Secondary Action: Lesson 4

Understanding the Principle of Secondary Action

Secondary action is used when creating additional movements that exist outside the main action in the scene. It helps support the main action by enhancing it with complementary movements. For example, if your animation's main action is a girl running, her ponytail may swing along behind her, she may take out a music player and switch the song, or she may look at her watch. These additional actions almost always are happening outside the main action.

There may also be secondary actions that exist outside the character, such as a background movement, additional characters moving or other subtle actions. For example, clouds may drift by in the sky or a mountain range could slowly pass through the background, showing movement. Other movements such as birds flying, a leaf falling from a tree or the wind blowing through the trees in the background can all be types of secondary action.

Related Project Files

The following related project files are located in the ASCurriculum-Lesson4.zip file that accompanies this course:

• **Tutorial 4.1 Start.anme** - You can use this project file as a starting point for this lesson if you have not completed or saved the project covered in Lesson 3.

• **Tutorial 4.1.anme** - A final version of the project that you will complete in this lesson.

• **Tutorial 4.1.mov** - A final render of the project that you will complete in this lesson.

• **Tutorial 4.1 How To.mov** - A step-by-step video tutorial of the project that you will complete in this lesson.

Tools Used

• **Translate Layer** tool, **Paint Bucket** tool

Tutorial 4: Overview

In this lesson you'll animate clouds in the background of the scene you created in Lesson 3 as a form of secondary action. You'll add some sky and three layers of background clouds. Each of the cloud layers will animate at a different speed.

As mentioned above, animating the clouds is a good example of secondary action, since they add subtle background movements that help set the overall feeling of the scene.
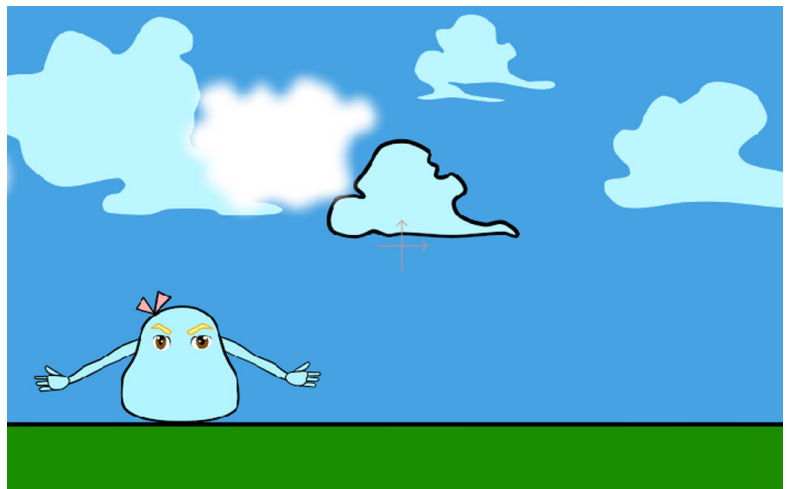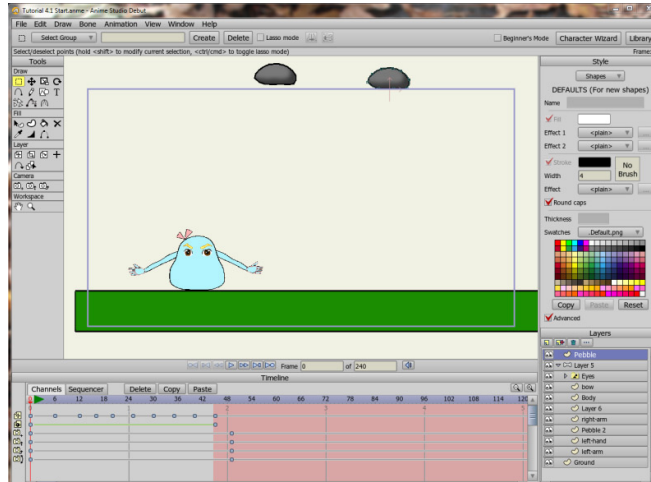
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Tutorial 4: Step-by-Step

Step 1: Load the Anticipation Project

To begin, load the scene that you completed in Tutorial 3.

Before you make any changes to the project, choose the **File > Save As** command and save the file as Lesson4_YourLastName.

If you have not completed the tutorial, you can open the Tutorial 4.1 Start.anme project in the Lesson 4.1 files included with this tutorial.

Step 2: Add Sky and Clouds

Choose **Window > Library** to open the **Library** window. Navigate to the **Library > Props** folder, and double-click the **Clouds** thumbnail to open the clouds selections. Select the **Sky** and choose **OK** to add it to your scene. Double-click the **Clouds** icon again to add the **Puffs**, **Soft Puffs** and **Rain Cloud** objects into your scene as well. Then close the **Library** window.
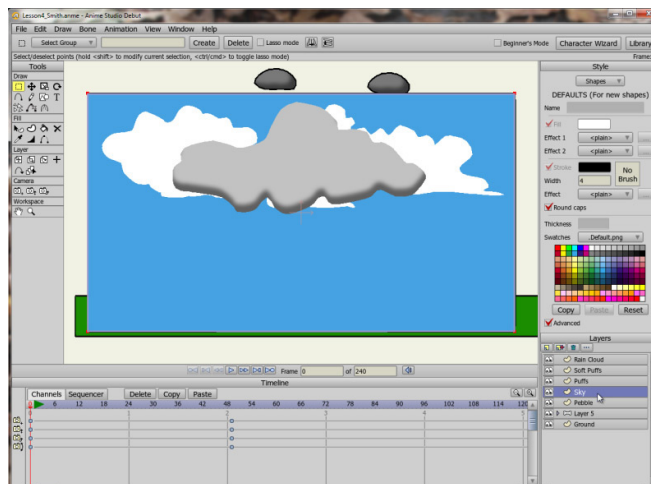
Step 3: Reorder the Layers

To reorder the elements in your scene, first collapse the **Layer 5** folder by clicking on the arrow next to it. Click the **Sky** layer in the **Layers** window and drag it to the very bottom layer so that the sky is behind the ground. Position the **Puffs**, **Soft Puffs** and **Rain Cloud** layers just above the **Ground** layer, but make sure that they are not nested within the **Layer 5** bone layer of the character. Leave the **Pebble** layer at the top of the stack.
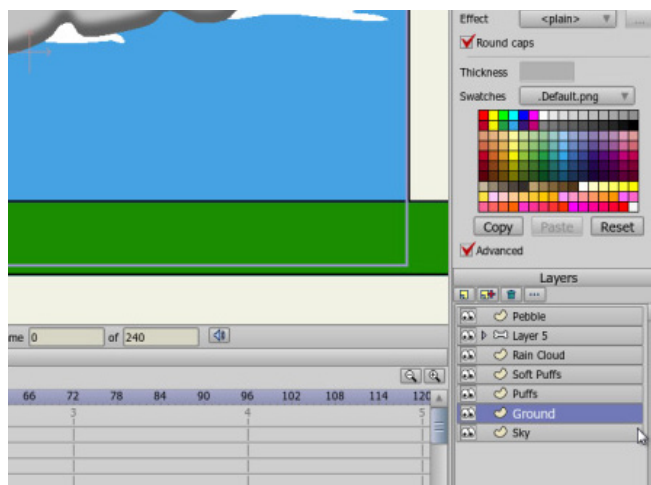
Step 4: Hide Some Clouds

So that you can see the **Puffs** layer more easily while you work on it, click the Visibility icon in the **Layers** window, and hide the **Rain Cloud** and **Soft Puff** layers.
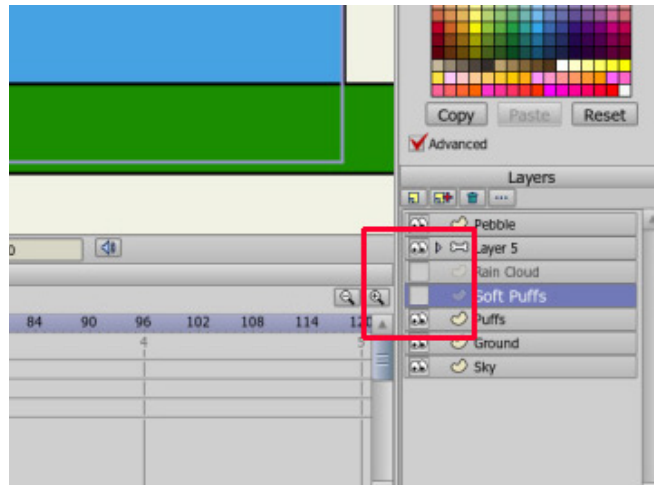

Step 5: Change Cloud Color

Now, let's change the color of the clouds in the **Puffs** layer.

Select the **Paint Bucket** tool from the **Fill** section of the toolbox, and then choose a light-blue fill color from the **Style** window. Make sure that the **Puffs** layer is selected in the **Layers** window, and then click each of the clouds with the **Paint Bucket**. Each of the clouds will change to a light-blue color.
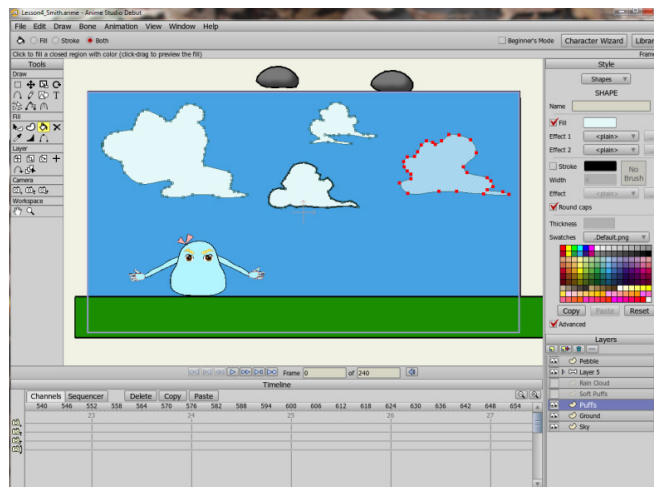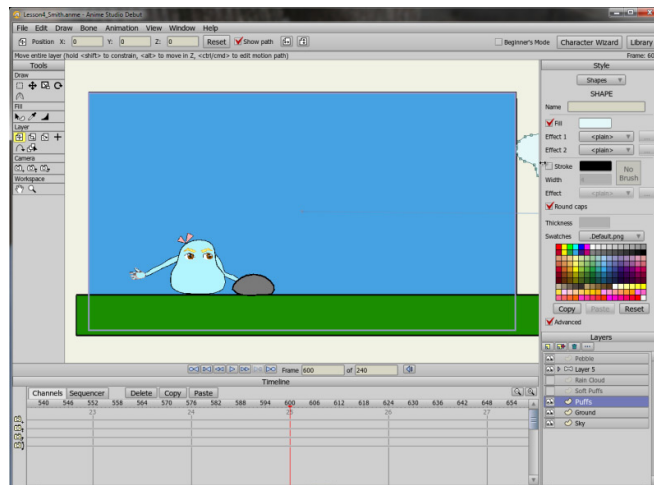

For further information on the **Paint Bucket** tool, refer to the Anime Studio Debut Users Manual.

Step 6: Animate the First Cloud Layer

We'll start the scene with the **Puffs** layer at its default position in the scene and will animate this layer of clouds very slowly. Move to **Frame 600** by dragging the slider at the bottom of the timeline, or just type the number **600** into the frame counter and hit **Enter**.

Select the **Translate Layer** tool from the **Layer** toolbox, and drag the clouds off the screen to the right.


For further information on the **Translate Layer** tool, refer to the Anime Studio Debut Users Manual.

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Step 7: Animate the Second Cloud Layer

The **Soft Puffs** layer will move twice as fast as the **Puffs** layer, and we will start this layer on the left side of the scene. Select the **Soft Puffs** layer, click to make **Frame 0** the current frame and use the **Translate Layer** tool to move the **Soft Puffs** layer toward the left. Next, make **frame 300** the current frame, and drag the **Soft Puffs** layer off the screen to the right.
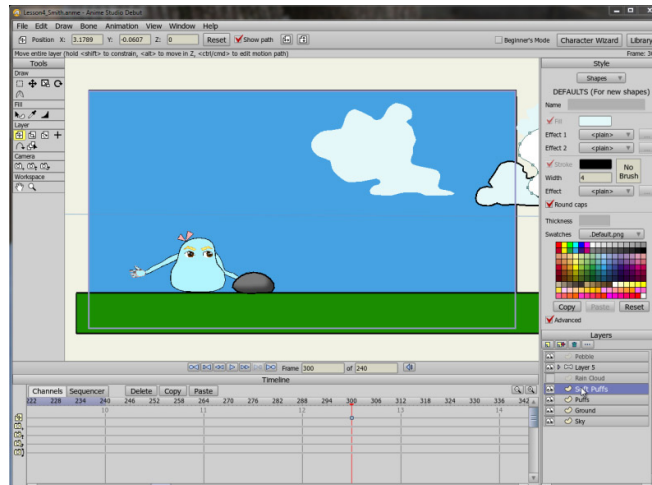
Step 8: Animate the Third Cloud Layer

Now we'll work with the **Rain Cloud** layer, which will move the slowest of all. We'll start this cloud off stage at the left and finish at the center of the scene, above the character. Select the **Rain Cloud** layer, move to **Frame 0** in the timeline and use the **Translate Layer** tool to move the cloud off the screen to the left. Next, click **Frame 450**, and move the cloud to the middle of the scene.

Now make the **Soft Puffs** and **Rain Cloud** layers visible again.

Step 9: Play the Scene

Now, rewind your scene to the beginning. To do this type **0** in the **Frame Counter** and hit **Enter**, or you can select the **Rewind** button on the animation player control panel.

When you play your scene, you'll notice that each of the cloud layers is moving at a different speed. If you want to adjust the speed of the cloud movement, remember that objects will move faster if there is less space or more movement between keyframes and will move more slowly if there is more space or less movement between keyframes.
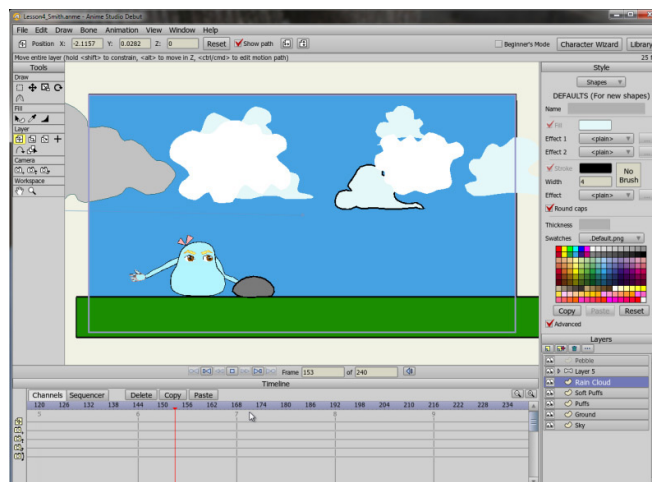
Step 10: Save Your Project

Choose **File > Save** to save your project. Then use the **Export Animation** command to render the scene to your preferred format.