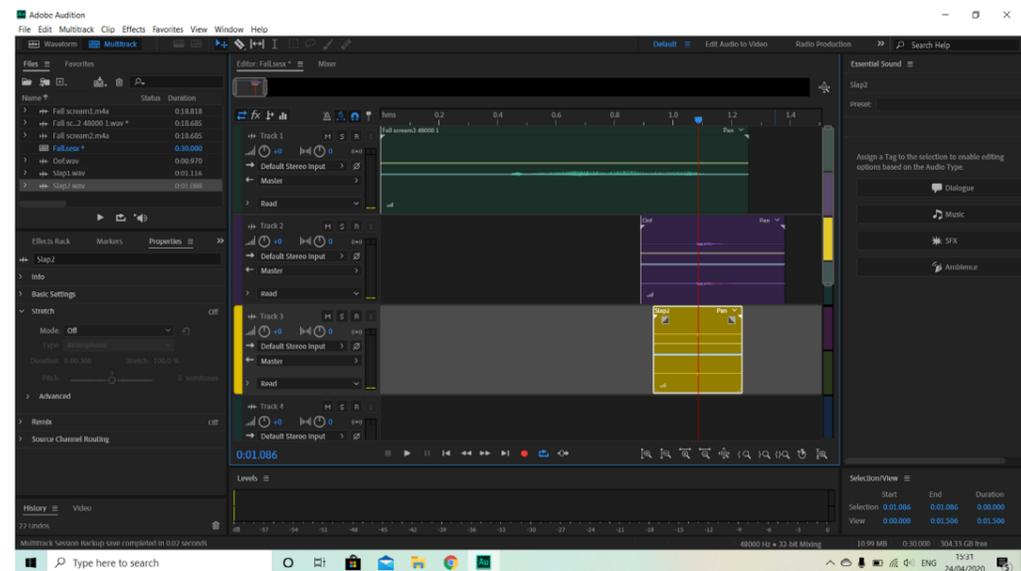
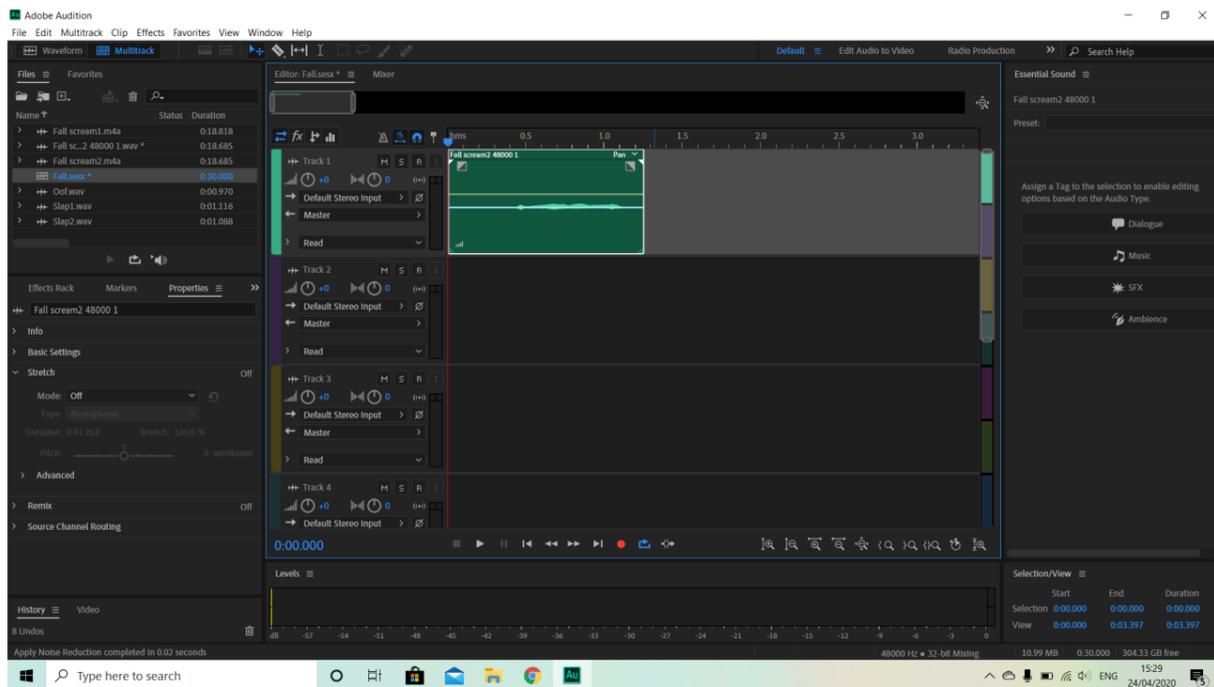
Upon clicking this option, the box that controls the effect appeared. Yet again I captured the noise print of the highlighted area and started to play with the sliders, until I eventually was happy with the audio.



After performing the same noise reduction effect on the other voice line, I wrapped up this sound by exporting it in the exact same way as the previous ones.

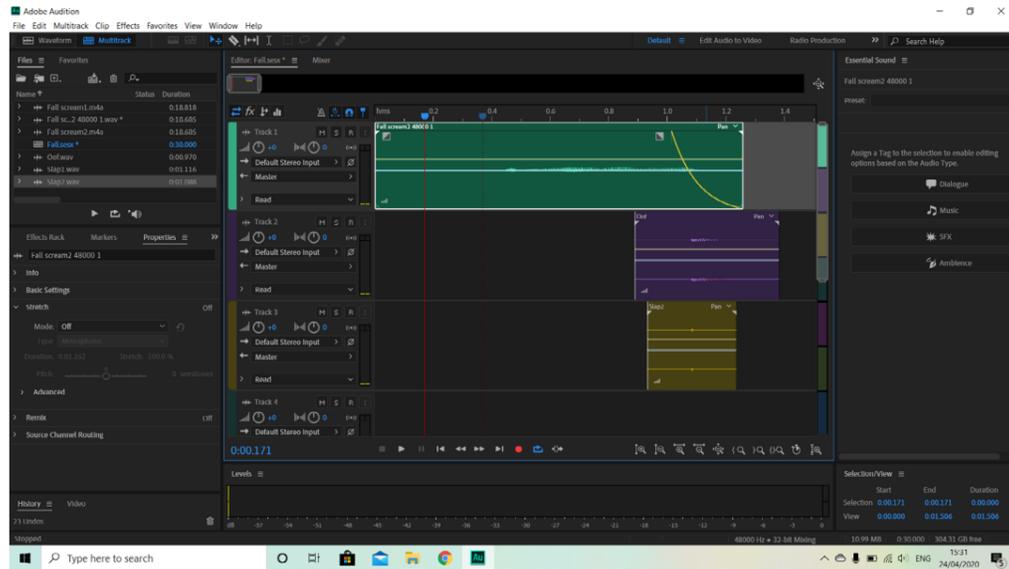


Following this, I added in additional sounds to the other rows. In order of how they appear these were an 'oof' sound effect for when Scoop's head hits the ground and the other was one of my slap sounds.

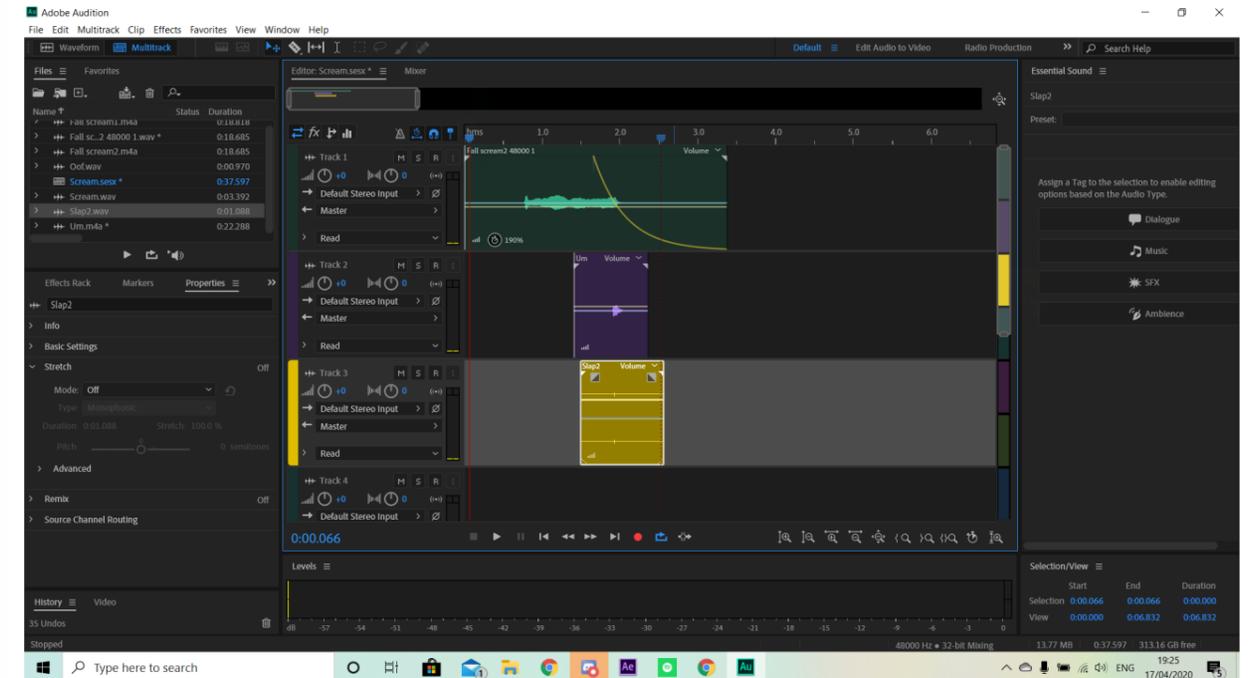


The final sound that I'm going to show is the one that goes with Scoop falling. The reason for this is because it shows how sounds can be collaged together to make a scene work. For this I started out by making a new multi-track session and then I added all of the sounds that intended to use to the top left panel, making them easily accessible. I then proceeded to drag out the scream that I had edited before and place it within the first row of the multi-track.

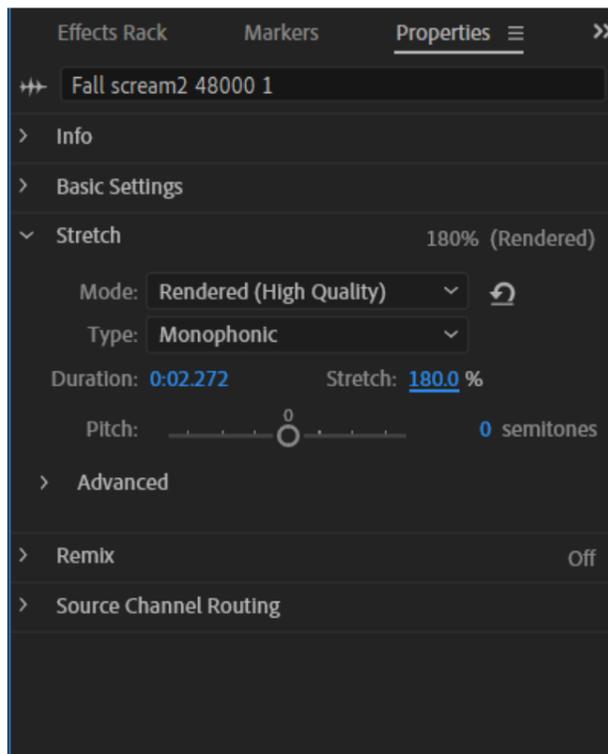
I then proceeded to zoom in and line these additional sounds up with the ending of the scream, which is when the head would have hit the ground. However, when listening to this composition as it is, it doesn't sound all that good because the ending is just a mess of different sounds.



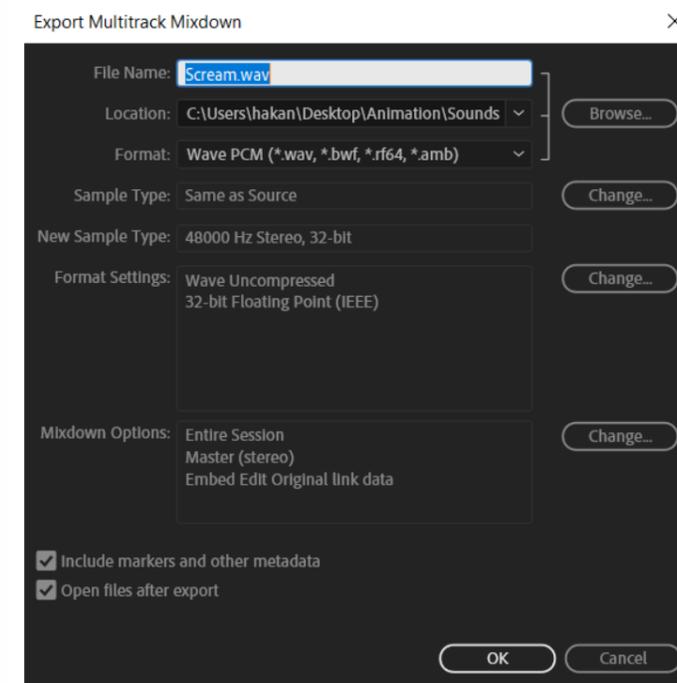
To make the sounds merge together better I selected the scream track and moved the little grey box in the top right corner, this is used to create a fade in or fade out and depending on how the box is dragged can change how soft the fade is. For this track I wanted the scream to fade out quite fast so I used a steep fade out, allowing the sounds of Scoop hitting the ground to come through clearer.



I then played around with the tracks, until they were all lined up correctly and worked in combination with one another. Once I was happy with how that sounded, I altered each track's audio so that they wouldn't be extremely loud in comparison to the rest of the sound effects in the animation.



After listening through the track I found that it was a bit on the short side, especially since this scream needs to stretch over the scene of Scoop falling and hitting the ground. Therefore, to extend this whole composition I selected the scream track and went into the 'Stretch' options in the bottom left panel. Here I changed the mode to 'Rendered (High Quality)' in order to open up the settings, then I changed the 'Stretch' from 100% to 180%. I did need to play around with a few different variants of this before I decided on 180%, but in the end this felt like the right length of scream.

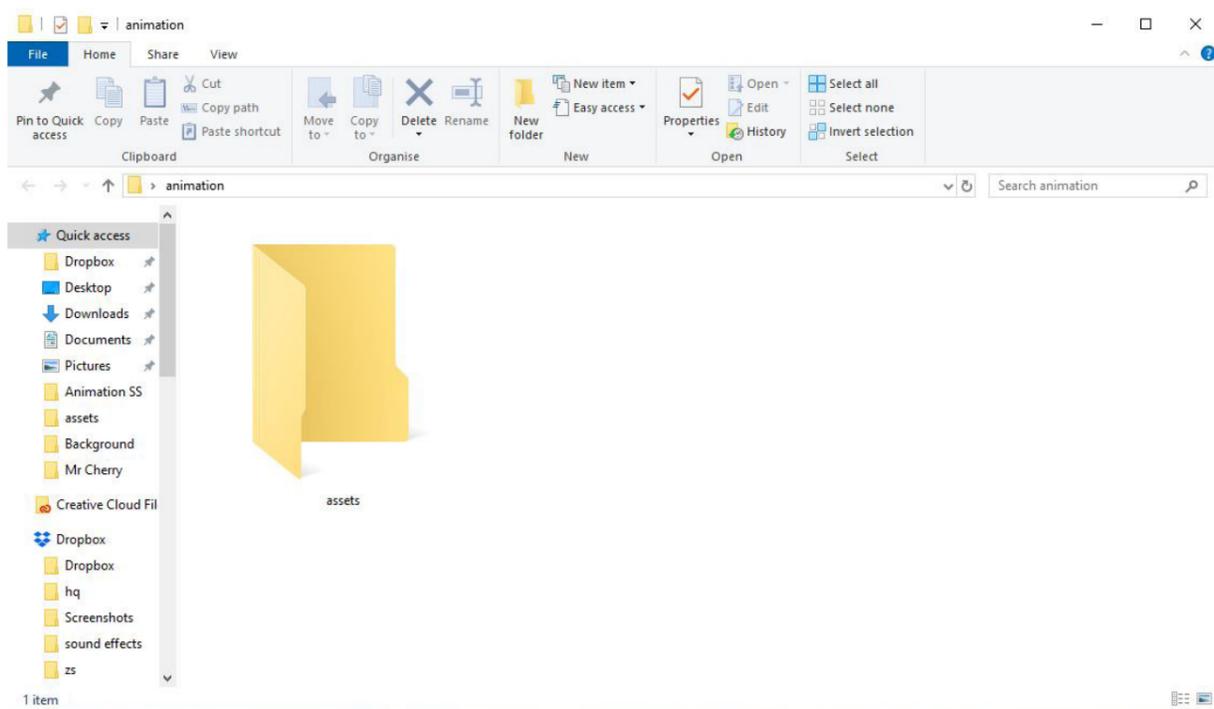


Finally, I exported this multi-track session as a single file into my sounds folder, ready to be used on the actual animation.

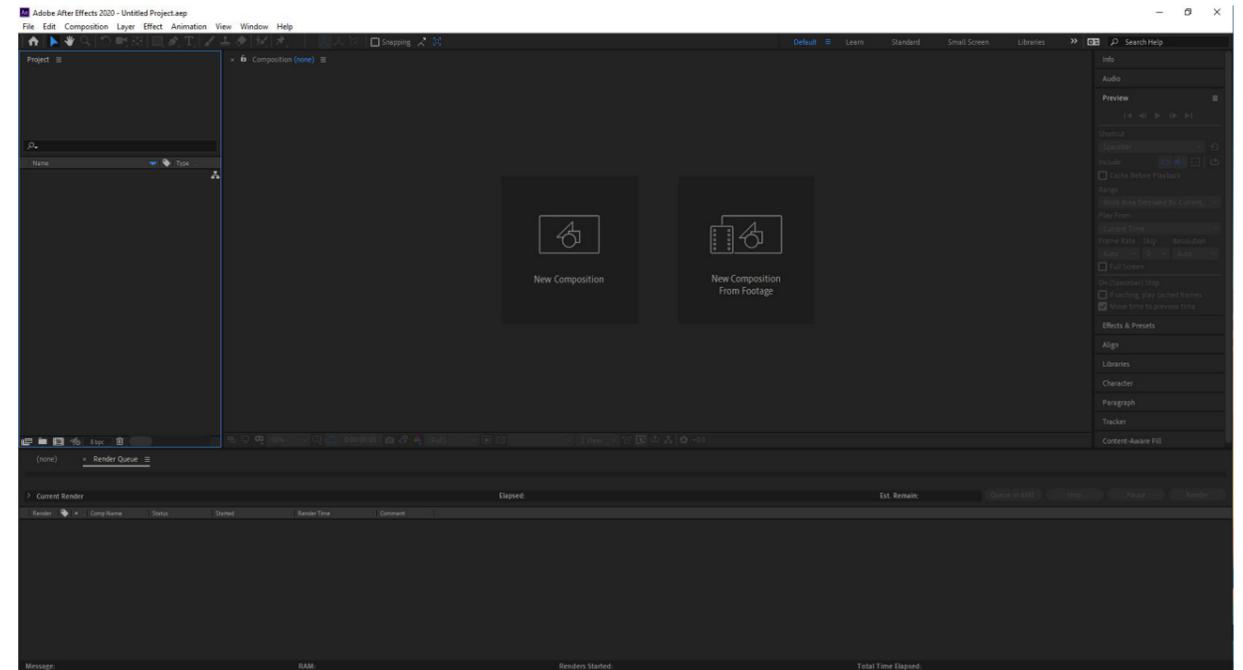
# Animating



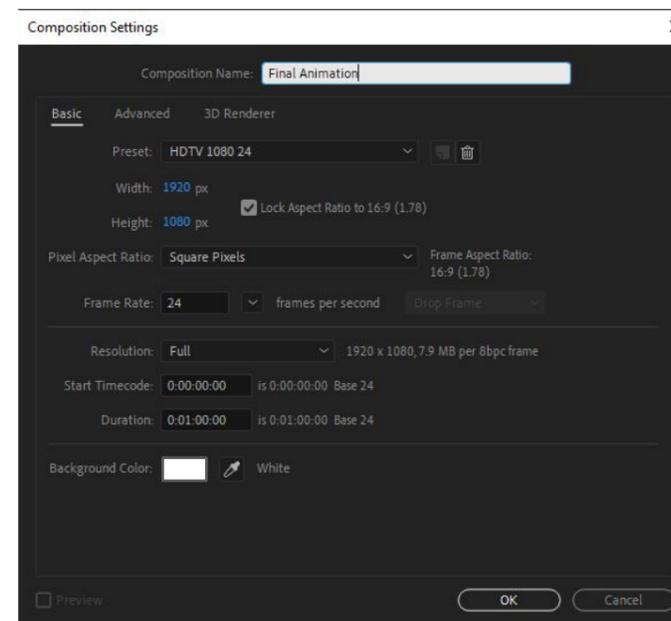
Now that I finished editing all of my sounds I moved onto the actual animating process. However, before I could start in the software I needed to create a series of files that would be pertinent to the development process. The first of these included a root folder, this would work as a container to keep all of the files relating to the animation together.



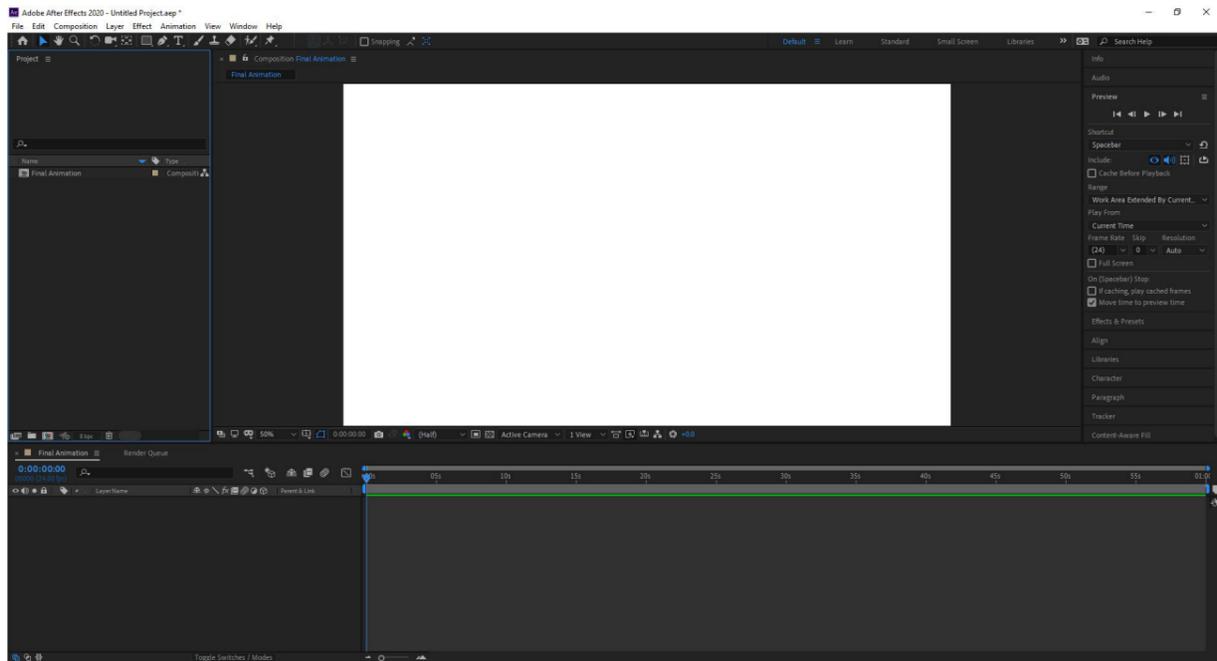
Once I had the root folder created, I opened it up and created another folder inside of this called 'assets'. The purpose of this folder was to store all of the elements that would be used in my animation, making them easily accessible to the software. After this was made I proceeded to fill the assets folder with the illustrator files like Scoop's sprite sheet and the backgrounds, as well as the sounds that I created earlier. However, to make this easier I just moved the whole sounds folder that I created into here.



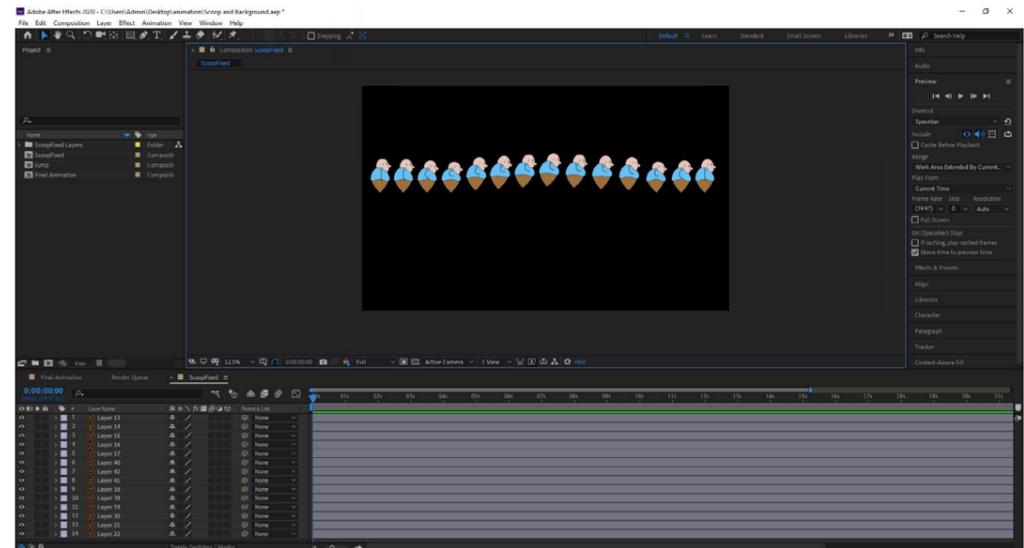
Once I stored out my folders I opened Adobe After Effects, this is where all of the actual animating would take place, but before I created anything I saved the project into the root folder that I had just made. Then I clicked the 'New Composition' button in the centre on the left.



Clicking this then brought up a box where I could change many settings about the composition. I started by changing the name of the composition to 'Final Animation', since this is where I would be bringing all of the scenes to construct the final piece. I then put in the basic information, such as the width and height of the video, which was 1920 by 1080 pixels to create a HD video. Finally, I set the frame rate to 24, this determines how many frames would fit into a second. To put this into perspective, Scoop's jump consists of 14 frames.

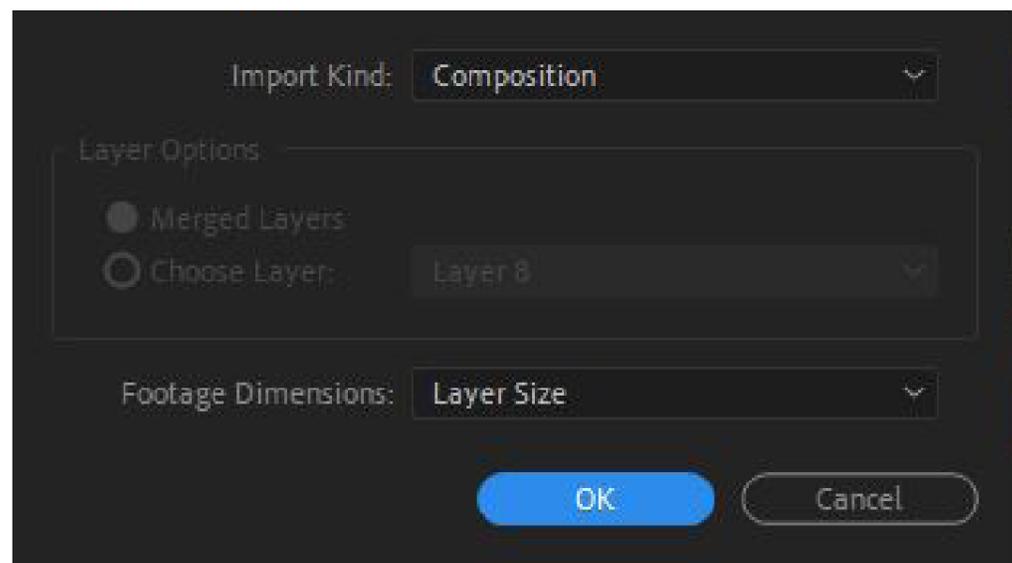


After pressing 'ok' I was greeted by a timeline at the bottom of the screen and a large white area, this was because I set the background colour of the composition to white.

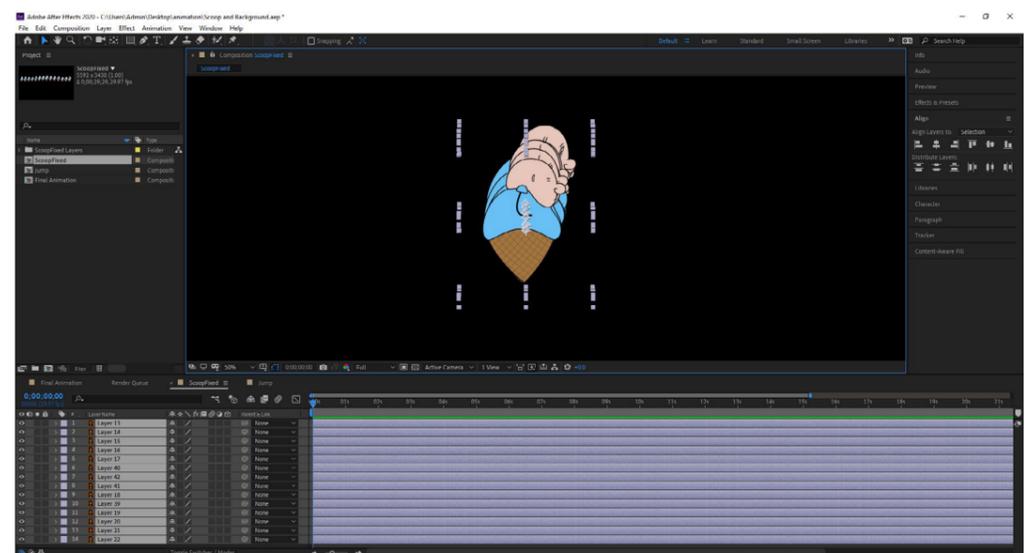


I then made another composition called 'Jump', this was done in the exact same way as the one for the final animation. The reason I made a new composition was so that I could copy the layers for the sideways jump from Scoop's sprite sheet and paste them into their own file that didn't have the forward jump in there as well.

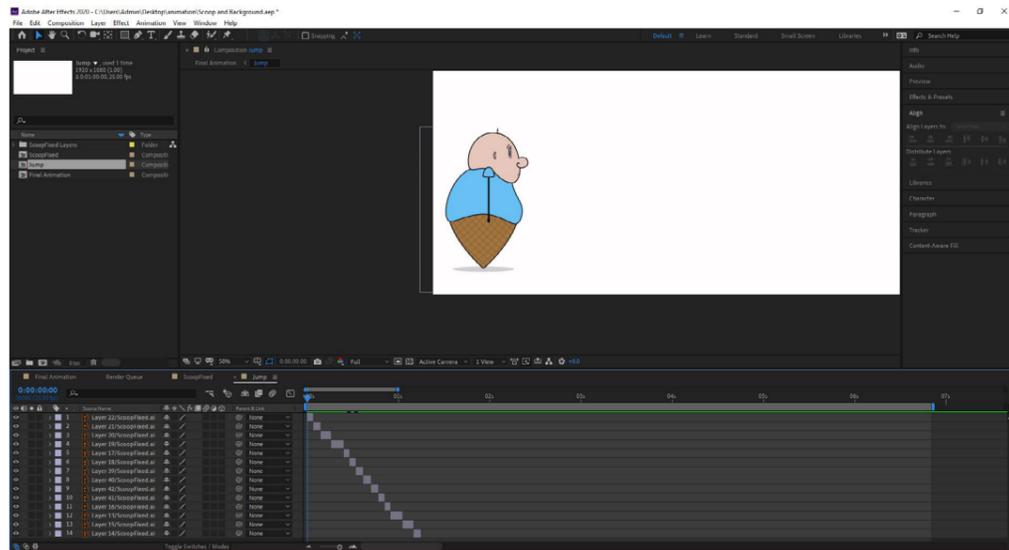
At this point I was aware that my storyboard didn't start with Scoop hopping sideways, but since this was the first walk cycle that I had made I was experimenting. Additionally, I also felt that using 2 different angles of Scoop hopping could make the animation more interesting to watch.



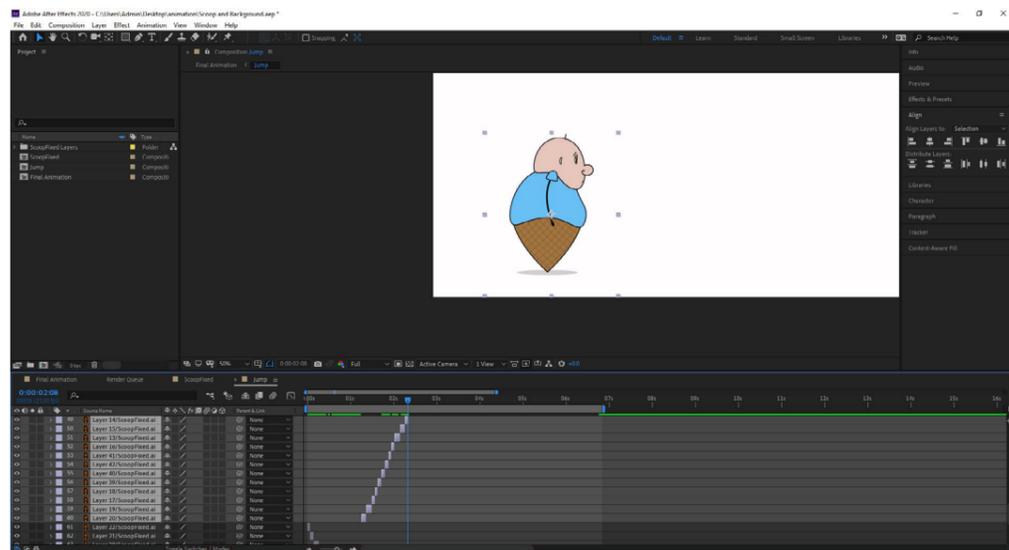
Following this, I opened my asset folder and dragged the illustrator file of Scoop's sprite sheet into the panel on the left, the one with the Final Animation composition. Upon doing this I was greeted by a box, on here I had to state that I wanted the file to appear as a composition and I wanted it to keep all of the layers that were included in the file.



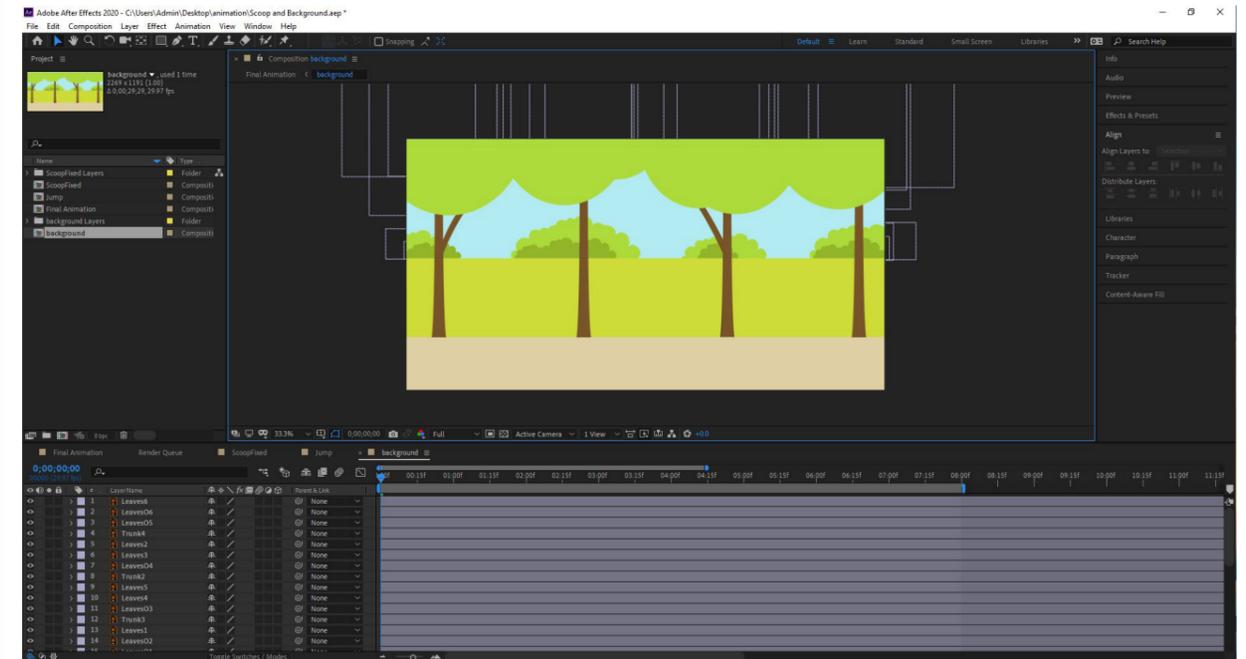
In this composition I proceeded to select all of the layers and used the 'Align' feature on the right side panel to get all of the frames lined up on the same spot. However, before I knew this feature was here I tried to line them all up with my bare eyes, this ended up making the frames be off slightly by a few pixels, which can be a very noticeable detail in a short animation.



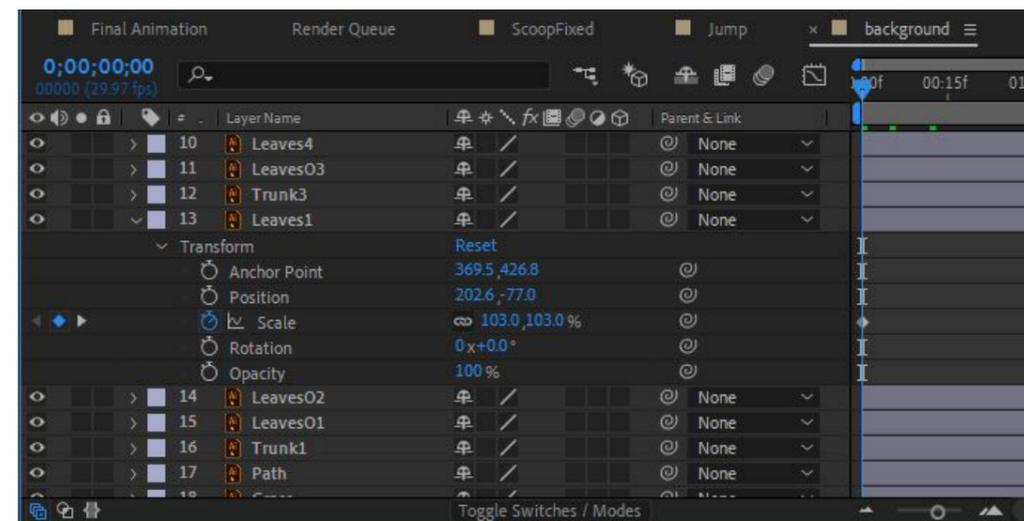
Following this, I shortened each of the layers in the timeline until they were 1 frame long, these were then staggered in the order that I wanted them to appear. Additionally, after the frame where Scoop leaves the ground I moved the position of the layer to the right slightly, this made it look as though the jump was actually sending him forward. However, when playing the animation it felt far too fast, since his eyes and arms were going through their movements really quickly. To fix this I went and changed the length of some of the frames to be longer, these included the crouch when winding up the jump, the peak of the jump, and the hard landing.



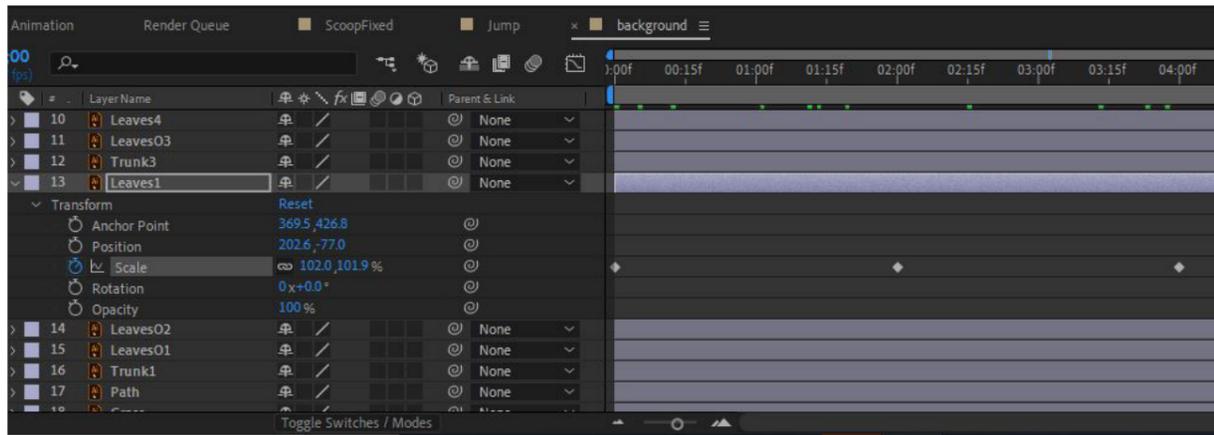
From here I proceeded to copy the jump layers and shift the copies along to where the first set ended, this would make it look like Scoop was doing a double jump. This was then repeated over and over until I had Scoop doing a consecutive series of jumps.



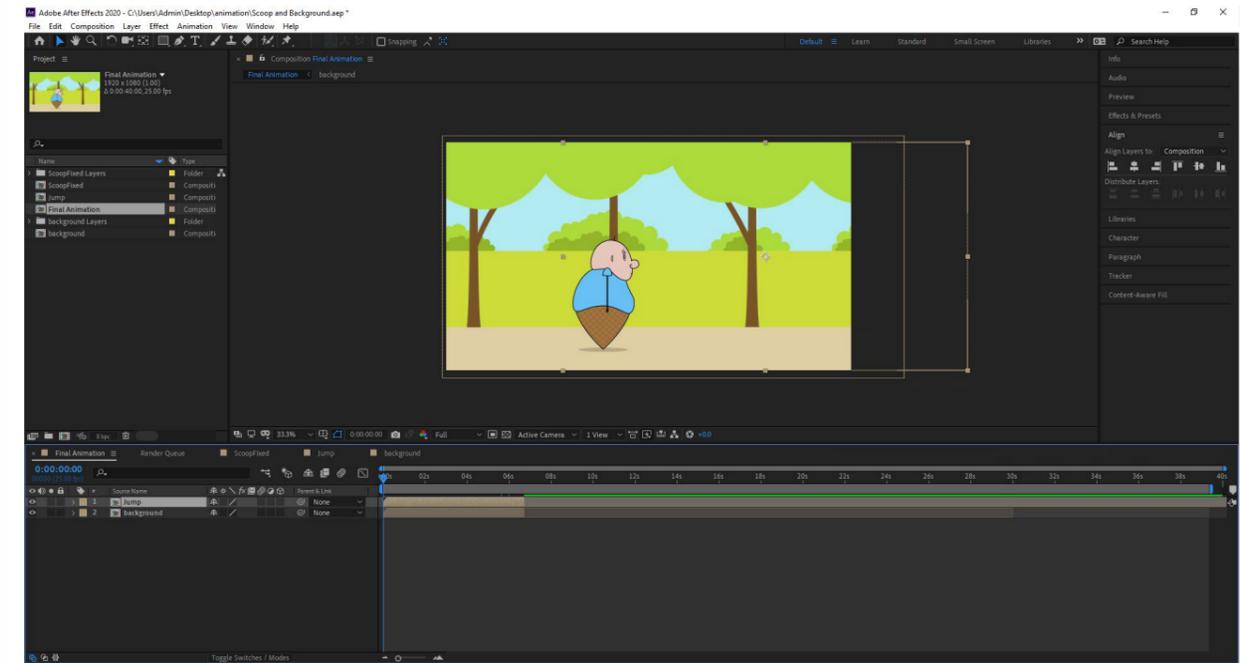
After sorting out the hop, I brought in the first background and opened it's composition. Unlike Illustrator, After Effects cuts off the shapes that aren't shown in the working area, therefore making it much easier to see how the background looks, as well as making it easier to animate. On top of this, I renamed all of the layers to what they linked with, making it easier to edit what I needed to.



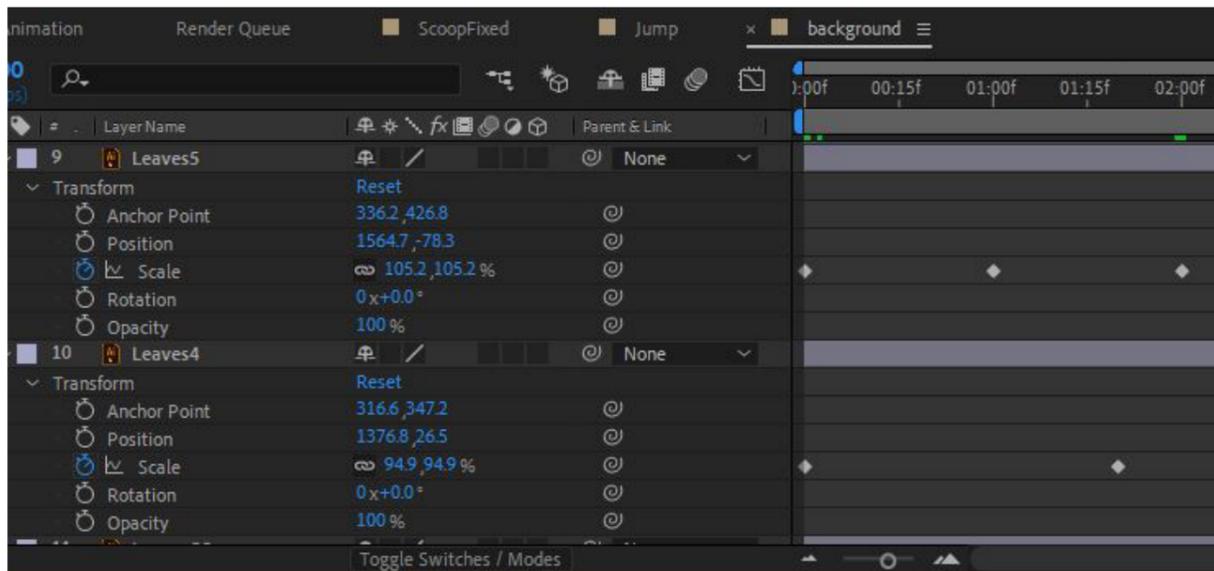
Moving on, I started to animate the leaves that could be seen on the background. The way that I did this was by opening up the layer for the leaves I wanted to animate, followed by opening their transform options. In here I clicked the stopwatch for scale creating a keyframe at the start of this composition, this tells the software that at this point in the timeline the layer should appear at this specific scale.



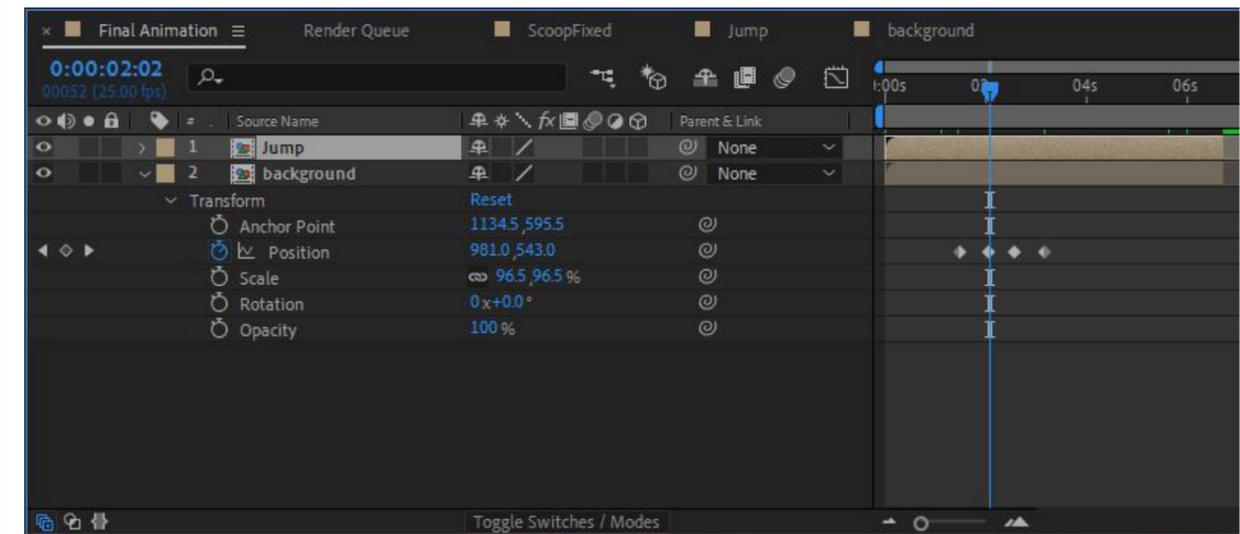
I then moved along the timeline, alternating the scale of the layer between large and small to give it a bit of movement. The point of doing this was to create key frames along the timeline at different points, thus making the software fill in the gaps and animate a transition from one scale to another, creating the illusion that the tree's leaves were moving due to the wind.



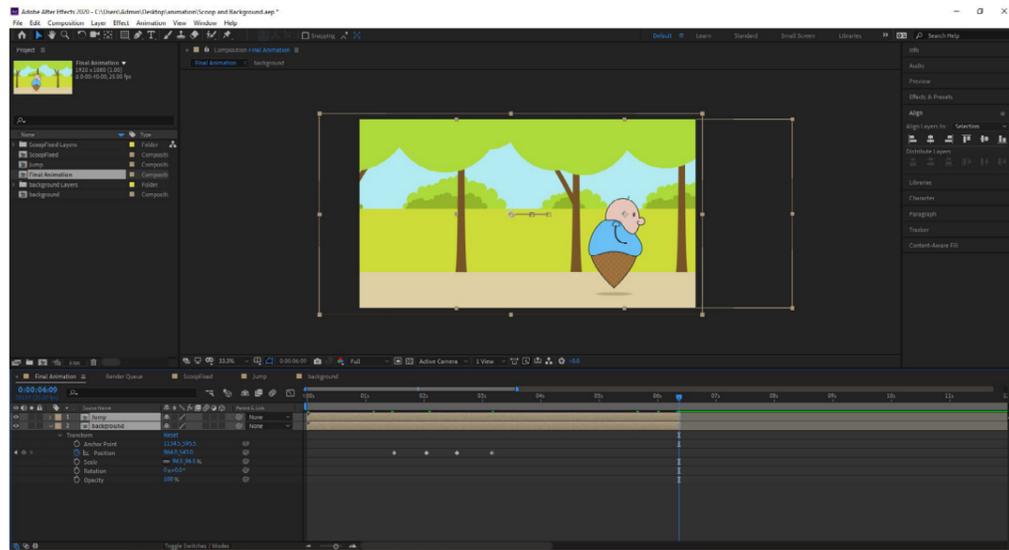
After this, returned to the 'Final Animation' composition and placed in both the background and the jump compositions. While doing this I had to resize the background so that it would actually fit to the scale of the video, as well as position the jump composition correctly so that Scoop started in the desired spot on the path.



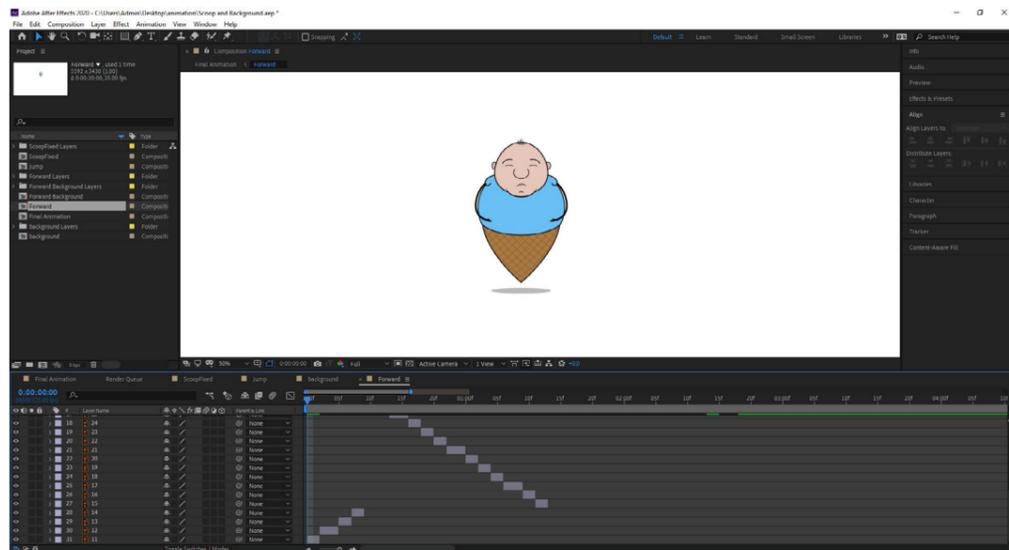
Next, I proceeded to go through this process for all of the other visible leaves on the trees, however I did make sure to vary the timing of the key frames and alternate whether the scale started going small or big at the beginning.



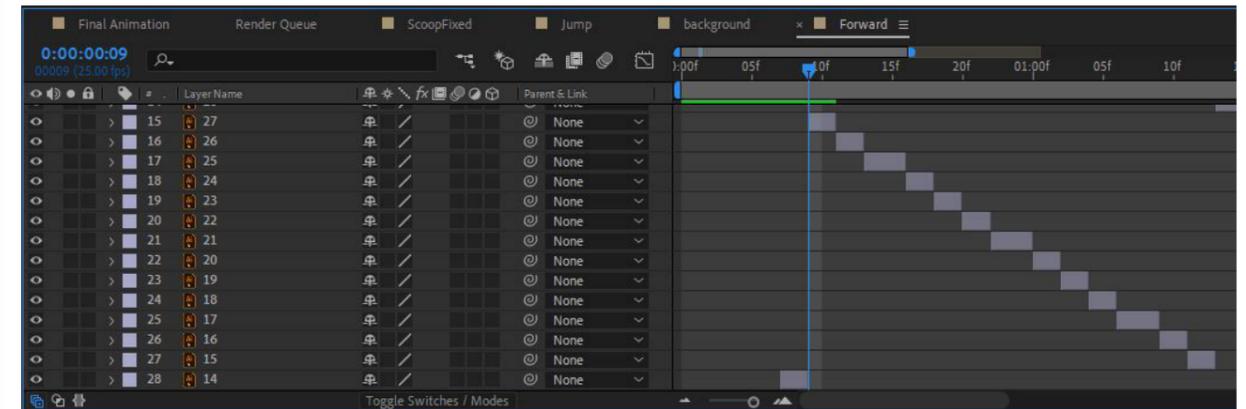
During the positioning of the background I noticed that I had a little bit of room to work with, therefore I decided to go into the transform options for the background and move the background's position a little bit every time Scoop hopped.



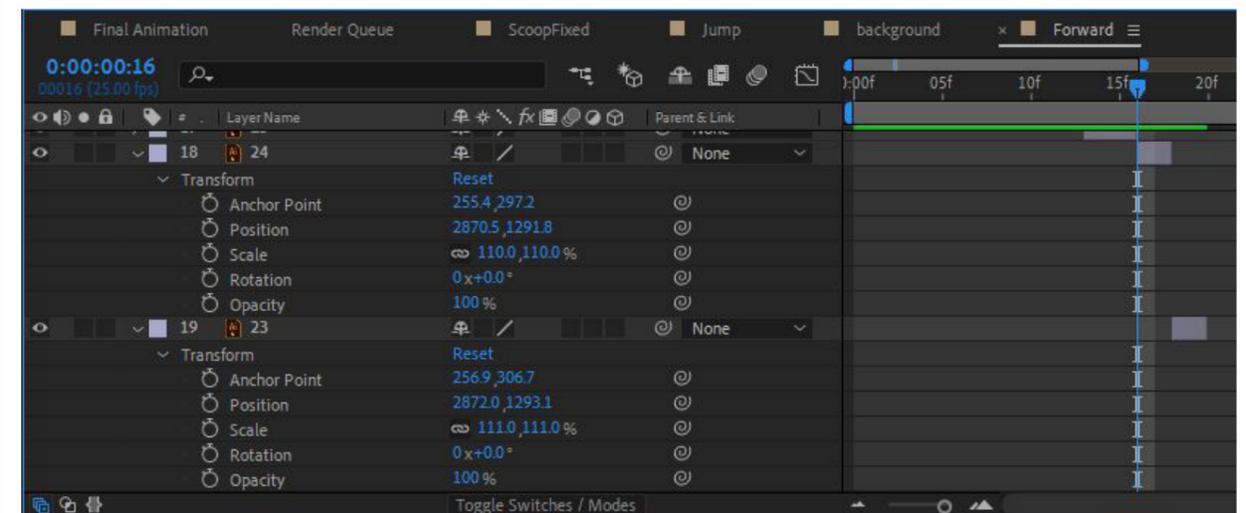
Additionally, rather than having the scene end with him finishing his hop, I decided that it would be an interesting idea if I cut the compositions short slightly, making Scoop end his jump at the start of the next scene. This would create a strong link between the 2 scenes and also work as nice transition that keeps the flow of motion going.



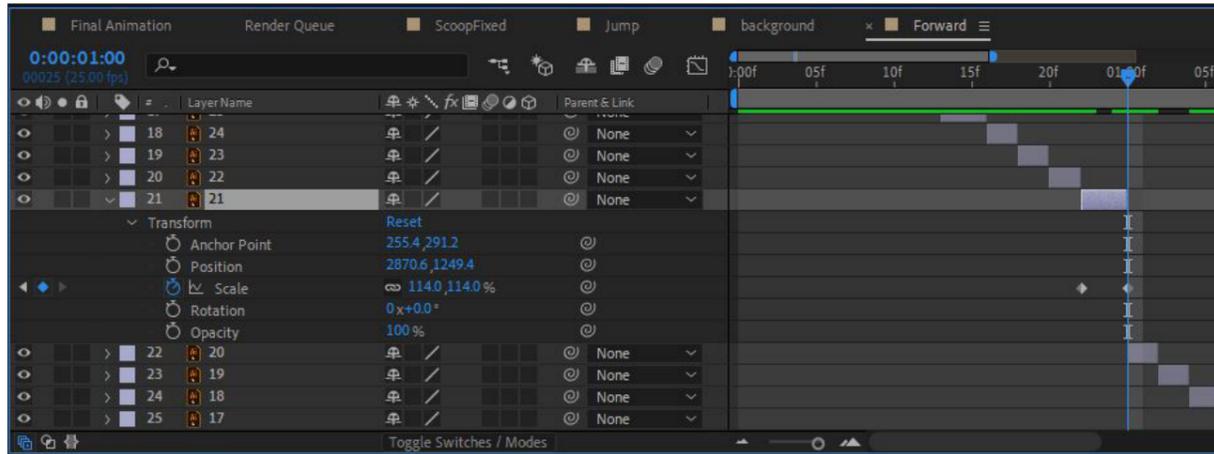
I then went through the process of making another composition for the forward jump. This was very similar to the way I created the sideways version with the frames being aligned on top of one another and the length of the frames being exactly the same. However, for this composition I started with the final frames of the hop rather than the start up.



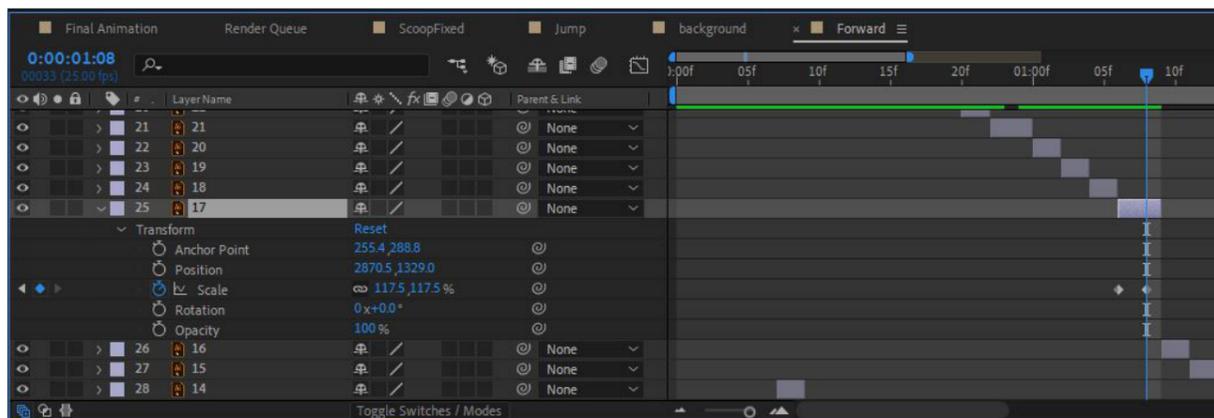
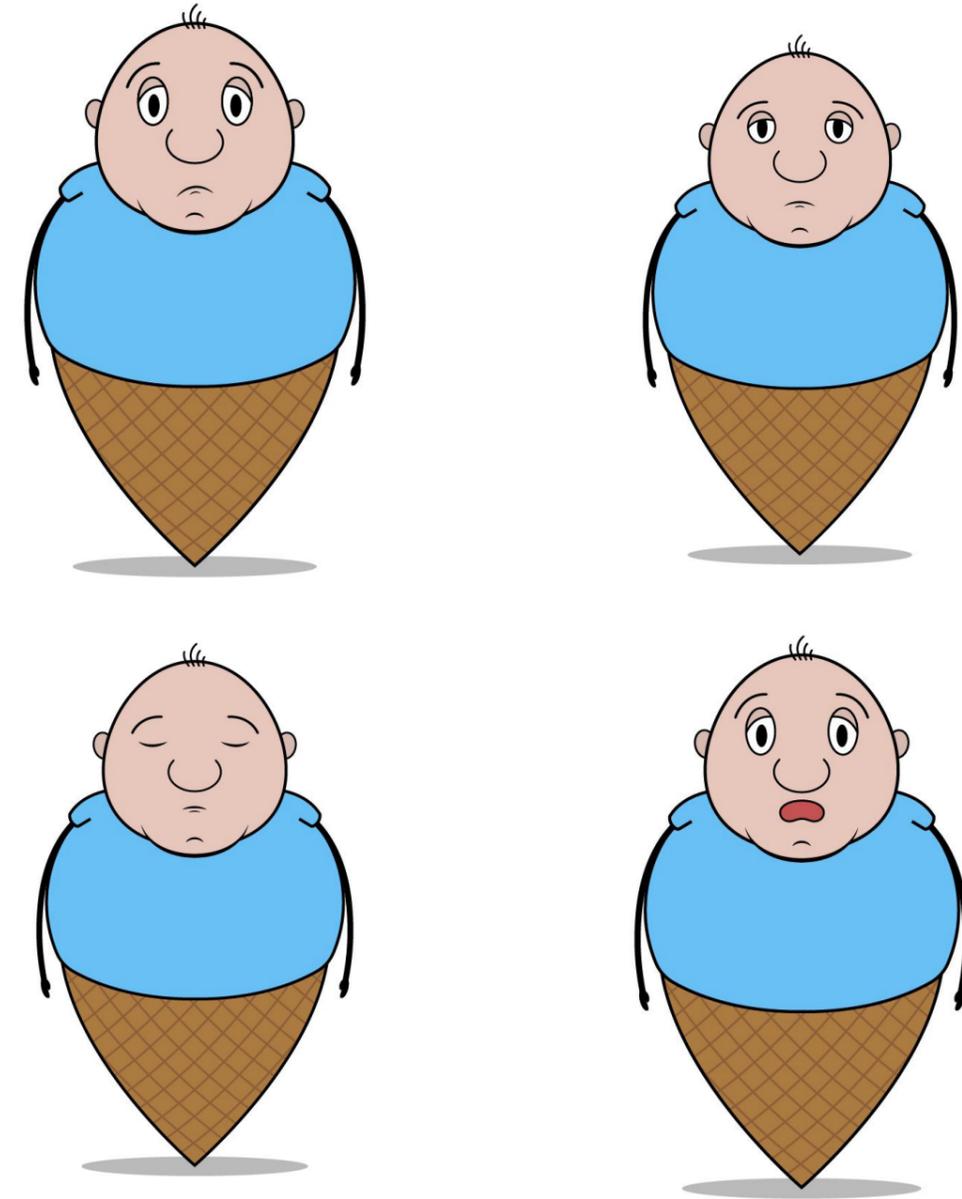
The next step after this was to place in the full version of the hop and line them up with the end of the previous one. By this I mean line up the frames, since the actual illustrations won't need to move in any direction at all.



As for the reason why they don't need to move, it is because I proceeded to go into the transform settings of every frame and change their scale to become 1% bigger every time Scoop moves closer. This meant that frames where he was stood still were unaffected. Additionally, I did not click the stopwatch, so all this was doing was effecting the original size of the layer, rather than making key frames to be animated.

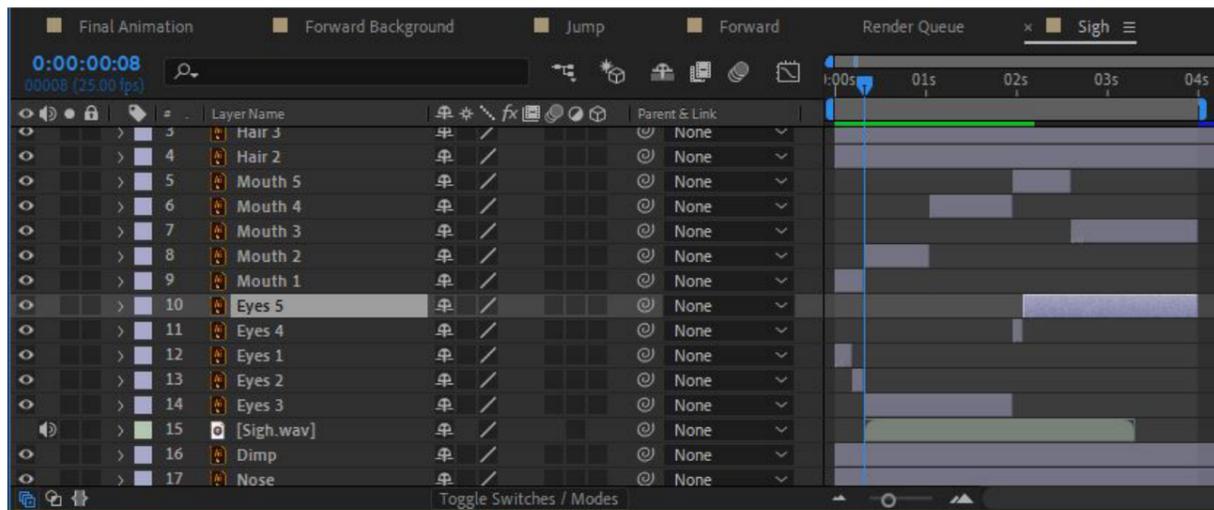


However, when it came to longer frames like the peak of the jump I did in fact click the stopwatch to use key frames. This was because I wanted the start of the frame to be bigger than the last by 1%, but also by the end of the frame I wanted it to have increased again by 1%. The result of this was to show movement even while the frame was technically stationary.

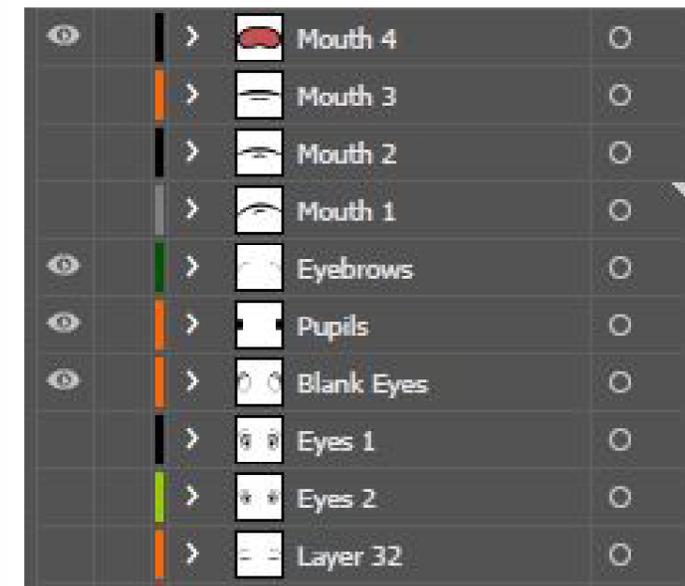


Then for the landing frame I did something slightly different, I made a key frame at the beginning that was 1% bigger than the last and then a little bit before the frame ended I made the scale increase by 0.5%. The desired effect here was to make it seem as though Scoop was rocking forward the slightest bit.

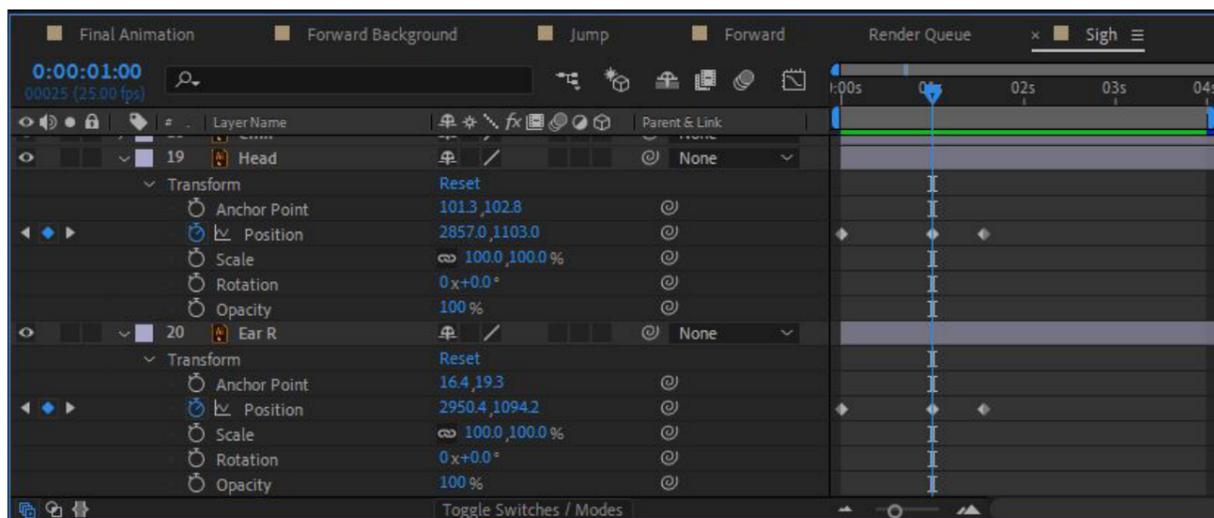
Once the sizing was done for every hop in the composition I needed Scoop to sigh, but because I didn't have this file created I had to go into Illustrator and make it during the animation process. This is something that I did throughout the whole animating segment. The way that I created the sigh was by taking the final frame of the hop cycle, the idle pose, and I placed the eyes from the other frames onto the face, along with a new set of mouths that showed the wind up and release for the sigh. These eyes and mouths were all then placed onto their own individual layers, along with the rest of the elements that made up the character.



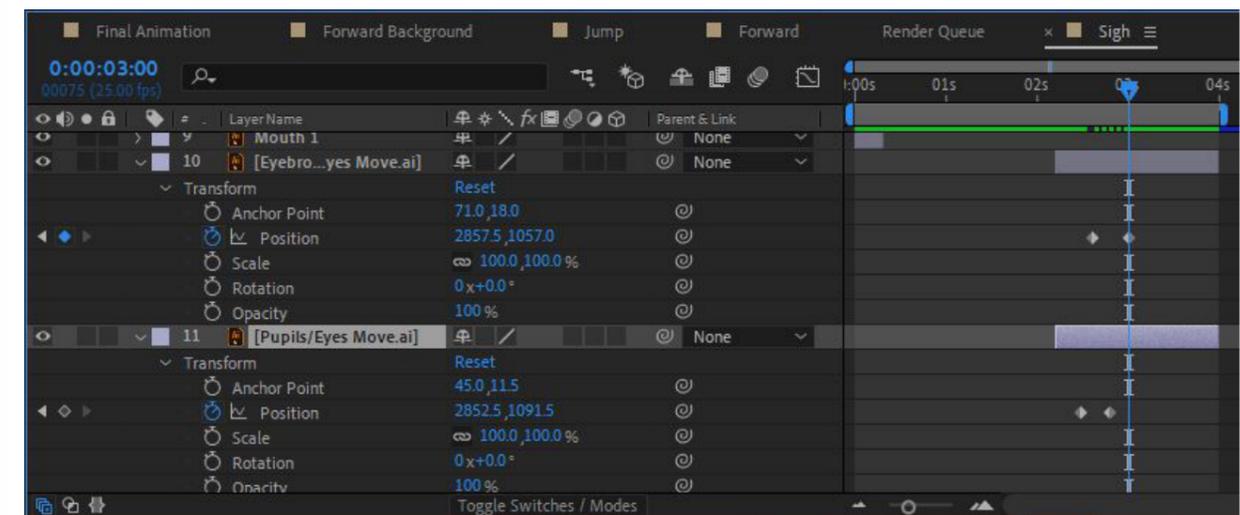
Moving back over to After Effects, I dragged in the sigh asset and created a new composition for it. Inside of this composition I began to organise the layers for the face, making Scoop close his eyes and switch to one of the smaller mouths for the inhale and then opening his eyes and his mouth for the actual sigh. In order to make sure that I got all of this timed correctly I had also dragged in the sigh audio file from my assets folder, this was placed into the composition so that the frames could be lined up to it. The audio track can easily be spotted by its green colour among the blue layers.



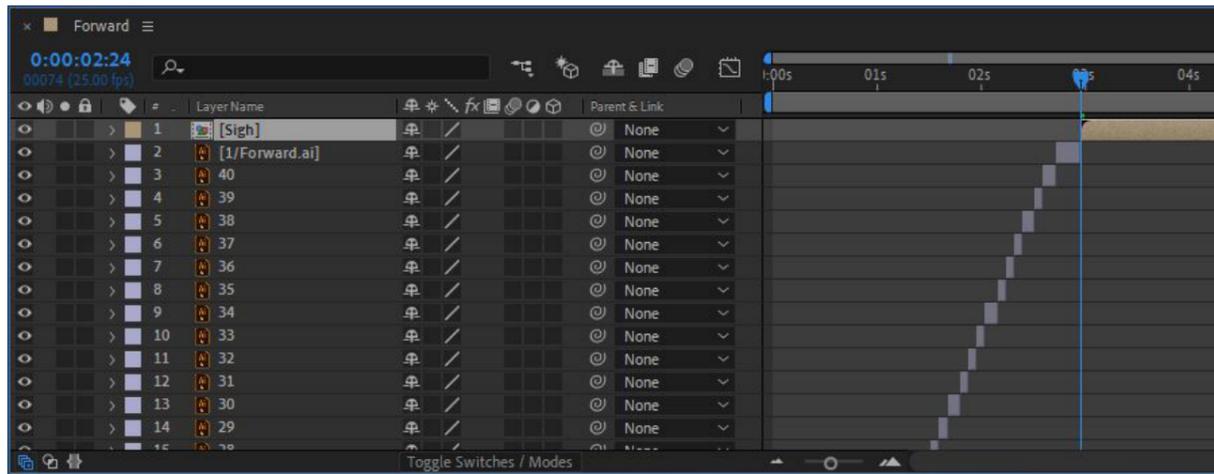
At this point the sigh was complete, but something that I forgot to prep for was the section after the sigh, where Scoop spots the ice cream cart and looks over to the side of the screen. Thus I returned to Illustrator and used the sigh document as a foundation for this new creation. Inside of this I made a new set of fully open eyes, but rather than have all of the features grouped together, I separated the pupils and eyebrows, allowing me to move all of them independently.



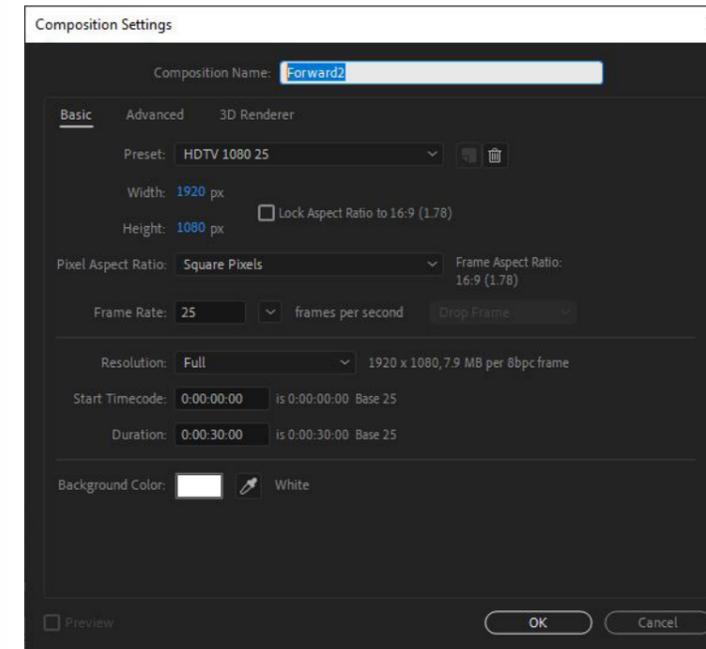
Additionally, to really sell the sigh to the viewer I set about making the character's body move along with the inhale and exhale. To do this I opened the transform menu for the body and used a key frame to increase its vertical scale when Scoop breathes in and then decrease afterwards. This had the desired effect, however the rest of the body, such as the shoulders and head, didn't move. Therefore, to get these other body parts involved I used their transform menus to set individual key frames that altered their positions, matching the body's movements.



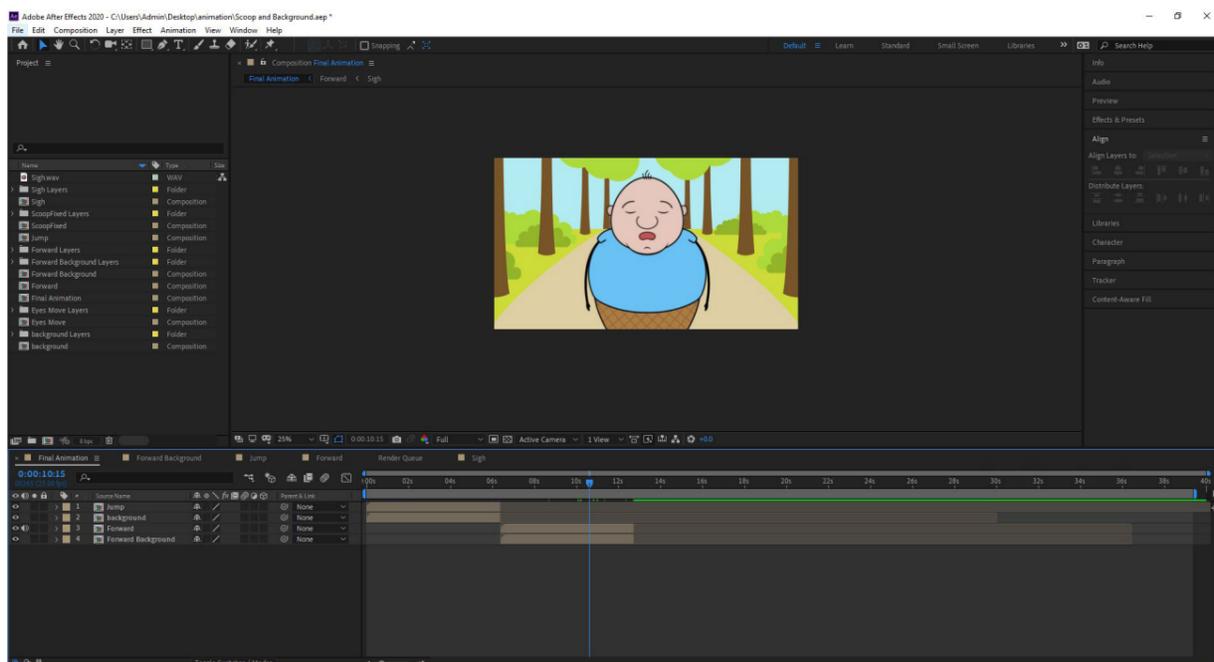
This new asset was then brought into After Effects, but rather than animate inside of its composition I opened the layer folder that gets brought in with it and dragged the layers I needed into the sigh composition. Once inside of there, I lined up the new eyes with the existing ones and made key frames that moved the pupils so they would look to the left, followed by the eye brows moving upwards afterwards to show that he is intrigued.



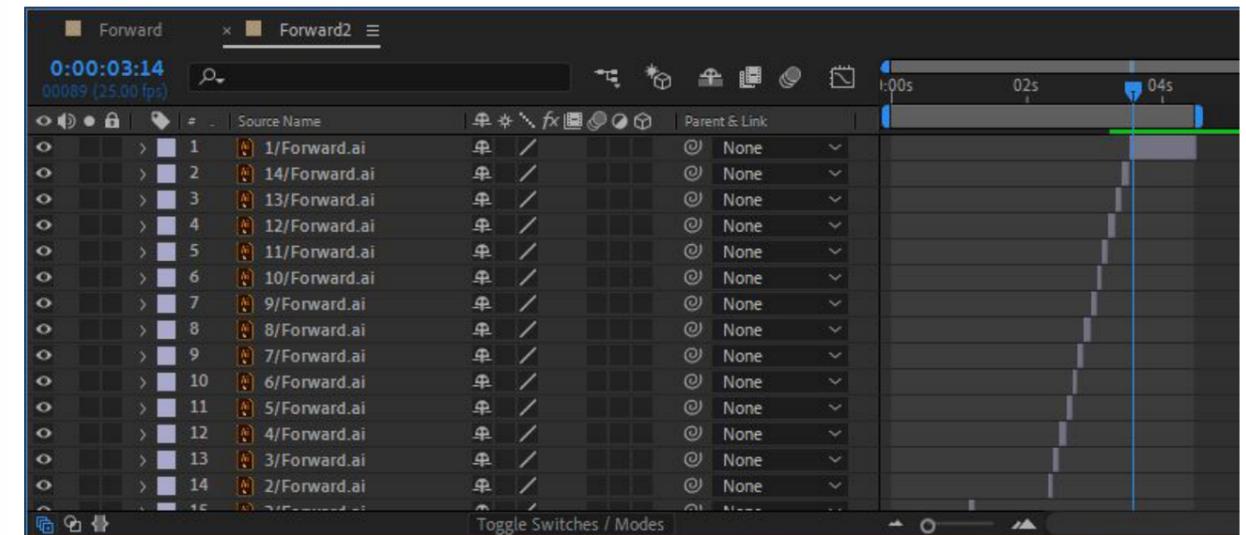
Going back to the forward hop composition, I inserted the sigh at the end of the movement cycle. Additionally, I extended the final frame of the movement, so that there would be a rest period before the sight started.



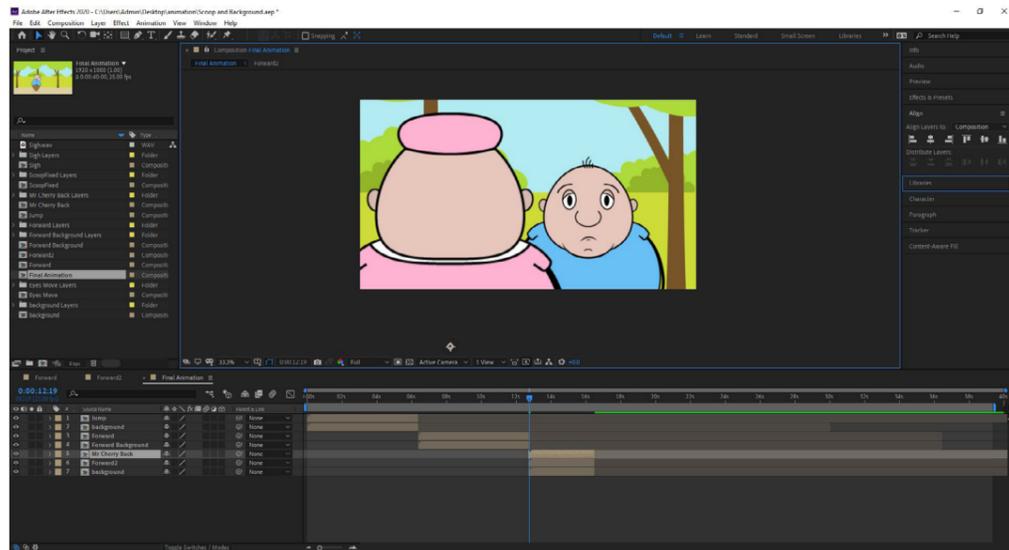
Following this scene, I thought it would be a bit harsh to have Scoop suddenly be in a conversation with Mr Cherry suddenly, therefore I set about making a shot of Scoop approaching him. To start this, I needed another composition of him hopping forward, since I didn't want him sighing at the end.



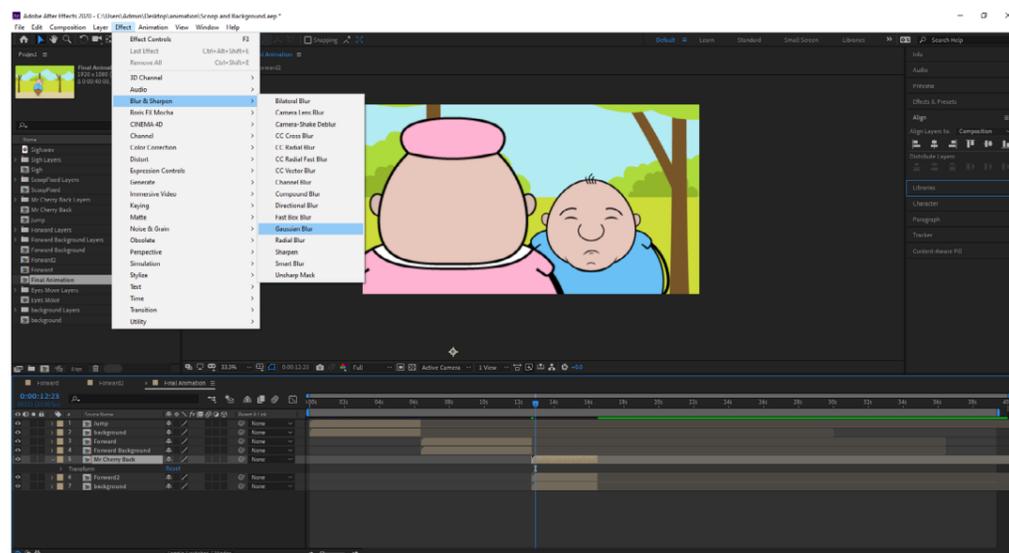
This forward hop was then added to the final composition, along with the correct background that was animated in the exact same way as the previous one, with the leaves changing scale. On top of this, these were fairly easy to put together because the background was the exact same size as the composition and I could use the alignment feature to place Scoop in the centre.



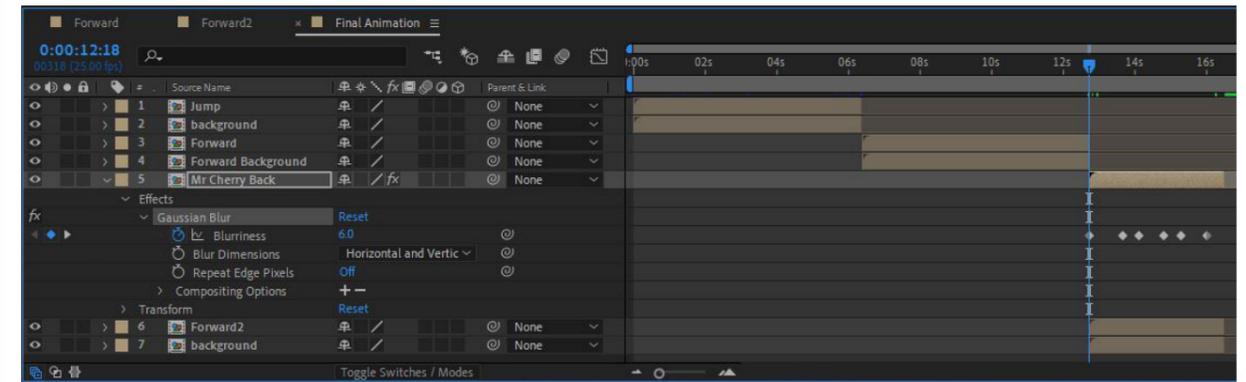
Once I had this second composition, I copied several hop cycles from original forward jump animation. These were then placed and altered slightly in terms of scale, since I didn't take the ending jump that started the last composition, making all of the frames afterwards that increased by 1% a tad too big. Then I placed in a final idle frame that was extremely long, since I could cut it down later if I needed. On top of this, something that I haven't mentioned yet is that after completing scenes like this one I drag the blue marker on the right side of the grey bar above the frames until it touches the end. The reason for this is because this tells After Effects where the animation ends, if this wasn't moved the animation would run on for as long as the composition lasts, making exporting a much longer process.



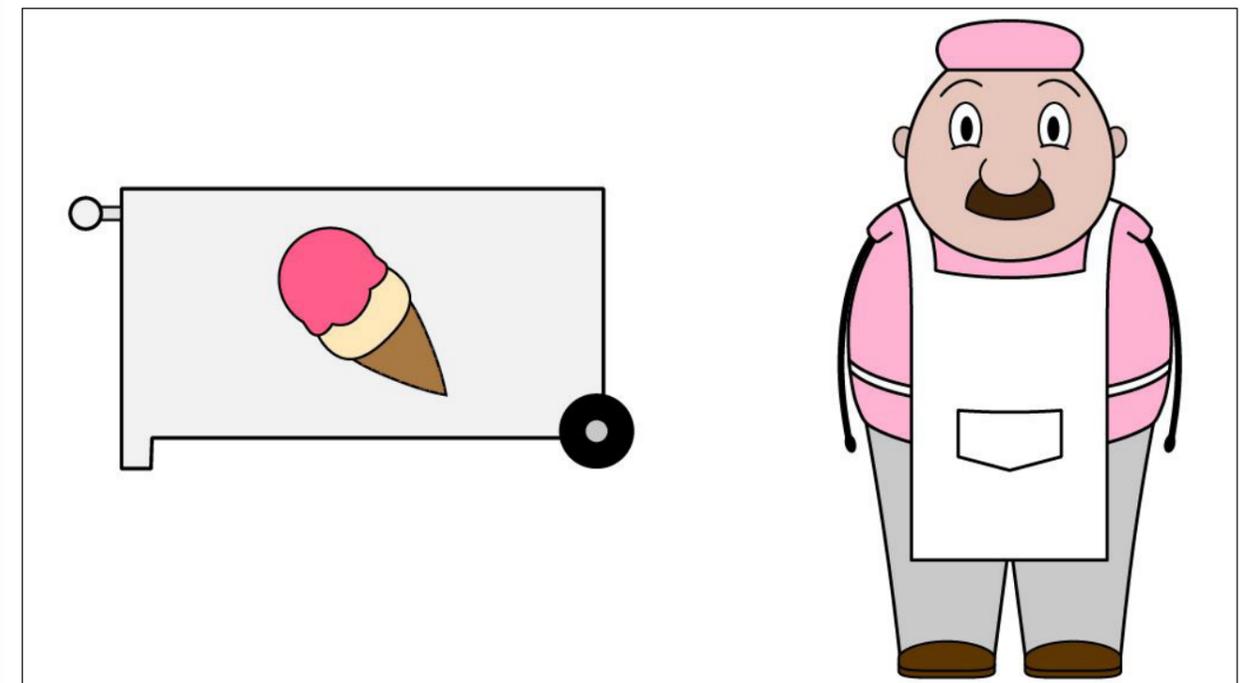
After the forward jump was ready, I dragged in the asset for the back view of Mr Cherry and began to assemble the scene in the final composition. Starting with the background, I copied the one from scene 1 and enlarged it so that the path couldn't be seen, this would keep the trees moving in the background but also look like a slightly different design. Next, I added in the unedited composition of Mr Cherry as the top layer and enlarged it so the camera was looking over his shoulder, followed by the second forward jump for Scoop that appeared on the other half of the shot.



When watching this through I saw a slight issue, this was that Mr Cherry was a little bit blurry because of how much I scaled him up. However, I soon thought of a solution for this that would make the blurriness not seem so bad, this was to add even more blur to his layer and place more focus onto Scoop. The way that I did this was by going into the 'Effect' tab at the top of the screen, going into 'Blur & Sharpen', and finally selecting 'Gaussian Blur' with the Mr Cherry layer selected.

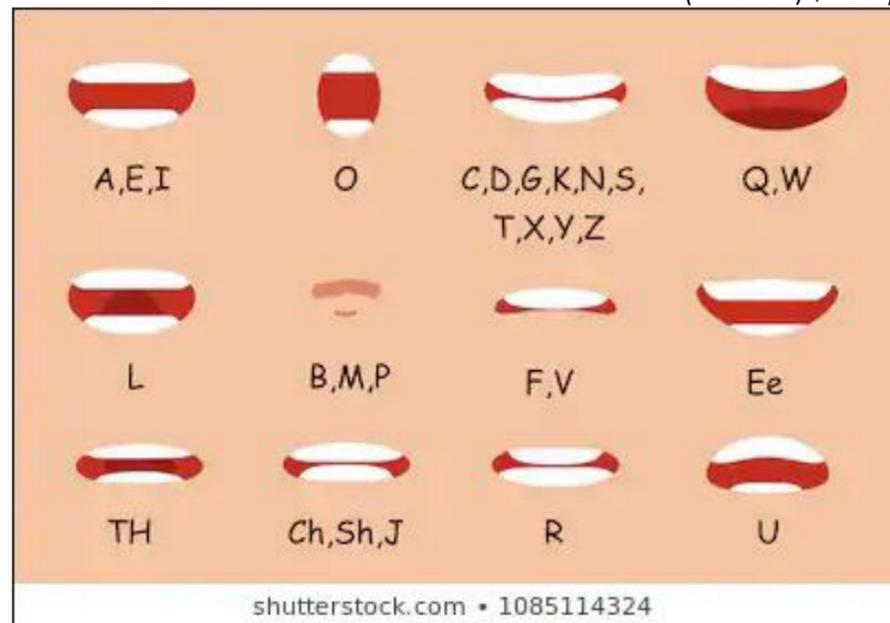


Upon adding this, I had another idea that the blur could slowly decrease as Scoop got closer, since the focus is on Scoop and where he is going. This would also make any blurriness on Mr Cherry seem normal in comparison to how the viewer first saw him. The way that I did this was by going into the effects options for the layer and making a key frame for the blurriness, which was then spaced in the same way as the first background that moved with Scoop's hops.



Now that I had the shot of Scoop approaching, I moved onto the creation of the scene where Mr Cherry is behind his cart and says his voice lines. However, much like with the sigh, I had to go into Illustrator and make the additional assets and frames for this whole scene. The way that I started this was by opening up the file that had Mr Cherry facing forward, then I proceeded to create his cart using the pen tool combined with shapes and the ice cream design that I had previously created on Scoop's sprite sheet. However, I decided to remove the wafer texture on the cone, since this would be something that is painted onto the cart and therefore wouldn't need to be overly detailed.

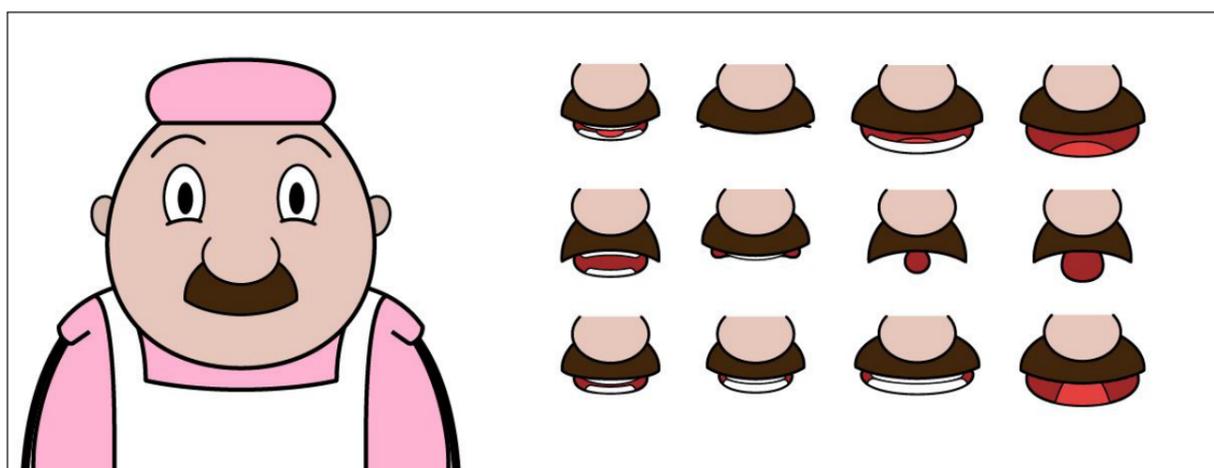
(Biliavskyi, n.d.)



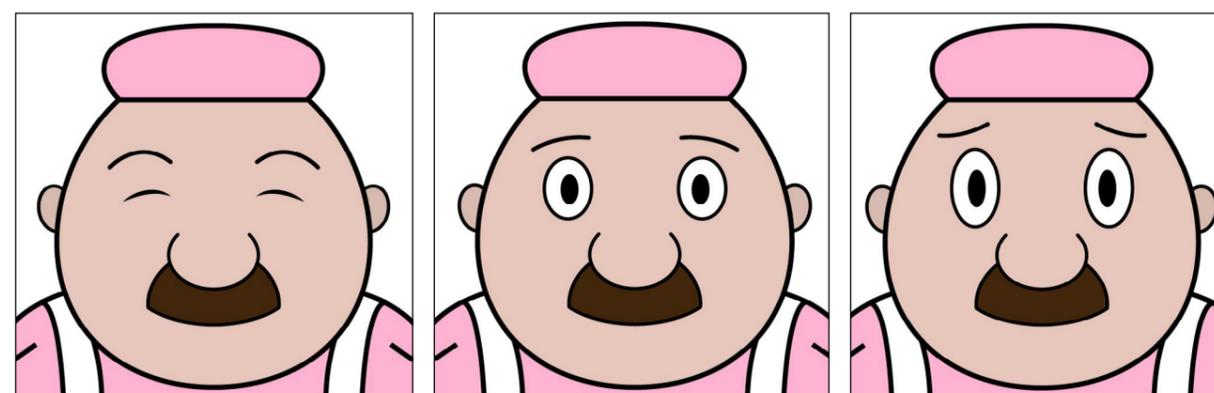
The next feature that I started to create for this scene was the different mouths for the lip syncing process, however since I had never done this before I had to search for a reference of different mouth shapes used in animation. Eventually, after searching for a while I found this set from Shutterstock that were nice and simplistic to follow.



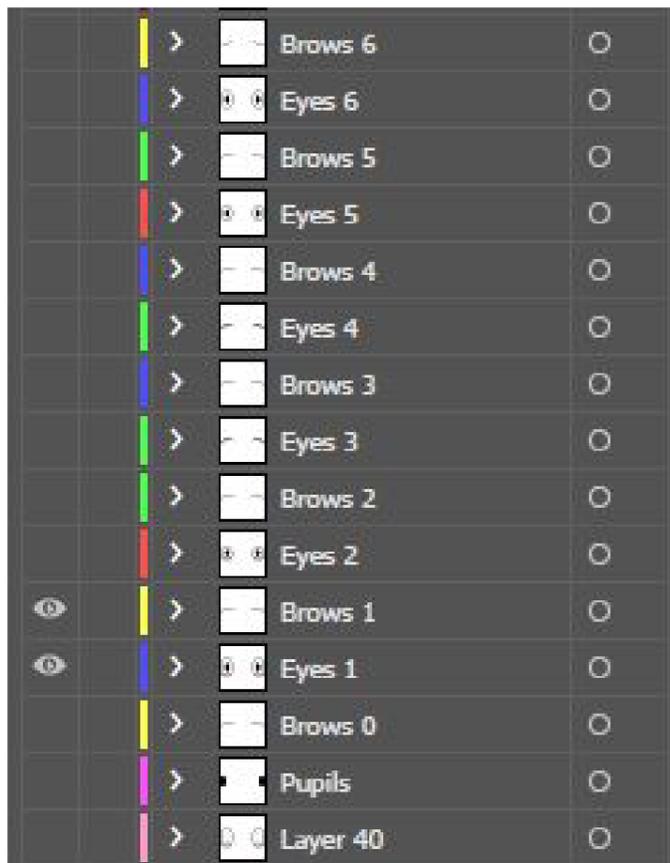
These mouths were then all organised on top of the original mouth, using the noses to line them up, since they were constantly at the same size. Then once these were in place I separated them onto different layers and gave them names that showed what sounds/ letters that they linked to. After this, the layers were all hidden because I had more work to do on the face and I wanted it to remain clear.



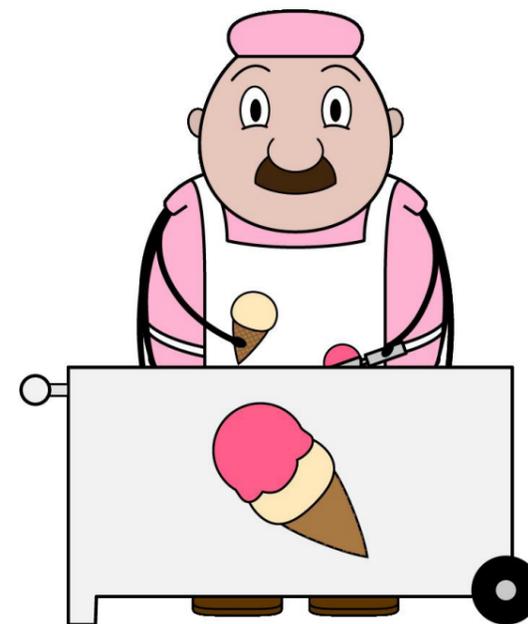
I then copied Mr Cherry's nose and moustache over to the side and began to use the reference and the pen tool to create several different mouth shapes. This was quite easy to do, however the difficulty came with the moustache because I had to manipulate it to follow the invisible lips of the character and sometimes the moustache would cover the top teeth that were needed to show the specific sound. The way that I got around this was by having the top teeth poke out slightly, so that the idea of the mouth still came across without any issue.



Speaking of the other work that I needed to do, I proceeded to place in new eyes for when Mr Cherry would be concerned about Scoop. The way that I did this was by changing the placement of the eyebrows and removing the cheek bumps at the bottom of the eyes that made him look happy before.

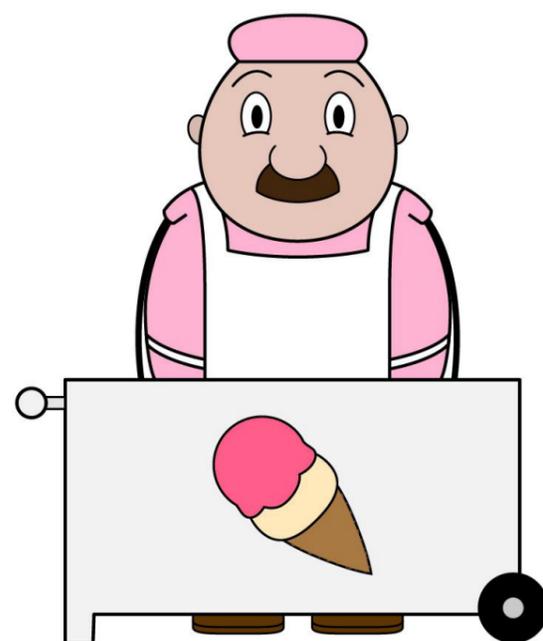


Much like the mouths these eyes were then divided into their own layers, with the eyebrows separate to the eyes in case I wanted to make them move. Additionally, unlike the sigh, I included a pair of pupils and empty eyes during this prep period, so that he could look around while getting the ice cream instead of staring straight forward all the time.



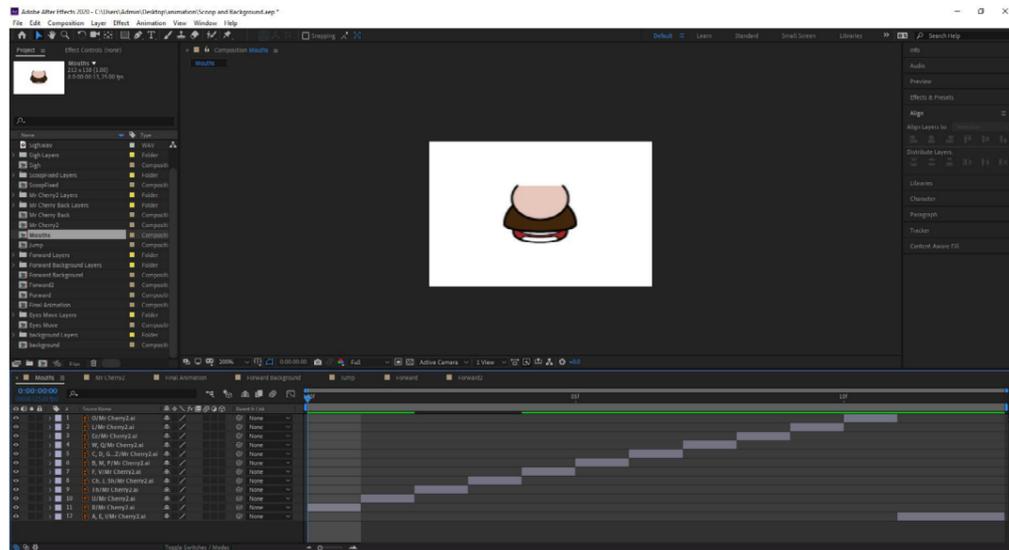
Following this, I proceeded to create an ice cream scoop and deconstruct the original ice cream that I made. Then frame by frame I created the motion that Mr Cherry would go through to place a scoop onto the ice cream, making sure to have the arms move at slightly different times so that it didn't look like his movements were being mirrored.

Now that the facial expressions were out of the way, I moved onto making the frames for the body. To start this I needed to set the scene, so I placed the cart in front of Mr Cherry, making sure to have it slightly lower than his feet to show that he was standing behind it and not inside of it.

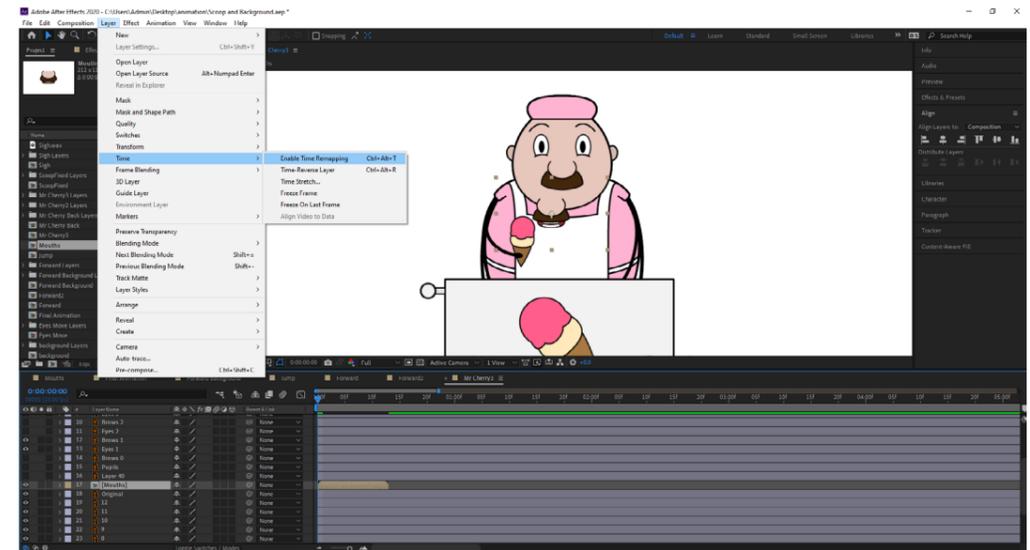


Eventually I ended up with a total of 12 frames for this motion, which I split apart and named in accordance of when they appear in the cycle.

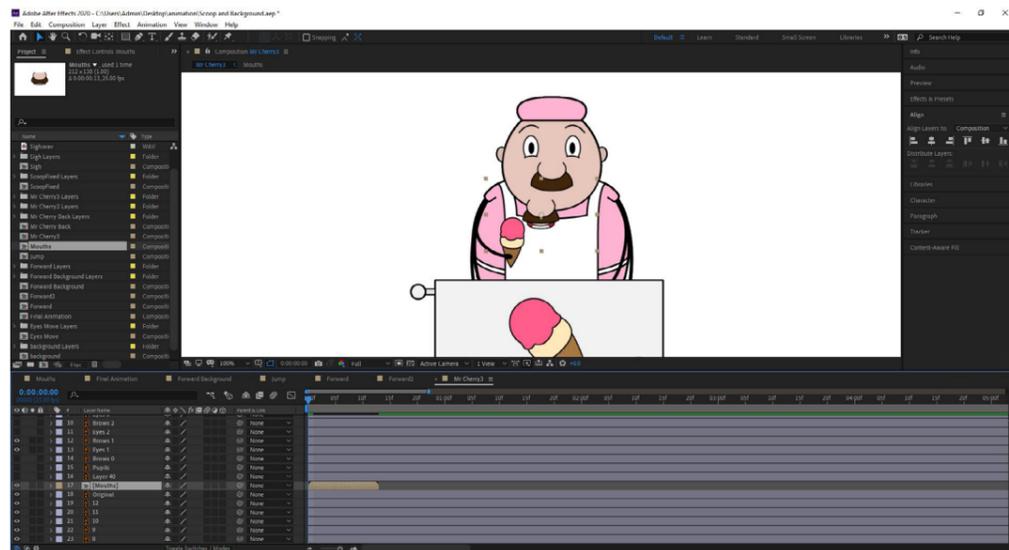




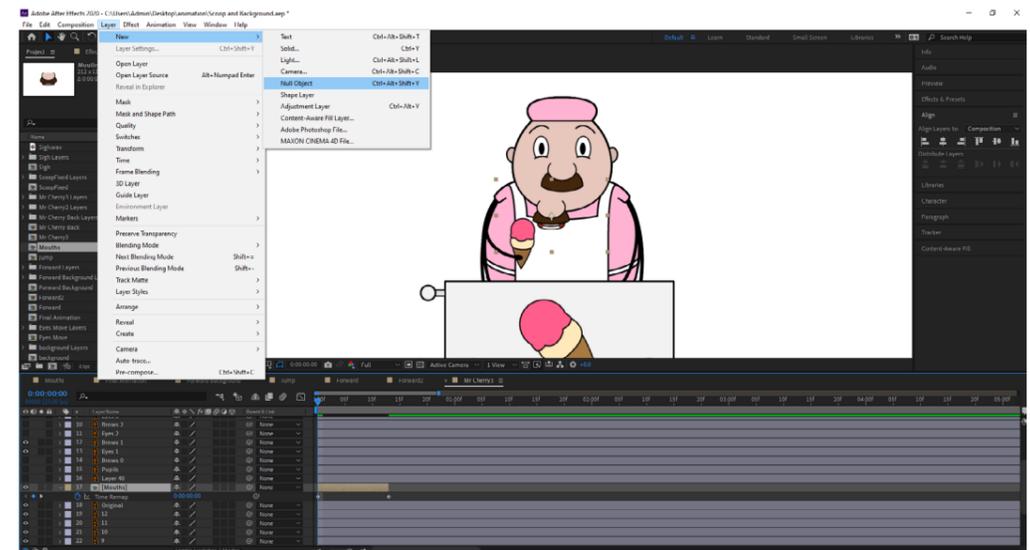
Returning to After Effects, I imported the Illustrator file for Mr Cherry and made a new small composition for the mouths, which I transferred them into. After they were inside this composition I made them each last for a single frame, apart from the last one that lasted for 2 frames because I was having a problem with it. The reason why I did this was because I was following a tutorial video on YouTube that showed how to do lip syncing in this software (Bloop Animation, 2013).



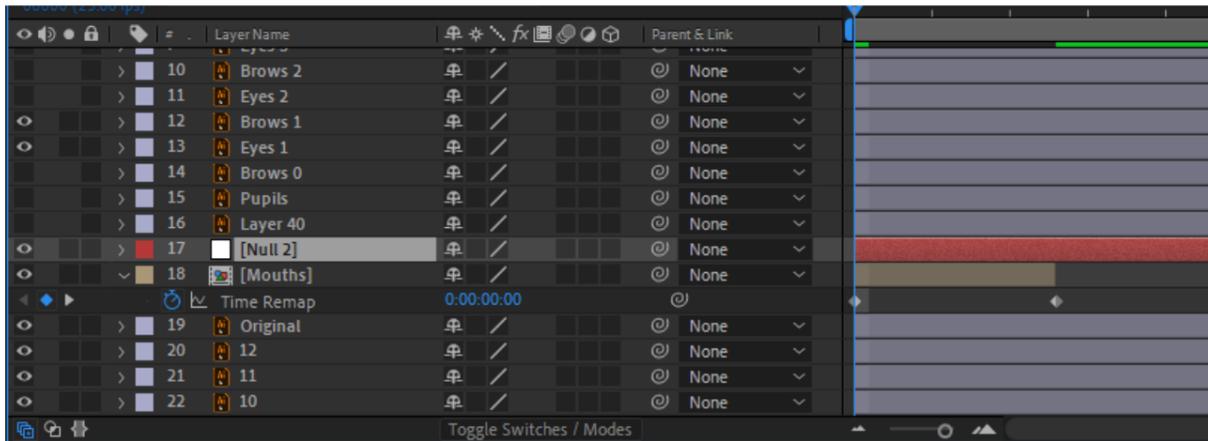
Next, with the mouths composition selected, I went into the 'Layer' tab at the top of the screen and inside of the 'Time' section I selected the 'Enable Time Remapping' option. This would place keyframes onto the composition and allow me to slow down the speed at which the animation plays.



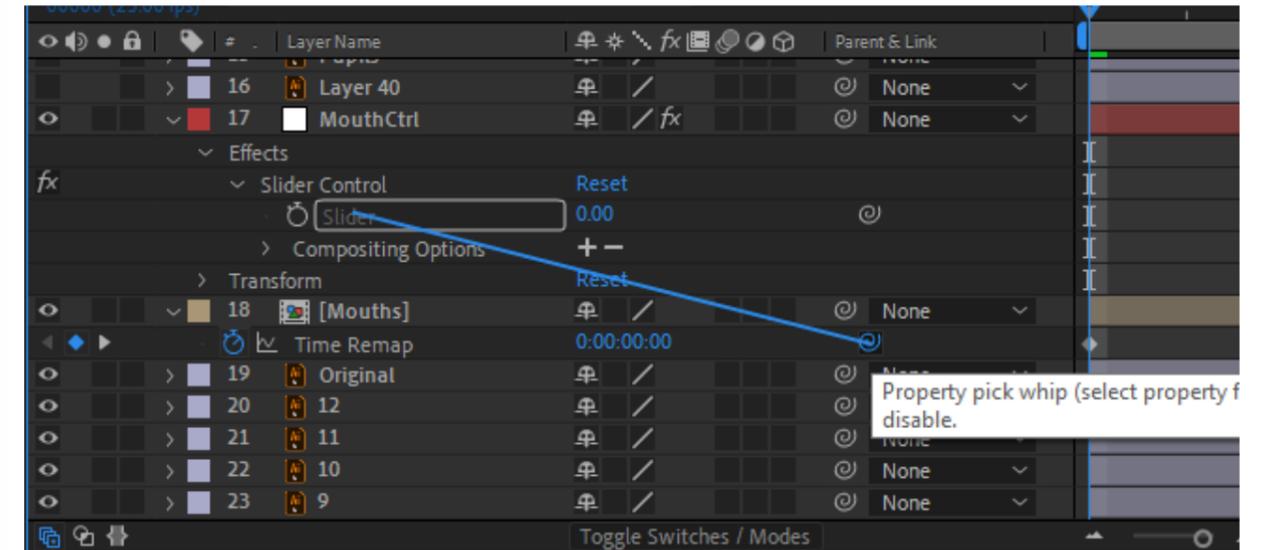
This was then placed into the Mr Cherry composition, sitting just above the original mouth layer.



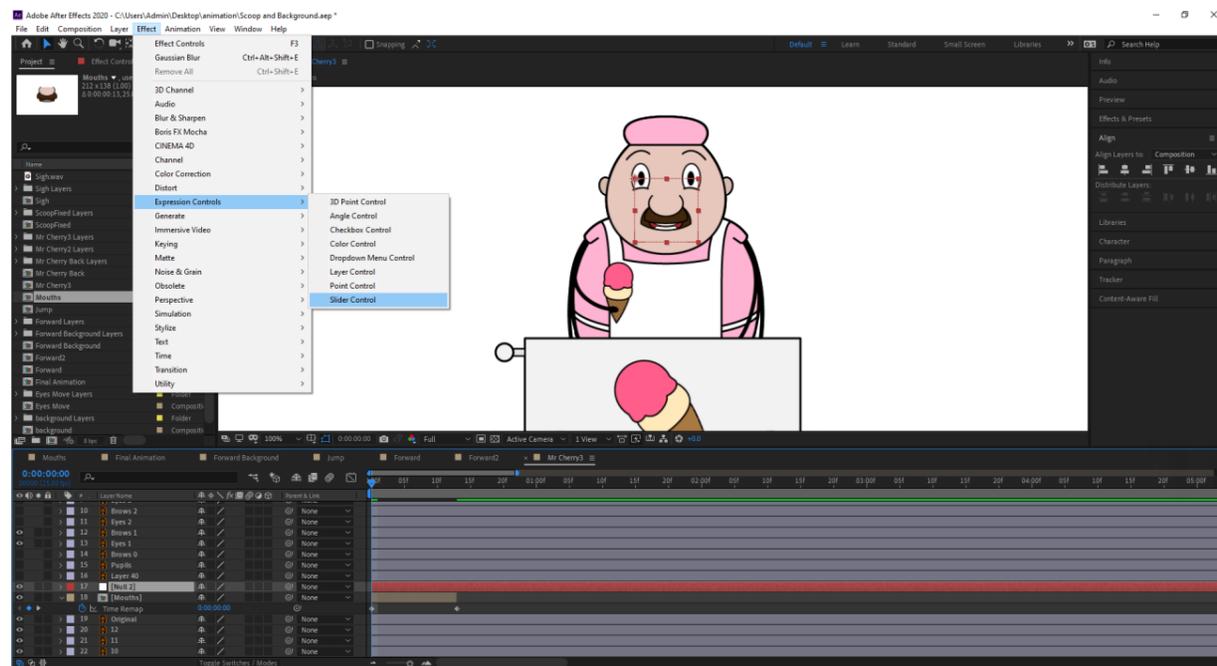
Additionally, I also went into the 'New' section of the layer tab and chose the 'Null Object' option. This is what would be used to control which mouths from the original composition appear in this one, since layers can be linked to it in a parent and child kind of relationship. By this I mean that changing the properties of the parent would effect the child.



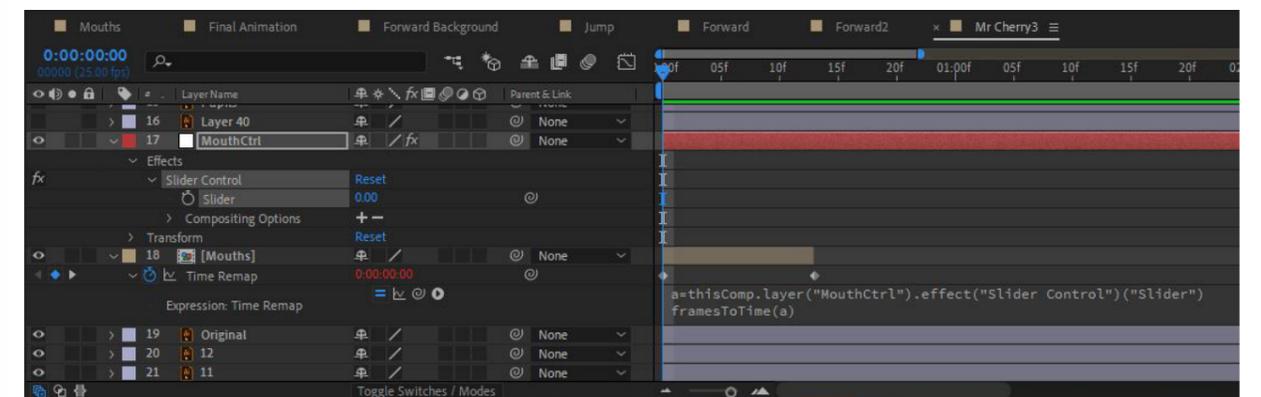
Upon clicking the option the null layer was added to the project, being easily identifiable by its red colour among the blues and brown frames.



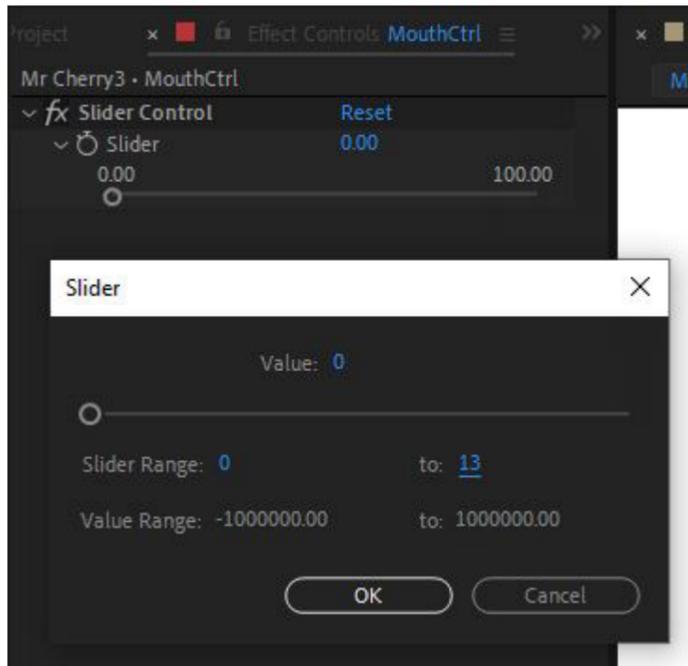
After placing this effect on the null object I opened up the layer's effects options and used the property whip to link the time remap to the slider effect. What this did was tell the slider what it could control. Additionally, during this time I also changed the name of the null object layer to 'MouthCtrl', which will become important in the next step.



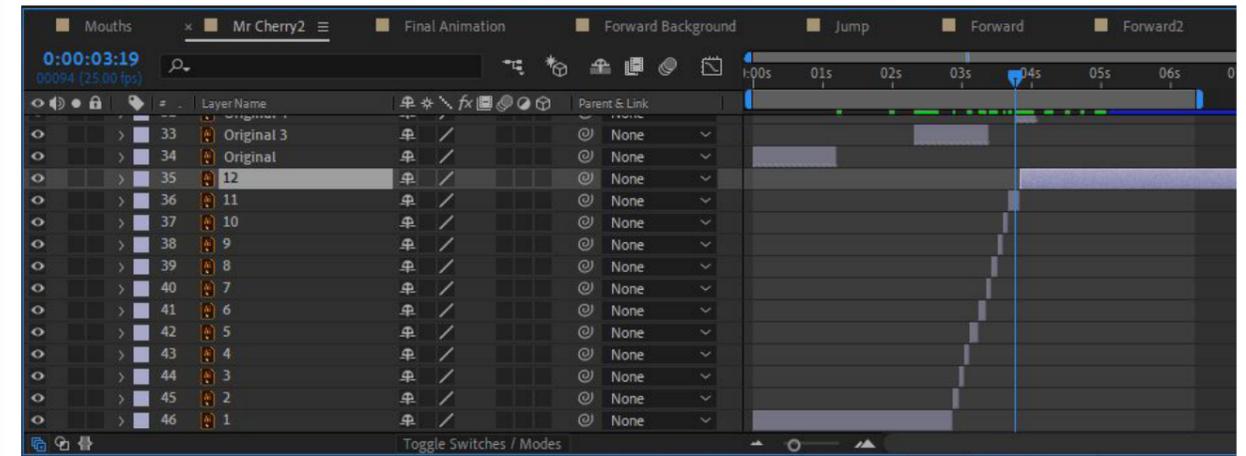
Following this, I placed an effect on the null object from the 'Expression Controls' menu, this effect was called a 'Slider Control' and would allow me to easily select what mouth I want to use.



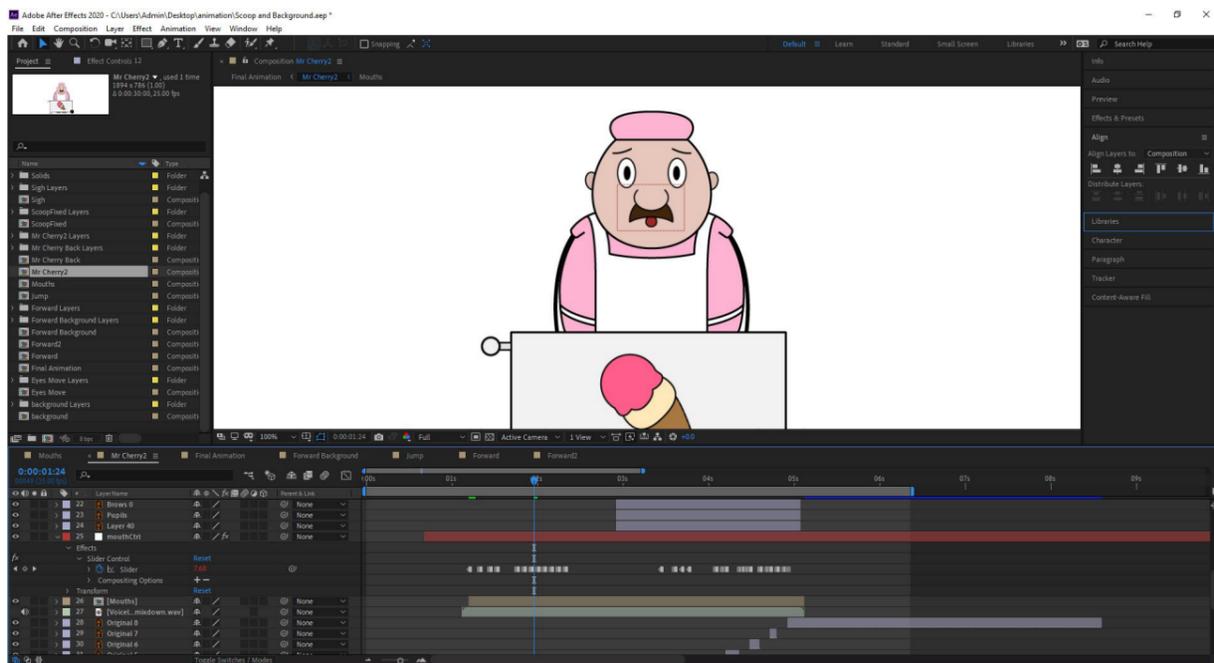
At the moment the whip was released onto the slider, a box with code showed up underneath the mouths composition frame, this was filled with some basic code linking the 2 elements together. However, in order to get the slider to work the way I wanted it to I copied and pasted some code from the tutorial I was following ((Bloop Animation, 2013)). This is where the name of the null object comes in to play because inside of the first set of brackets I had to change the name of the layer that the code was focusing on.



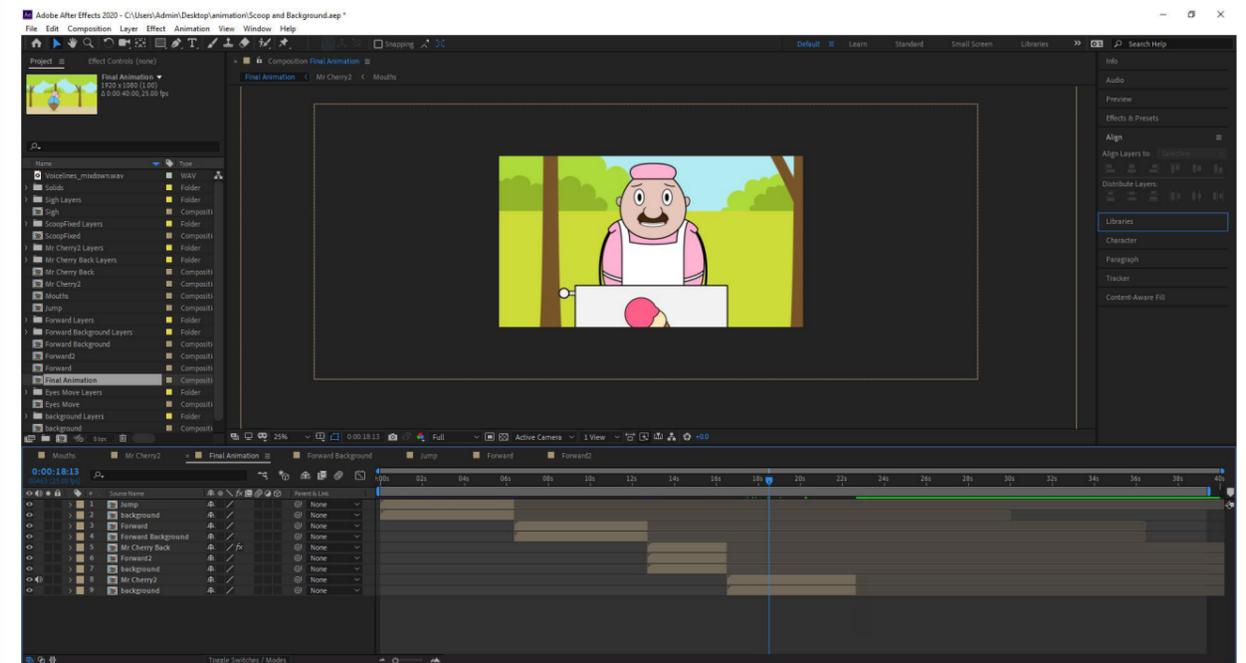
I then opened the slider settings in the top left panel and edited the value of the slider. Originally it was at 100 but I lowered it down to 13, since there are only a total of 13 frames in my mouth composition that I would need to switch between.



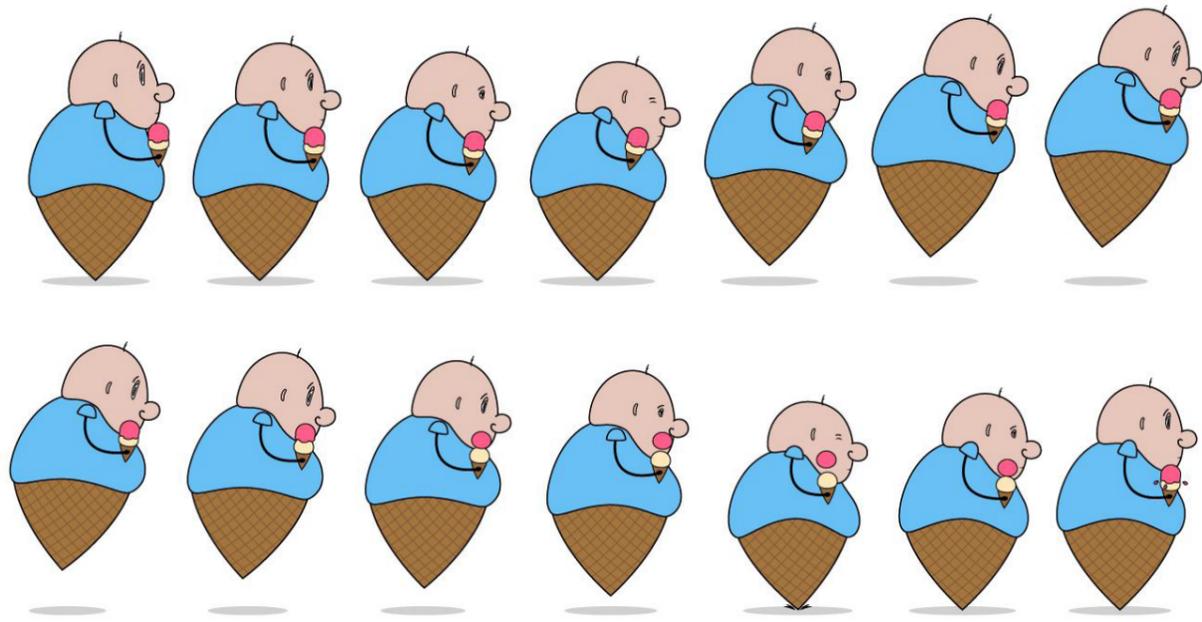
Once the speech was all lined up, I continued to animate the rest of the scene, placing in the frames to change his expression while he was talking and making him look down at the cart while he ran through the frames of scooping ice cream onto a cone.



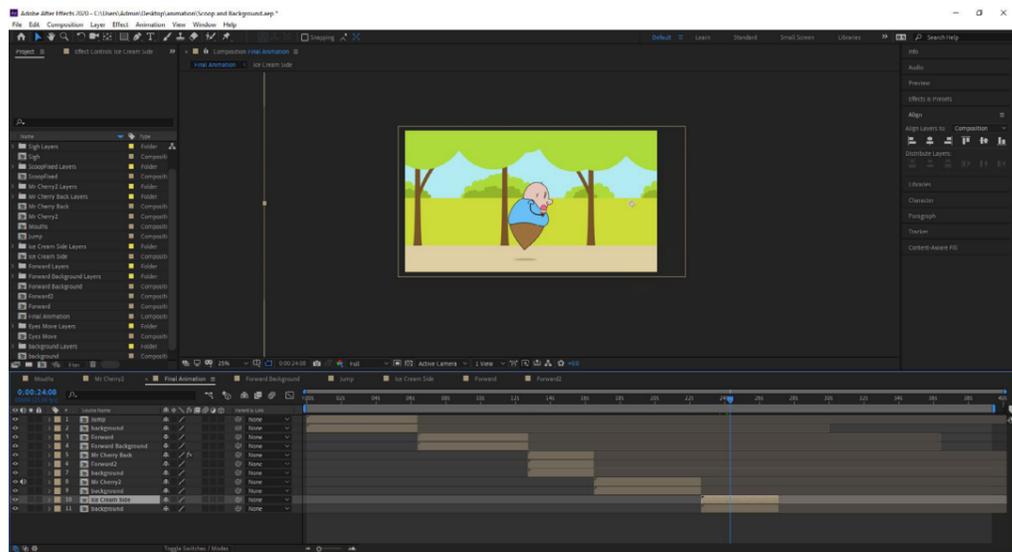
I then proceeded to place in the voice line audio track and listen to it closely, creating key frames to show the mouth that would match the sound. However, unlike normal key frames I turned these into holding key frames, this meant that rather than making the software fill in the gaps between 2 points, it just switched to whatever the other point was showing.



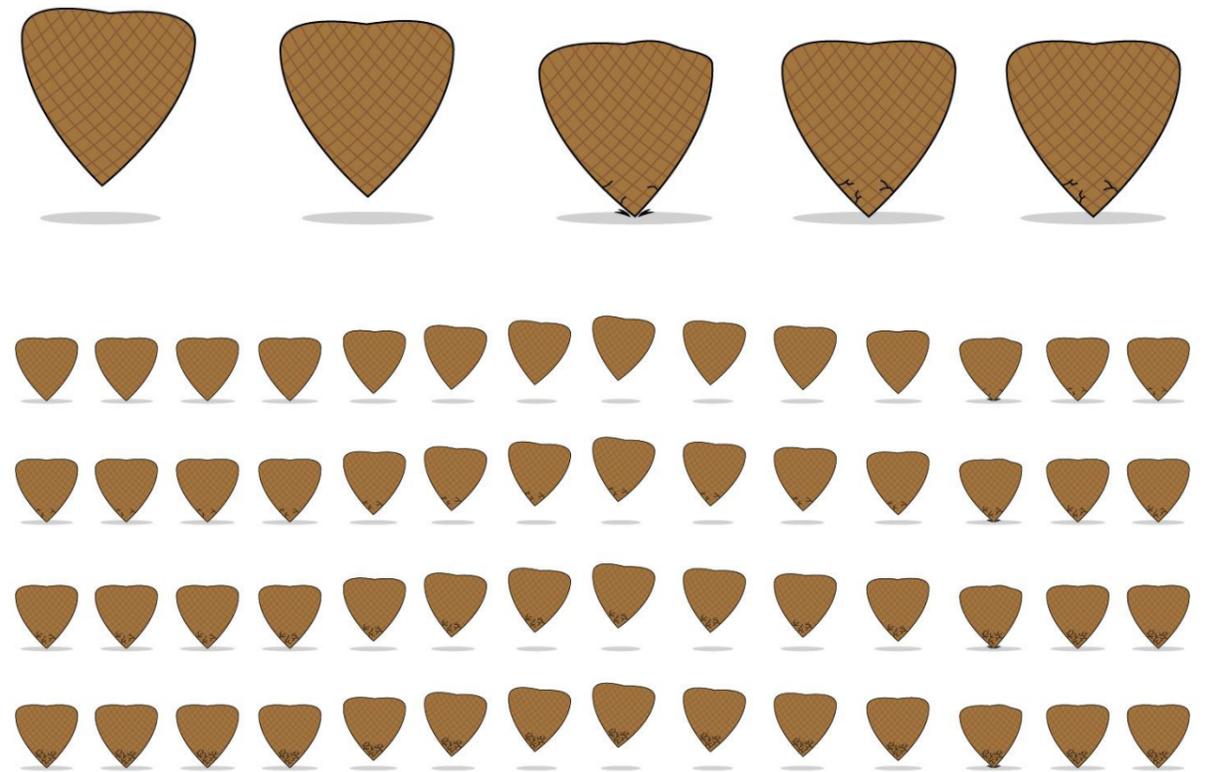
Finally, I placed this into the main composition, where I reused the first background again, changing the size to suit the situation. Additionally, I didn't show the entirety of Mr Cherry's composition, this was because when trying that out he felt far too small, so I had to settle for the cart getting cut off slightly.



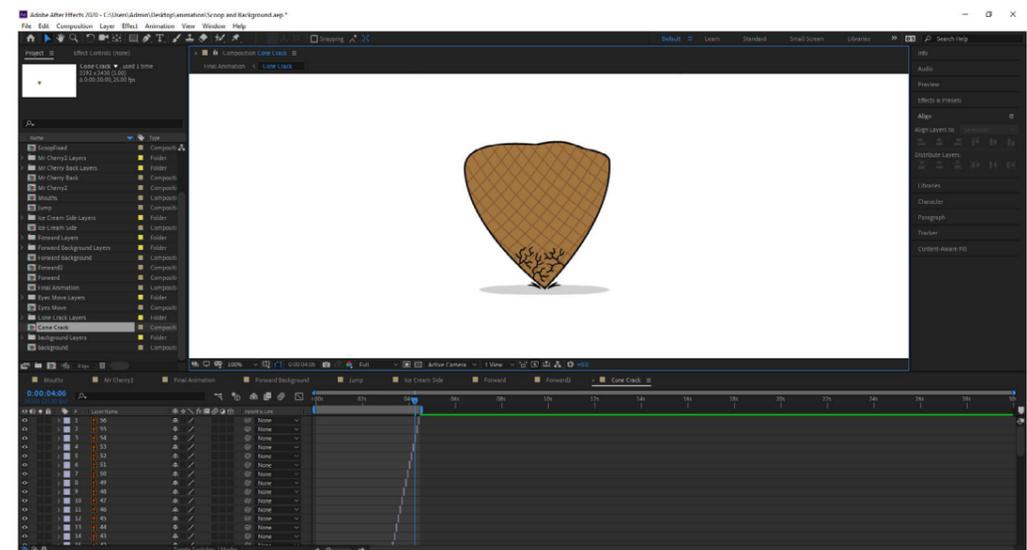
For the next scene I needed Scoop to be hopping along with an ice cream, therefore I opened up Illustrator and copied over the sideways jump cycle from his sprite sheet. Then I went through each frame and repositioned the arm so that it would always be holding something and never by the character's side. Following the arm placement, I added the ice cream that I made before into his hand, where I then proceeded to lift the top scoop off and have it come and splat down later in the cycle.



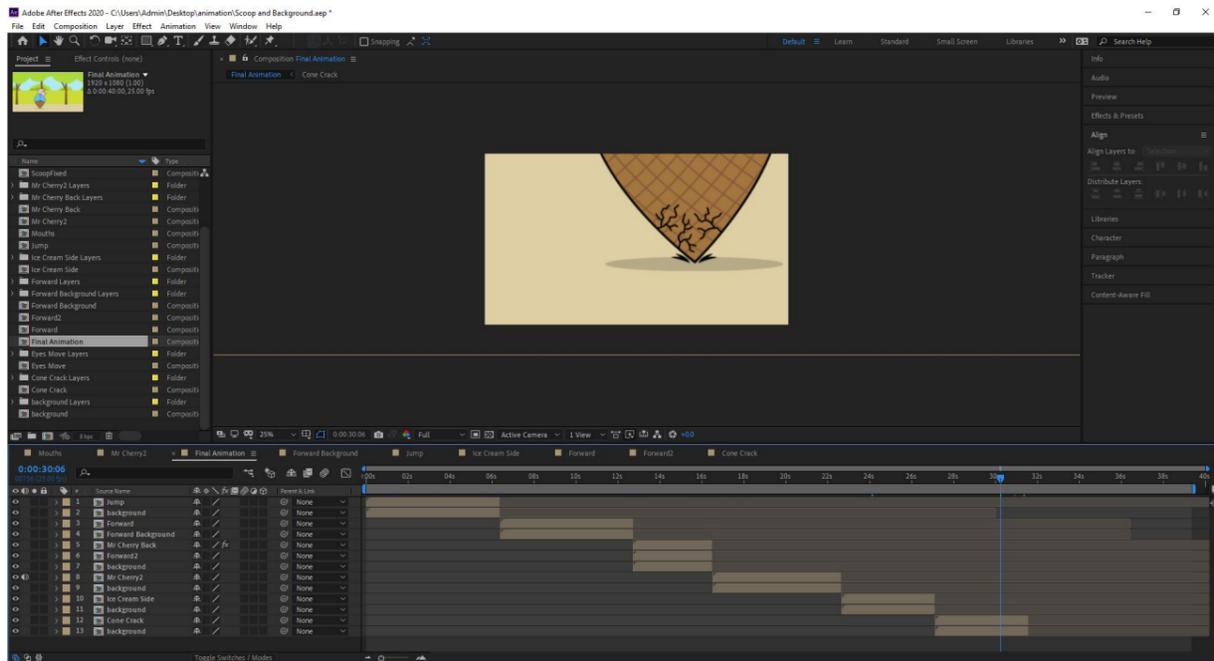
Back in After Effects, the scene for this was extremely easy to put together, since the frames were organised in the same way as the original jump composition and the same background was used. Additionally, I used the jump composition to line up the character as well, so Scoop appeared in the same place on the path.



Moving on, I began to create the asset for the close up shot of the cone as it began to crack. The way that I did this was by taking the jump cycle and removing the body, then I made multiple copies of the cone and on each landing frame I went in with the pen tool and made crack marks. Additionally, I also made a slight crack just before the jump when the character was pushing off the ground, which would realistically cause a little bit of a crack.



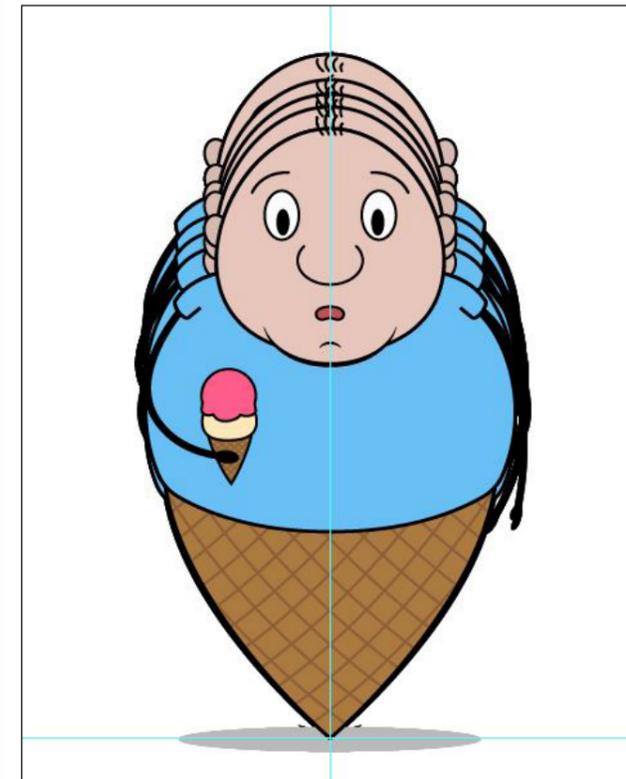
This asset was then placed into After Effects, where I proceeded to match the length of the frames up with the original jump cycle from the first scene.



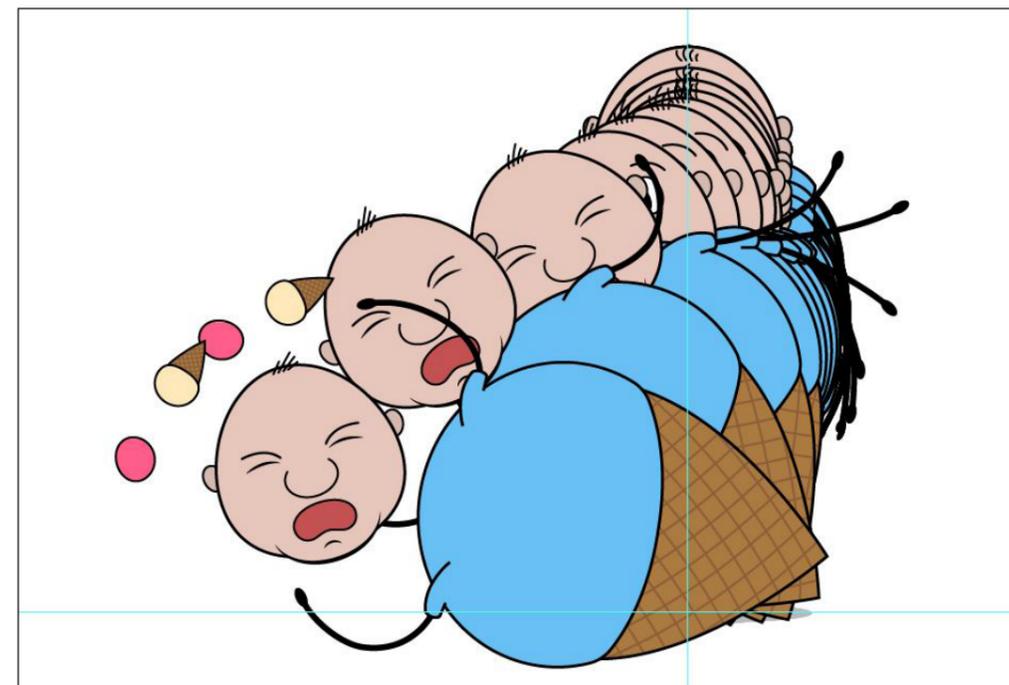
The hop was then placed into the final composition, which was tricky to do because I needed the cone to be positioned in such a way that the viewer wouldn't be able to tell that a body wasn't attached to it. Additionally, below this layer I also copied over the first background, enlarging it until only the path was being shown in the shot.



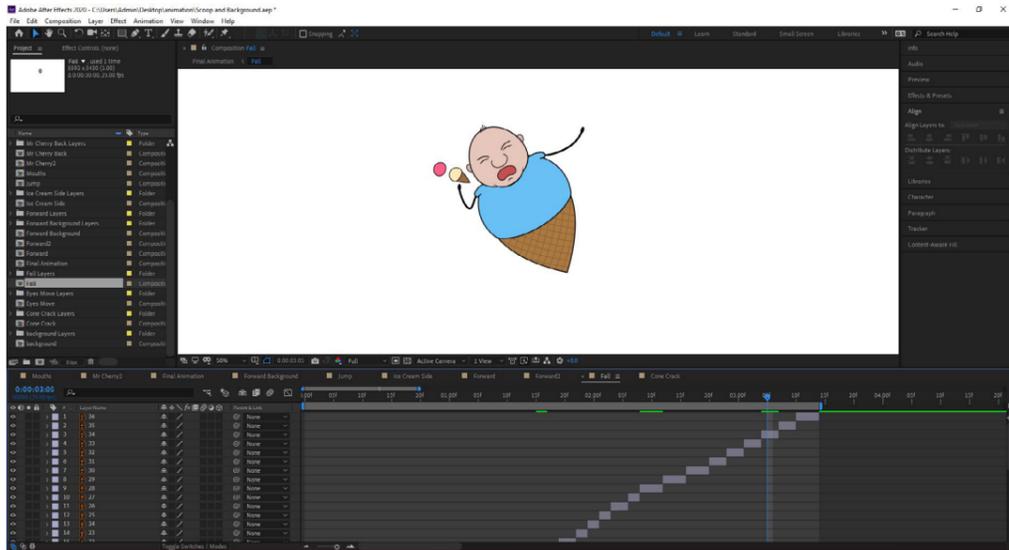
After this, I began creation on the scene where Scoop falls over, dropping his ice cream and losing his head. To start this process I copied the jump cycle for the forward jump and, much like the sideways shot, I changed his arm to be holding an ice cream, which I then animated to have the slap motion again.



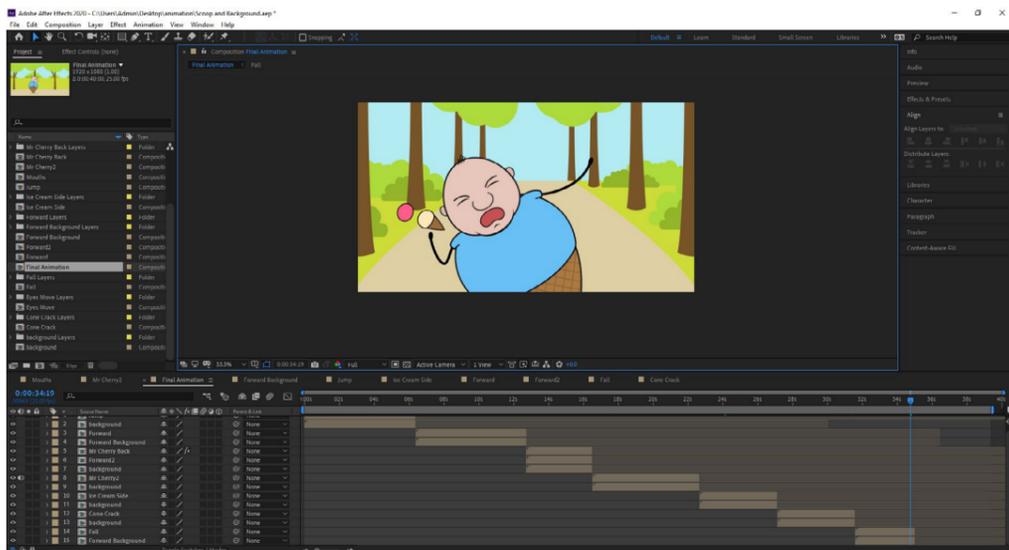
Then on the final frame of the cycle I started the reaction to the cone breaking, having Scoop's eyes open wide and his eyebrows raised as his mouth begins to open for the scream.



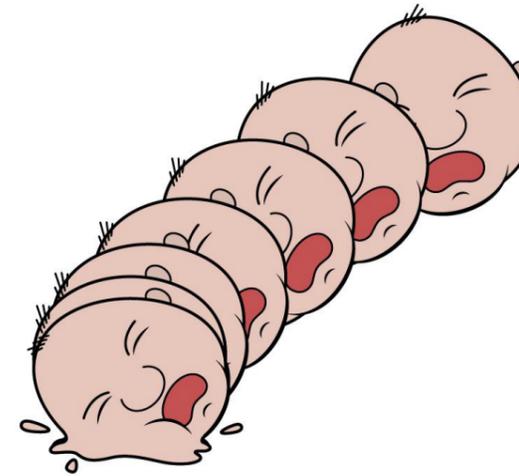
Following this, I went through the process of making him fall until he was almost completely horizontal. During the stages of doing this I paid close attention to features like the facial expression, hair movement, and how the arms would react, along with how the ice cream would separate and fly off by itself.



This fall was placed into After Effects, where I edited the length of the frames to properly match the speed at which this action would happen. Additionally, in the same way as the regular forward hop I increased the frames by 1% every hop.



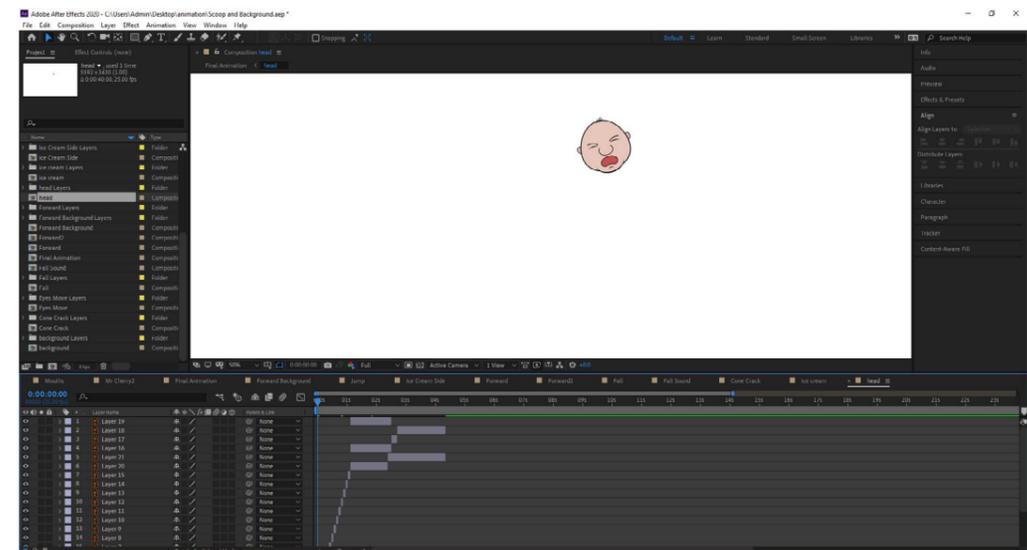
Once this was all prepared I put the fall animation into the main composition, along with the background used for the first forward hop scene with the sigh.



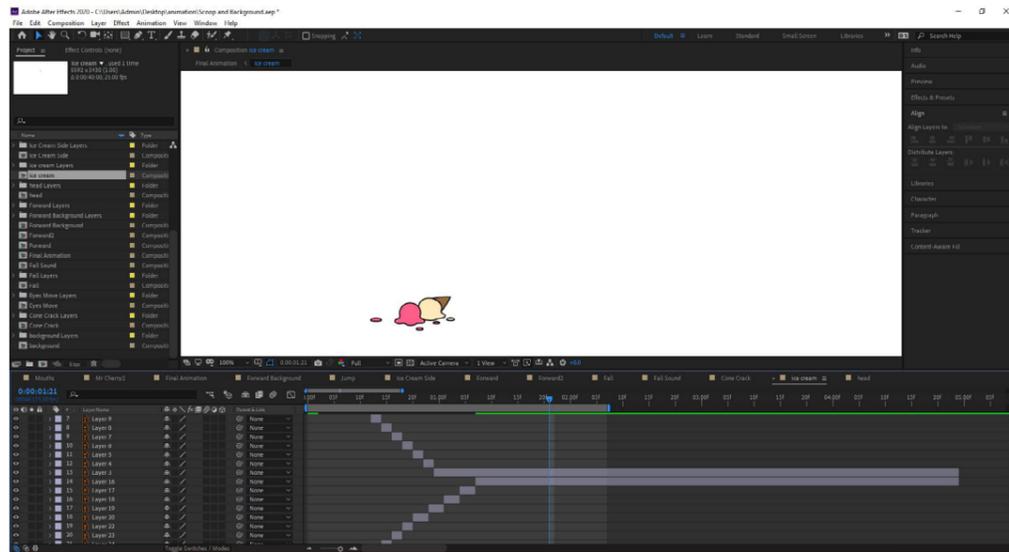
Moving back to Illustrator, I started to work on the frames for the final scene where Scoop's head hits the ground with his ice cream. First up was the cycle of the head, which, like the falling frames, I had to pay attention to certain parts of. These parts included the hair getting pulled in different directions, as well as the face getting squashed when it hits the ground to emphasise the splat. Speaking of the splat, I also made the head create a puddle and shoot out droplets to really make it look like he was splatted on the path.

After making the other frames for the head, I proceeded to make the ones for the ice cream, getting the same splat effect and even having the cone fall down slowly after the impact.

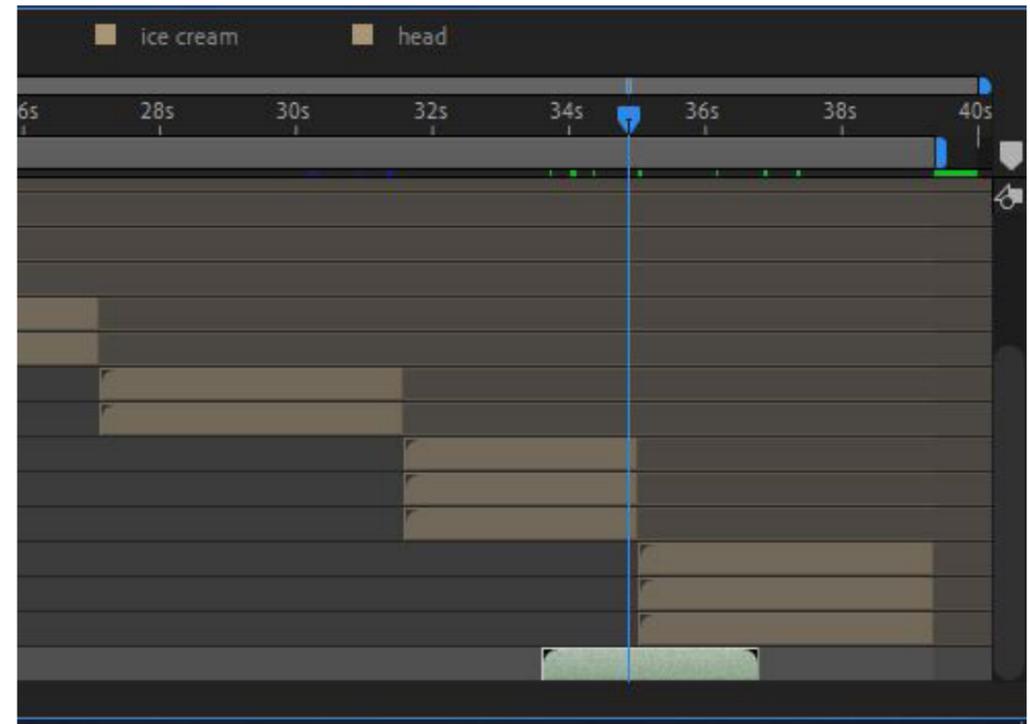
These assets were then separated onto different files, so that they wouldn't mess with each other.



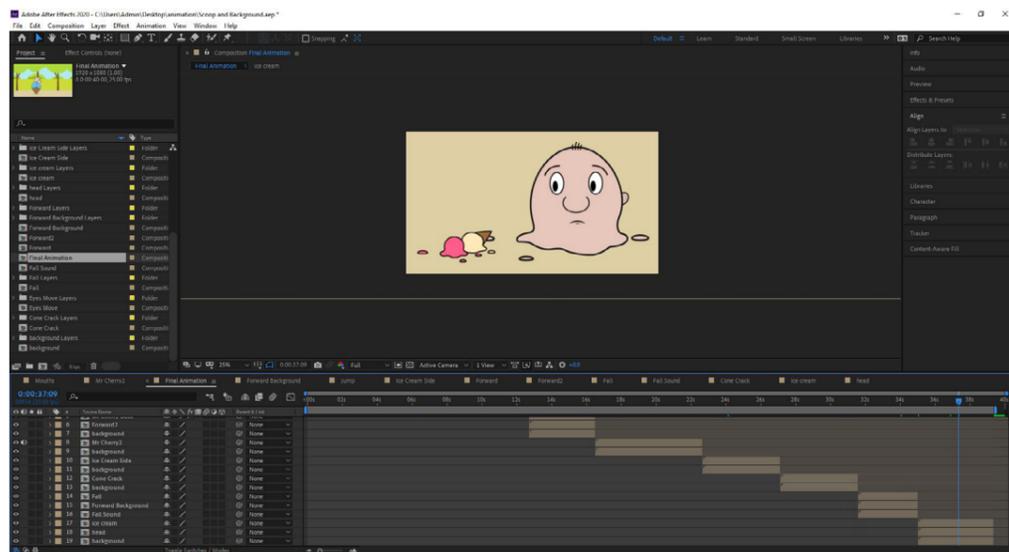
The head cycle was then added to After Effects, with the frames being very short for the most part, apart from the final frame that was extended so that the eyes could look down to the left and then the mouth could change.



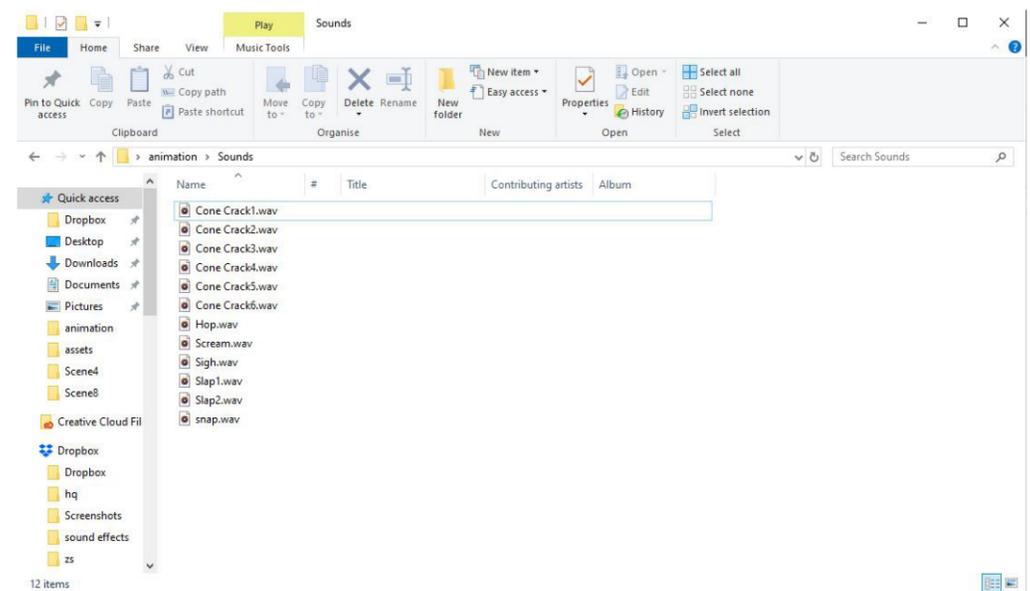
As well as this, I also brought in the ice cream asset and made the frames for that the correct length and gave them an extended final frame that would keep them sat in the shot to be looked at by Scoop.



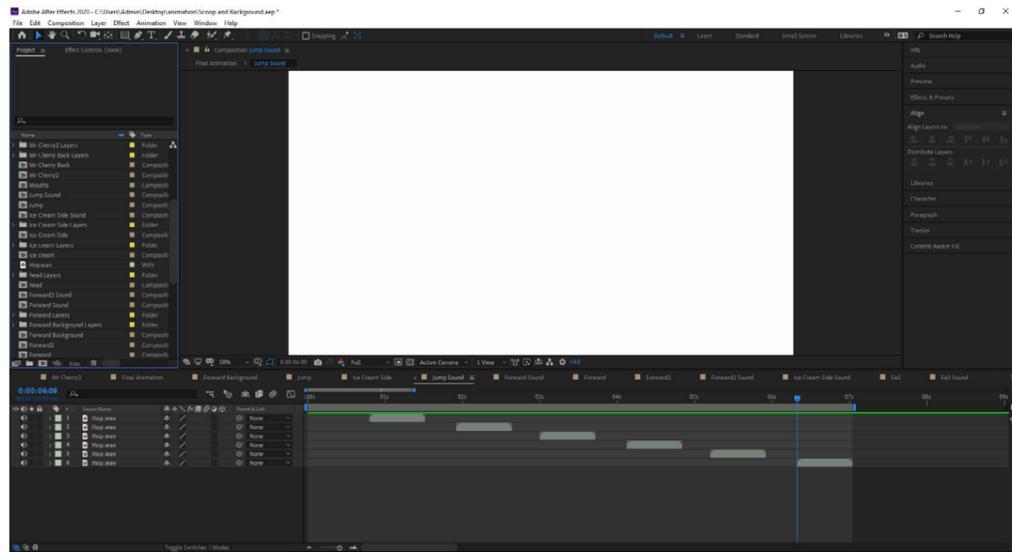
I was then at this point where I included the scream audio, since I need both scenes complete to see if the scream was too long or too short. Luckily there wasn't much that need to be changed other than a few frames being extended on the falling scene.



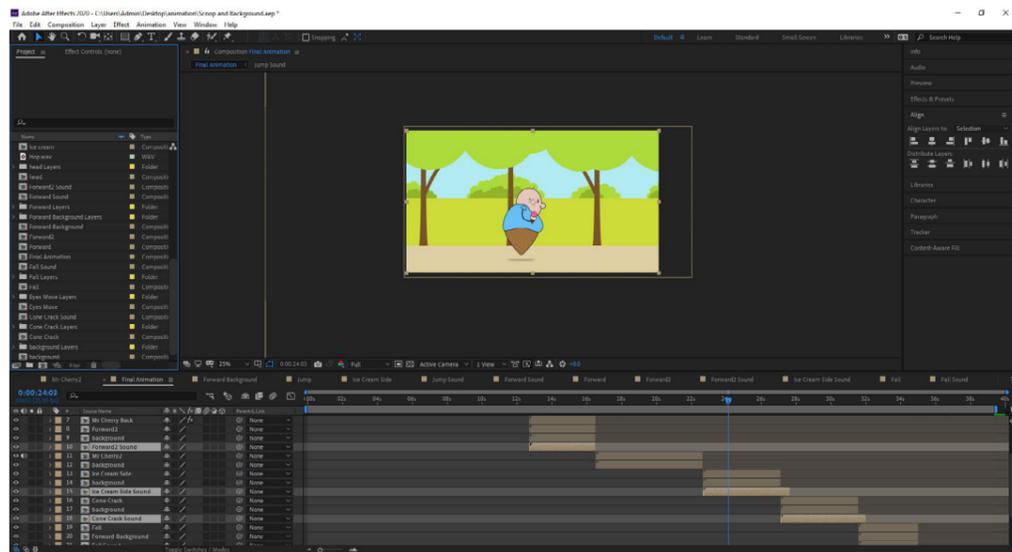
These were both then incorporated into the final composition, sitting in front of the same enlarged background that was used on the previous cone cracking scene.



Following the lead of the scream track, I opened the sounds folder that had all of my audio tracks inside of it and I proceeded to drag them into After Effects, allowing me to line them up with their related scenes.

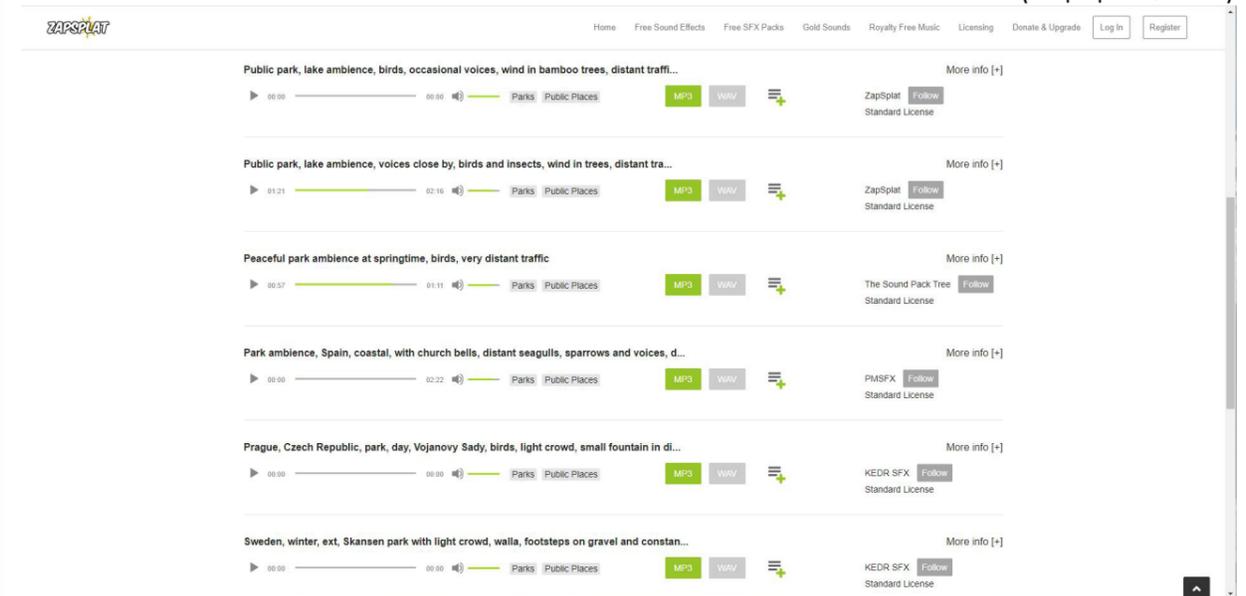


The first sound that I put in after this was the hop, this was done by going into the jump composition and lining the sound effect up with the moment that Scoop hit the ground. Once I had these in place, I copied them and pasted them into their own composition called 'Jump Sound' so that they were out of the way and easy to edit. This process was then repeated for all of the other sounds in the animation.

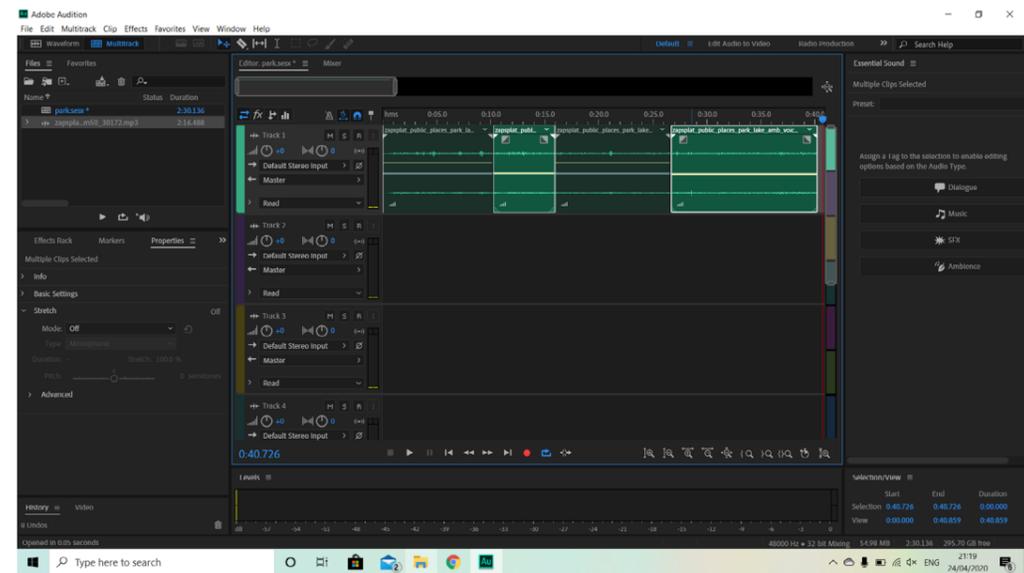


Once I had all of the sound compositions they were placed under their scenes, where they were extended slightly so that the sound wouldn't be cut off prematurely.

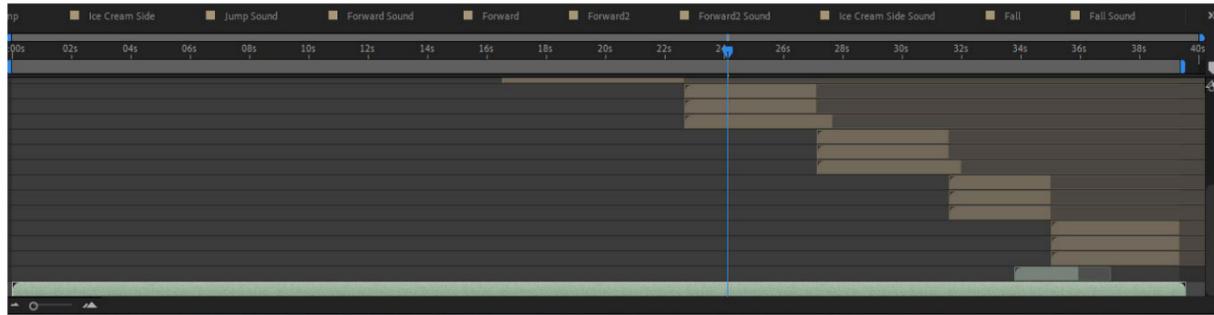
(Zapsplat, n.d.)



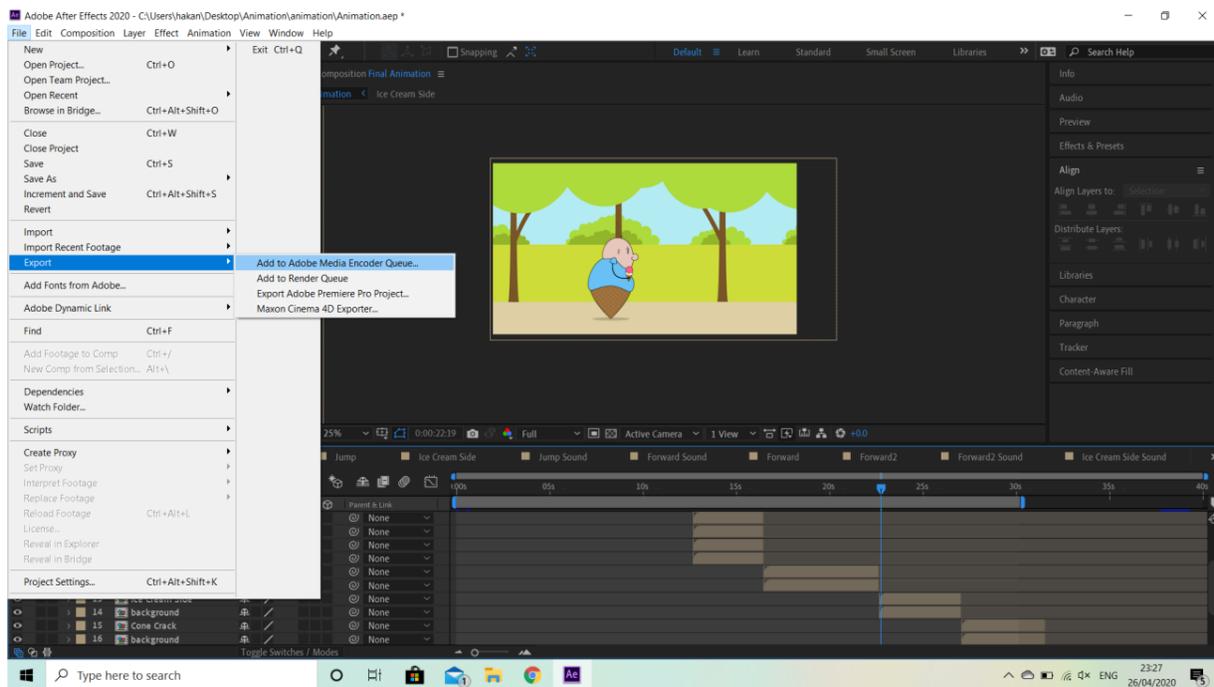
However, while I may have incorporated all of the sound effects that I recorded myself I found myself in need of background audio. Ideally I would have gotten this myself, but due to the situation with COVID-19 I was unable to go to a park or record the sound of the outdoors at home, since there a lockdown and my neighbours were rarely peaceful during the daytime, which was when I needed to record. Therefore, to overcome this problem I used a copyright free audio file from ZapSplat of park ambience, however even after downloading this file I did need to edit it.



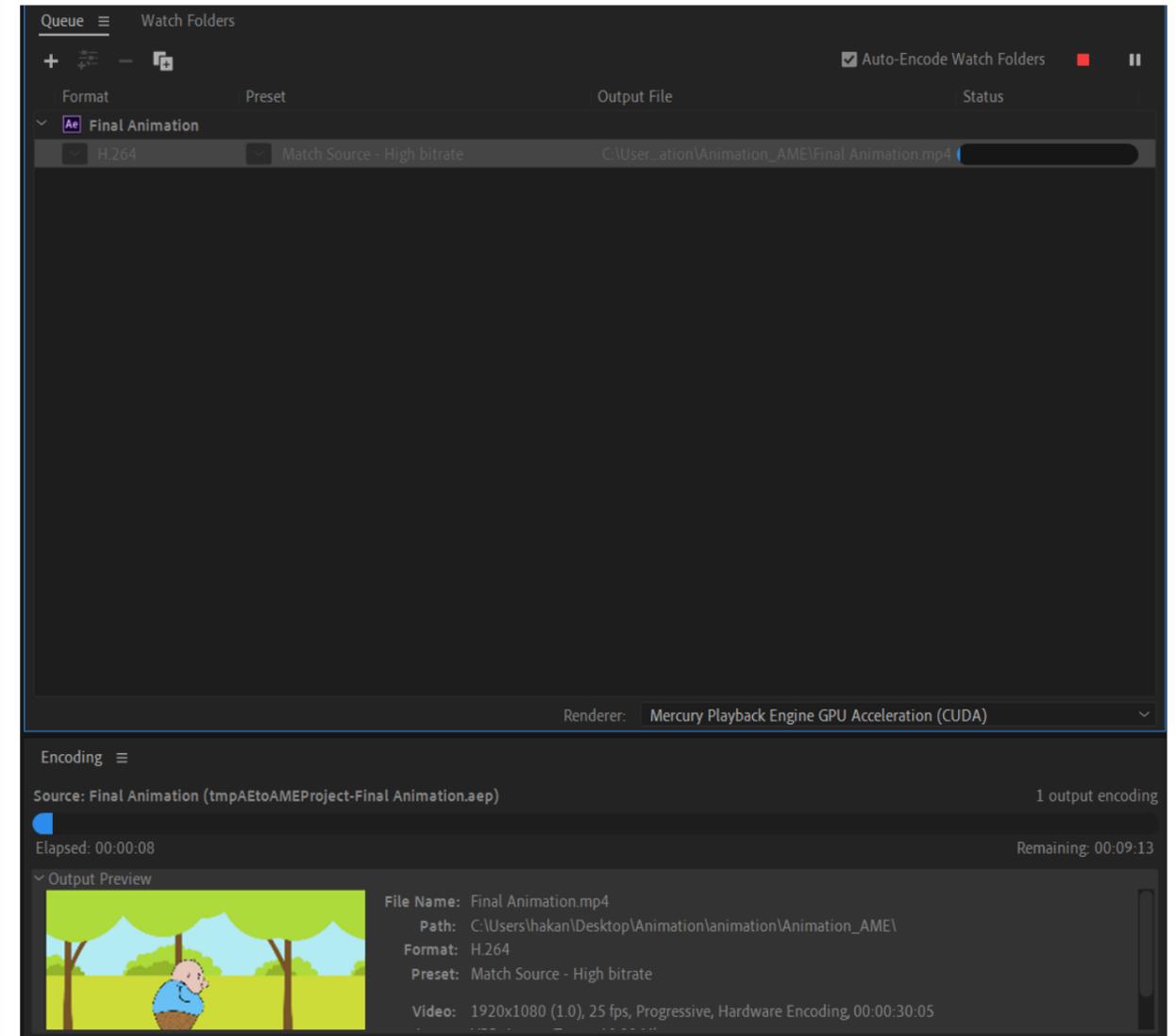
To do this I went into Adobe Audition again and shortened the piece to 40 seconds, the length of my animation. I then proceeded to make cuts with the razor tool, so at the time when a scenes with dialogue would play like the sigh or scream I would be able to lower the volume of the track. Additionally, to make the audio less harsh I created a fade in and fade out at the start and end of the whole track.



After this audio file was exported, I dragged it into After Effects and placed it within the final project composition so that it sat underneath everything, playing the whole way through the animation.



Finally, with the animation finished all that was left to do was export it as a proper video. Typically this would be done through After Effects, but that kept making the file very large, so large in fact that I wouldn't be able to submit it for the project. Therefore, I chose to export it to Adobe Media Encoder, which is a rendering software.



Once in Media Encoder, I selected that the animation would be exported with the H.264 preset, making it an MP4 file that was much more manageable.

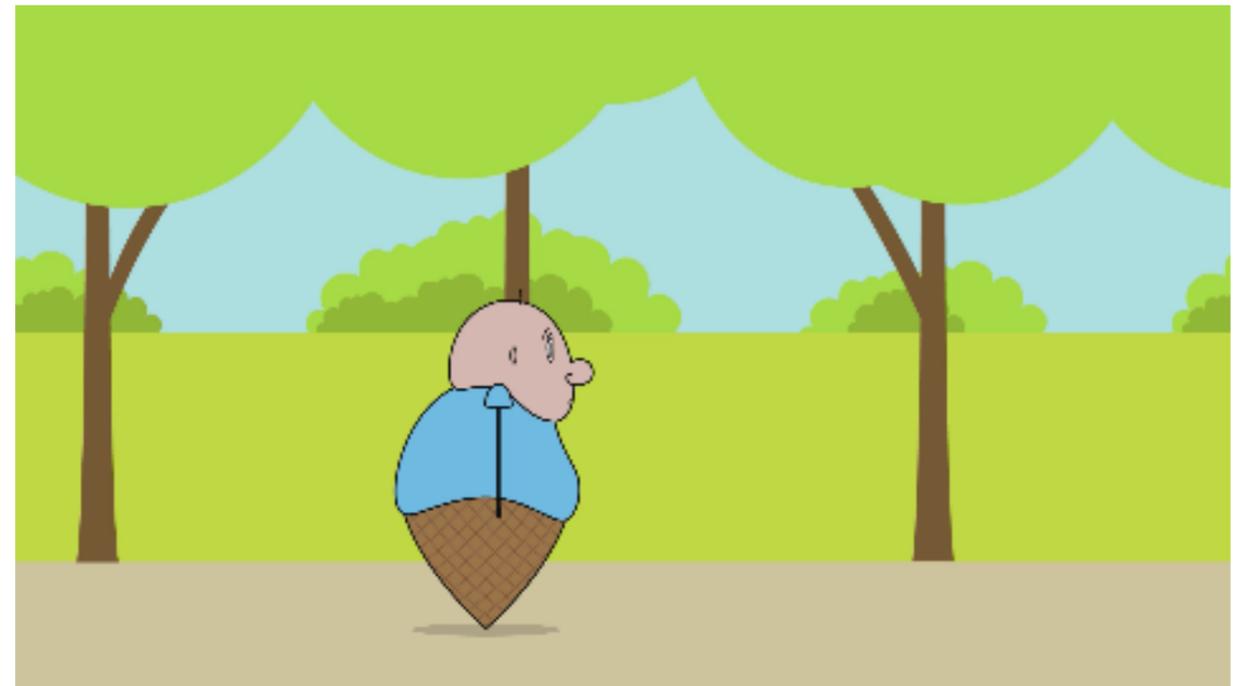
# Evaluation

Overall, I feel that this project's outcome is fairly good, with the planning being aided by the use of research and the final animation conveying a basic narrative with a degree of skill. Speaking of research, I believe that there are several links that can be drawn between my final piece and the short Pusheen animation. To name a couple of these links, the characters share a similar simplistic styles with flat colours and a consistently thick dark outlines being used, additionally the backgrounds both have minimal movement, with more focus being placed onto the characters rather than the surroundings. There are other links besides these, which I went into with more depth on the research page earlier in this sketchbook.

Looking at the specific areas of this project, planning the animation was something that I felt went quite smoothly. Part of me contributes this to the research that I did into areas like character design, storyboarding, and sprite sheets, which helped a great deal with preparing for the animation. However, having dealt with film and character work in the past I was also loosely familiar with the ideas of character development through scamps, as well as storyboarding scenes to plan a shot before getting the footage for it.

Moving onto the sound, there were some issues that came with this section, but these were mainly due to lack of experience and factors that were out of my control. The first of these was spending a large amount of time just testing sounds because I was unsure of what noise they would make, however this also worked to my advantage in some ways because if I were to do another animation I would have already have objects in kind for certain sounds. As for the factors that were out of my control, the COVID-19 situation forced me to work from home, which due to the loud area that I live in was not the best for recording more finalised sounds. With this said, I do feel that I managed to make the best out of what I could get when combined with my limited knowledge of the Adobe Audition software.

For the actual process of animating I had a hard time getting to grips with what I needed to do at first, spending a while on getting the walk/jump cycle to look right, but one I did more it slowly became easier. Eventually, in the final scenes of the animation I was picturing how certain scenes would be placed together, visualising what frames I would need and even starting to add distortion to them to exaggerate certain movements, like the head splatting on the ground. This is not to say that there were not obstacles during this section, but after working on them for a long time I found solutions.



Now if I were given the ability to redo this whole project there are a few changes that I would make when looking back. The first of these would be to make the characters a bit more simplistic, this would mean that I when the character does an action I wouldn't have to worry as much about the knock on effect it would have to other features. Secondly, I would have recorded the sound much earlier in the process inside of a proper studio with a real microphone, rather than in my bedroom with an app on my phone. Then finally, I would have gotten other people involved to say the voice lines so that the characters actually felt like they were different people.

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