



**Toontastic**  
**Parent & Teacher Guide**



# ***Welcome to Toontastic***

Toontastic is a creative learning tool that empowers children as young as five to create and share their own cartoons through Imaginative Play. Making cartoons with Toontastic is as easy as putting on a puppet show - simply press the record button and tell your story while moving your characters around onscreen. Once you're done, Toontastic will play back your animation and voice as a cartoon for you to share with friends and family around the world. Toontastic inspires the artist and writer in every child while teaching key storytelling skills that help to promote Creativity at a young age.

We hope the following guide will be helpful to all you parents and teachers out there looking to join in on the 'Tooning. We designed Toontastic to be

a tool for collaborative play and learning because, despite what our Robot Overlords would tell us, there is no substitute for the guiding hand of a good old fashioned parent/teacher/sibling/cousin/friend/grandparent/oldster.

Have fun! We can't wait to see what you and your kids create!





# ***Creative Learning & Storytelling***

Creativity is a critical, but underserved component of elementary education. Children begin to develop creative thinking skills at a young age through open-ended activities like Imaginative Play, Art, and Creative Writing. These activities require kids to exercise Divergent Thinking Skills by working with symbolically ambiguous objects like clay, wooden blocks, and craft materials to create, direct, and act out their own fantasy worlds, characters, and storylines. As adults, we often trivialize play as a pastime, but the skills we develop through Imaginative Play and Storytelling serve as building blocks for future creative success.

Designed in partnership with Stanford's Graduate School of Education and Zeum: San Francisco's Children's Museum, Toontastic encourages Creative Learning by enabling kids to capture and share their Imaginative Play as animated

cartoons while introducing and guiding key storytelling principles like Narrative Arc and Emotional Energy. Cartoons can be shared online via ToonTube, Toontastic's Global Storytelling Network, to help children connect to friends and family and learn about other cultures, customs, and lifestyles through the imaginative stories of their peers.



## STEP 1

# Story Arc

A cartoon is an animated story made up of different types of scenes. In Toontastic, there are five scene types: a Setup, a Conflict, a Challenge, a Climax, and a Resolution. Each scene should represent an independent event in the story.

A Setup scene is where you introduce the Characters and Setting of your story. In the Conflict, you'll create a problem for those characters that you can then complicate in a Challenge. Eventually, the characters will address this problem in the Climax and then settle it in the Resolution.

### Questions to ask

How many scenes will be in your story?

What will be the conflict in your story?

What will happen at the end of your story?  
Will it be a happy ending? A sad ending?  
A surprising ending?

Together, these scenes form what we call a Story Arc. The Story

Arc is the emotional spine of the story. In Toontastic, every cartoon begins with a classic Story Arc: five scenes rising in Emotional Energy from the Setup to the Climax, then tailing off through the Resolution. Of course, you may add or remove scenes at will to create the Story Arc that best fits your story. To begin a new cartoon, select one of the Scenes on the Story Arc and tap the green edit button (paintbrush).



### To do on this screen

Select a scene to edit (Setup, Conflict, Challenge, Climax, Resolution)

Reorder the Scenes in your story

Add/remove Scenes in your story

Finish your cartoon by filling in the Slate and uploading to ToonTube

## STEP 2

# Setting

Once you've selected a scene to edit, your first step is to pick the Setting for that scene. The Setting is where your scene takes place. You may choose from one of the stock settings, or tap the "Draw Your Own" slide to create a Setting from scratch.

The Setting is critical to defining the mood and events of your Scene. This is a good place to start thinking about what will happen in your scene and how it will fit into your story at-large.

Once you've selected or drawn your Setting, tap the Forward Arrow in the top right corner to proceed.

### **To do on this screen**

Scroll through stock settings to determine where your scene will take place

Use your imagination to draw your own setting



### **Questions to ask**

When does your story take place?  
Was it in the past or will it be in the future?

What will happen in this scene to introduce or change your story?

Where do your characters live?

What are they doing in this scene?  
Will it be a happy ending?



## STEP 3

# Characters

Now that you've determined a time and place for your scene, it's time to pick your characters. On this page, you may choose from one of the stock characters and objects or draw your own.

The first step should be to select your main character. Your main character is the heart and soul of your story and the viewer will experience your story through the eyes and emotions of this character.

Once you've chosen your main character, you can add additional characters and/or objects to the scene. Is there a bad guy? Is your story a love story? If so, who is your main character's love



interest? Is there a battle or maybe a natural disaster? Do you need to draw a tornado? On the next page, you'll be able to animate all of the characters and objects that you add here on the Characters page.

### **To do on this screen**

Scroll through and pick stock characters and objects to be animated in your scene

Use your imagination to draw your own characters and objects

### **Questions to ask**

Who is the main character of your story?

What happens in this scene and who needs to be there?

What other objects should be present?  
Do you need to draw anything new ?

Is there a bad guy? A love interest?

## STEP 4

# Animation

The Animation page is where you bring your scene to life! Before you begin, take some time to think about what will happen in this scene to establish the story event. If you're working on a Setup, how do you introduce your characters? If it's a conflict, who or what is creating the conflict?

You may also edit or delete your characters and objects on this page. To edit, tap the character and then the green paintbrush to change its colors or edit a custom drawing. To remove a character or object from the scene, tap the red trash can.

Now the real fun begins! Once your scene is set, tap the Start Animation button and move your

characters around onscreen.

Be sure to speak up to tell your story so the

microphone can record your voice and sound effects. You can change a character's direction by moving it left or right and scale and rotate it by placing two fingers on the torso. Limbs may also be moved individually for greater expression. When you're done, press the Stop Animation button and your animation will play back automatically.



### **To do on this screen**

Recolor/redraw characters and objects

Delete characters and objects

Animate and record your scene!

### **Questions to ask**

What will happen in this scene to establish the story event? If you're working on a setup scene, how do you introduce your characters? If it's a conflict, who or what is creating the conflict?

How long will this scene be?

What happens first in the scene? Next?  
What happens last?

## STEP 5

# Music

The last step in creating your scene is to pick the background music. In Toontastic, the background music is defined by the scene's Emotional Energy. How energetic is your scene? Traditionally, Setup scenes are low-key while Climax scenes are high energy, but Toontastic enables you to set the energy levels of your scenes to whatever you'd like, in turn changing the shape of your Story Arc.

Move your scene up and down the scale to set the energy level. The emoticons at the bottom of the page change accordingly. For a low energy scene, for example, you might choose "Friendly", which would play Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" as background music. Increasing the energy

changes that emoticon to "Loving", in turn sets your background music to Bach's "Canon in D".

Emotional Energy is the driving force of your story. It shapes a viewer's empathy with the main character while giving your story a dynamic undercurrent that keeps them engaged through its conclusion.

## Questions to ask

Is this a high energy or a low energy scene?

What emotion is your main character feeling in this scene?

What is the emotional change from last scene? How does this scene compare to the next scene?

### **To do on this screen**

Move your scene up and down to set its energy level

Choose the appropriate emotion to match your Story Event





# ***A Global Storytelling Network for Kids, by Kids***

Upon finishing your scene, Toontastic returns you to the Story Arc where you may choose to begin a new scene or complete your cartoon.

Once you're done with your cartoon, tap the Done button in the top-right corner to bring up the Film Slate. Here you can type in a Title for your cartoon and name the Director(s). You may also nominate yourself for a Merit Badge by telling us what your story is about. If you choose to "Share Your Cartoon Online", others can watch your cartoon on the web and vote for you to receive your Merit Badge.

Once your cartoon is uploaded, an email will be sent to the parent's account to approve it for viewing. You can then view your cartoon online by opening up ToonTube on the Main Menu or by

going to <http://toontube.launchpadtoys.com>. Our goal for ToonTube is to create a Global Storytelling Network for Kids, by Kids – a place where children can learn about different cultures, beliefs, and practices around the world through stories created by other kids just like them.



**Thank you for your interest in Toontastic. If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns, please email us at [howdy@launchpadtoys.com](mailto:howdy@launchpadtoys.com). We'd love to hear from you.**