



Telling the Story

In the Animating History workshop at the Port Moody Station Museum we tell the story of building the trans-Canada railroad. You can find a brief history of this story on the Port Moody Station Museum website www.vcn.bc.ca/pmmuseum or in your teacher resource package. Please review this material with your students prior to your workshop.

The workshop begins by discussing the concept of **historical fiction**, briefly reviewing the history of the railroad and creating a 12 scene storyboard for the group. Students are encouraged to use facts to create a story of historical fiction. The class is then divided into 6 teams and assigned 2 scenes each to animate.

The following are some exercises to help students understand the process of storyboarding.

Exercise 1: Writing a Tag

A good film starts with a good story. To have a clear idea of what your film is about you must be able to tell your story in one sentence. This sentence is called the **tag**. Have the students research their story and create a tag. (Example—It took many men years of hard work to build a railroad from Montreal to Port Moody.)

Exercise 2: Create a Storyboard

When creating their story, have students see in their minds the pictures that tell the story. Try to tell the story visually, without using words. Put these pictures into a storyboard using the storyboard template provided in your package or located on the Port Moody Station Museum website. A **storyboard** is a series of drawings that capture the main ideas of the story. The sketch in each storyboard square gives a rough idea of what will happen on camera. Keep the storyboard simple. Every scene filmed requires new material and new figures.

Under each drawing students should write a one line dialogue or narrative that describes the action in that scene. In this short film, much of the story will be told with dialogue and/or sound effects.