

PIXAR

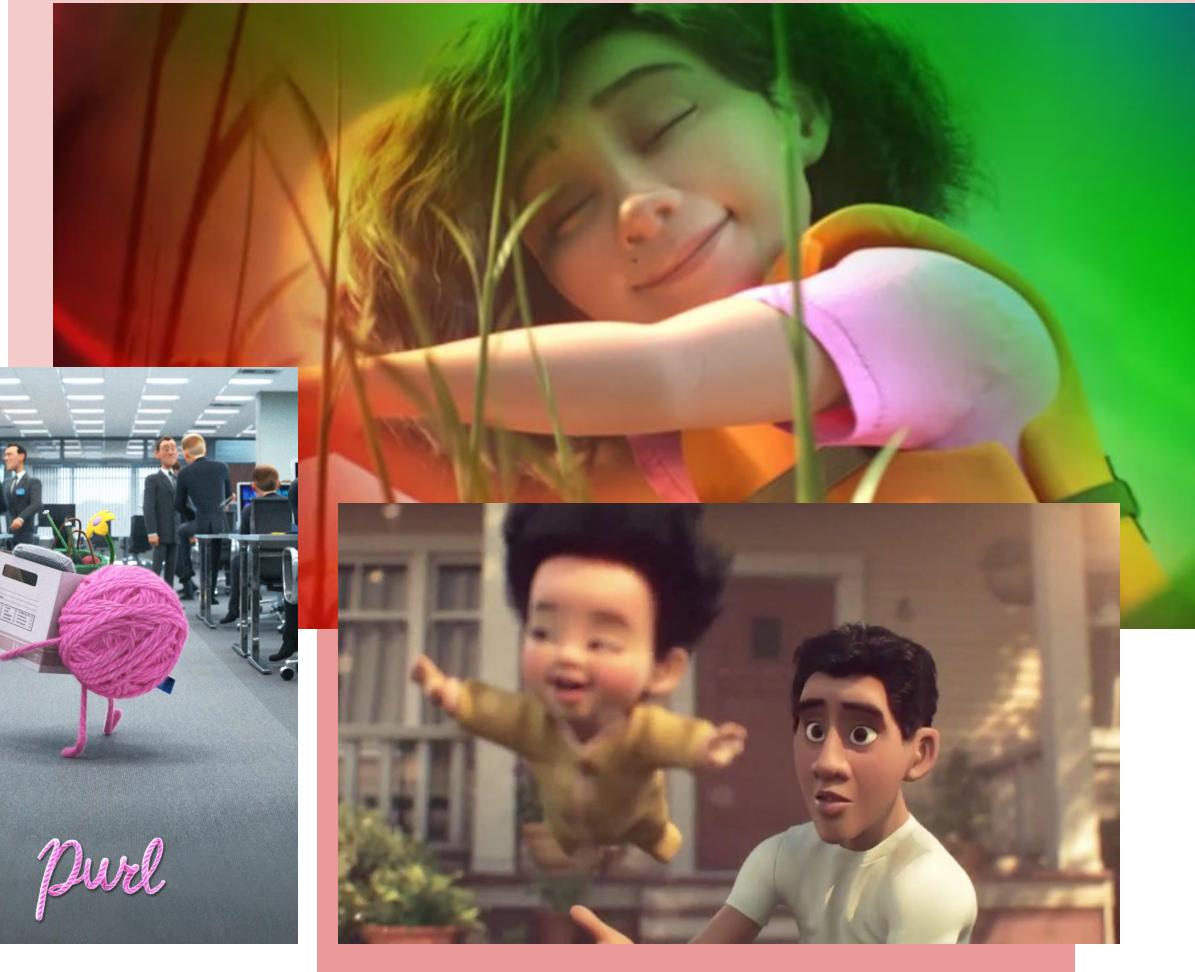


Innovators of **today**, storytellers of **tomorrow**

-First featured character with autism

-First Fil-Am featured character

-Topics like workplace discrimination, abuse



Audience



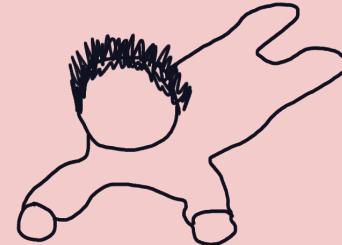
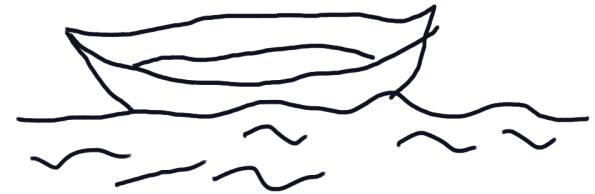
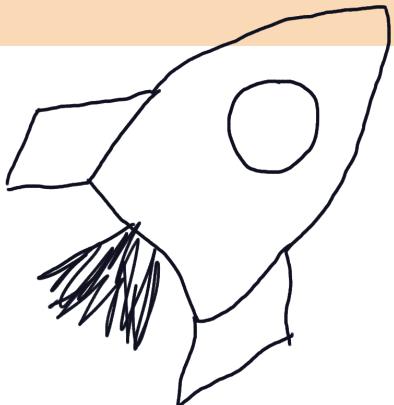


Partnerships to foster discussions and inclusion

Reaching a new Pixar audience from SparkShorts

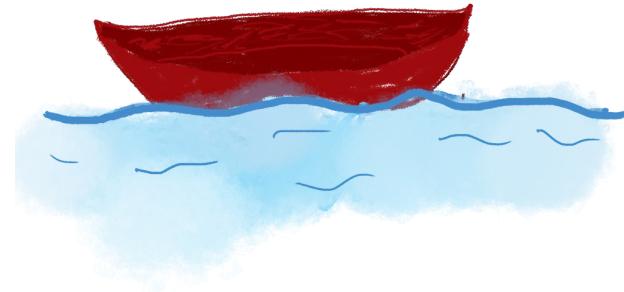
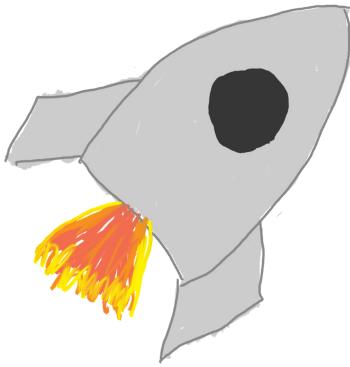


Memo: Outlining the plan



Contents

- Explanatory memo (along same lines)
- Fact sheet _____
- News release _____ **press-specific**
- Newsletter _____
- Profile/Feature _____
- Blog post _____ **to public, too**



ZaZu Lippert
zazulippert@pixar.com

SPARKSHORTS



TO: Claudia Keith, CEO, ANN 416
FROM: ZaZu Lippert, Public Relations, ANN 100
DATE: October 21, 2019
SUBJECT: Information Kit: New SparkShorts Releases

Claudia,

This information kit will announce and further promote the release of a new set of Pixar SparkShorts. The SparkShorts initiative is an incubated animation program where a diverse set of new Pixar creators are given the opportunity to produce their own animated short film. Using a small amount of funding and Pixar technology over a span of six months, the program's production groups have brought — and will continue to bring — ideas from the next generation of filmmakers to the forefront. Each film deals with important aspects of growing up in a prejudiced world, and discusses how to make the world a better place through being oneself and accepting others. While the first three shorts were released in early February 2019, the next three will premiere exclusively on Disney+ upon the streaming platform's launch on Nov. 12, 2019. The previously-released shorts have garnered over 4 million views each. This not only shows that these shorts are important to Pixar viewers, but also demonstrates that given their content, there may be potential for significant viewership expansion into more diverse communities with the upcoming batch yet to be released.



The primary audience for the SparkShorts info kit is families, specifically those with kids and adolescents ages 10 to 15. The complex and mature themes of SparkShorts make them more suited to an older audience: kids and adolescents in the age range of 10 to 15 years old understand the moral implications of the stories that they consume, and may think more about how these animated films apply to their own lives. Given their messaging and characters, the shorts also open up new potential sections of this primary audience perhaps not previously held by Pixar, such as Latin American, African American and Asian American families, as well as families with disabilities. Our secondary audience is young adults around 18 to 25 years old, who have grown up with Disney and Pixar and follow their creations.

In order to reach these audiences, our information kit will be distributed to media outlets that cover family life, parenting, diverse communities and film. These include FamilyFun and Parents Latina, two magazines and online outlets from the Parents conglomerate, focusing on family activities and Latinx families. We will also send the kit to Autism Parenting magazine, Hyphen, a media outlet focusing on Asian Americans, and Ebony, which focuses on African American lifestyle and culture. These specific outlets will help us reach our more diverse audiences on their frequented platforms. Pitches to film trade publications like Film Journal International (Film's version of Billboard magazine) and The Hollywood Reporter will further

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extend the kit's influence into the film community, and we will also do some internal pitching to our affiliated outlets within the Walt Disney Company, such as the fan-centric blog Oh My Disney.

Strategically, this kit focuses on the diverse perspectives of the shorts, and will spread the messages of already-released projects while building up excitement for the next set. In order to do this, it will include more behind-the-scenes content of the released shorts while giving information about the program geared toward young adults, parents, and extremely interested kids. It will simultaneously tease the upcoming films — discussing how their themes relate to the experiences of their creators — through digital and physical materials.

The mostly electronically-distributed kit will include a personalized memo, a fact sheet about the films and their messages, a news release on the premiere of the new shorts with Disney+ in November and a feature on one of the shorts' creators. It will also include a family project/critic blog post along with newsletters for kids and adults. While the news release and fact sheet are geared toward media outlets specifically, the other elements will be simultaneously distributed to the public directly across company websites and physical locations. Full digital and physical kits will not only be sent to the aforementioned news organizations, but also to groups such as Together We Rise, 67 Sueños, Partners for Youths with Disabilities and public schools in lower-income communities nationwide, who work with our diverse primary audiences. If these audience-specific organizations express interest, we will work with them to create co-sponsored film viewing parties and project sessions within the communities they serve, and facilitate discussions of their themes with SparkShorts creators and Pixar personnel.

More details on the contents of the kit:

- Fact sheet:** What the SparkShorts program is and info on the new shorts, where and when viewers can access them
- News Release:** Release of the new shorts upon the launch of Disney+ in November
- Newsletter:** Articles on creating SparkShorts and subscriber exclusives
- Profile/Feature:** On Bobby Rubio, the writer and director of "Float," focusing on how he tackled disability stigmas through his short film, and his focus on Filipino American representation
- Blog post:** Family project instructions (for parents) to create your own SparkShorts at home and foster conversations around diversity and acceptance with kids

Our full kit for SparkShorts has a personalized memo detailing the basics of what is enclosed. It also features an extensive social media campaign, with an emphasis on interactive Instagram stories for Pixar's 5.9 million followers. More behind-the-scenes videos will also be included: one on the role of the producer/writer, one on the animator's job and one on the contributions of the composer. Finally, it features a 20-minute podcast with all of the creators and Pixar Chief Creative Officer Pete Docter discussing the processes of creating each individual film.



Sincerely,
ZaZu Lippert

Fact Sheet

PIXAR'S

SPARKSHORTS

FAST FACTS



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Pixar's SparkShorts program gives up-and-coming creative voices in the company a platform to share their stories. With a small amount of time and funding and all of the tools and technologies that Pixar has to offer, teams of young Pixar employees create animated shorts that give us a peek into the diverse and profound stories of tomorrow. As we storyboard for the future with the next generation of diverse creators, these SparkShorts, focusing on acceptance, overcoming adversity and celebrating diversity remind us that accepting ourselves and others can change the world.

For more information, visit <https://www.pixar.com/sparkshorts>

- Three new shorts, "Loop," "Wind" and "Float" will be released on Disney+ when it launches on Nov. 12, 2019. They are:
 - 
"Loop" — A pair of kids must learn to communicate across the barrier of autism in order to cross a river, and find out in the process that they're not so different after all.
 - 
"Float" — A father who finds out his son has a special ability tries to hide the fact that he's different, but slowly realizes that his son's unique talent is a gift.
 - 
"Wind" — A boy and his grandma, trapped in a chasm, realize their dream of escaping to a better life.
- The first three films will also be available on Disney+, and were released in February:
 - "Purl" — An optimistic ball of yarn changes who she is to weave into her workplace community, but realizes that being herself gives her the chance to change stereotypes and leads to more close-knit, authentic bonds.
 - "Smash and Grab" — Two robots working in a small, dark train car discover the world outside, and risk it all to explore this new frontier together.
 - "Kitbull" — A poorly-treated pitbull and an abandoned kitten form an unlikely friendship, healing together and rediscovering their inner confidence.

News Release



Contact: ZaZu Lippert
zazulippert@pixar.com

For Immediate Release

New Pixar SparkShorts Set to Release with Disney+

Short films focused on accepting others, ourselves will be featured on streaming service

EMERYVILLE, Calif., Nov. 2, 2019 — Animation production company Pixar announced today that it will release three new short films from the company's SparkShorts program on Disney+ when the service hits general markets on Nov. 12. The films, "Float," "Wind" and "Loop," all deal with complex topics of acceptance and bridging divides in the world today, expanding Pixar's repertoire into more serious and diversity-focused storytelling.

The SparkShorts initiative is an incubated animation program where a small team of new Pixar creatives are given the opportunity to produce their own animated short film in six months.

According to Pixar's Chief Creative Officer Pete Docter, the program aims to bring fresh ideas from the next generation of creators to the forefront, with an emphasis on including more diverse perspectives, shown through these films.

"We wanted to focus on making younger and more diverse voices heard in the story process, and these shorts take on topics that we really need to address living in such a divisive world today," Docter said. "The powerful animation pieces these teams created really push the boundaries of what people think animation can effectively communicate, and are definitely paving the way for Pixar's future."

While "Float" focuses on accepting a family member's differences, "Wind" follows a family who risks everything to escape to a better life, and "Loop" follows a boy and girl who learn to communicate across the barrier of autism. The first three films from the program, "Purl," "Kitbull" and "Smash and Grab," were released on YouTube in February 2019. All six shorts will be available Nov. 12 on Disney+, which has a subscription cost of \$6.99 per month. To learn more about the Sparkshorts program, visit <https://www.pixar.com/sparkshorts>.

About Pixar

Pixar Animation Studios is the leading animation studio for feature films and shorts. The company was the first to create a full-length animated film with *Toy Story* in 1994, and has since turned out award-winning blockbusters such as *A Bug's Life*, *Brave*, *The Incredibles* series and *Coco*. A subsidiary of the Walt Disney Company, Pixar's upcoming projects include the feature films *Soul* and *Onward*, as well as a new short film incubator program focused on diversity in storytelling called *SparkShorts*. For more, visit www.pixar.com/

###

Newsletters



A screenshot of a Pixar Insider newsletter. The top section is blue with the "PIXAR INSIDER" logo. Below is a white section with the text "THE LATEST ON: SPARKSHORTS Pixar's Incubated Animation Program". Underneath is a black section with the heading "CREATING SPARKSHORTS". The text discusses the program's mission to create short films for young audiences. Below this is a "PIXAR PROFILE" section featuring a photo of a woman and the word "loop". At the bottom is a "READ MORE" button.



Email Newsletter

PIXAR INSIDER

THE LATEST ON:

SPARKSHORTS

Pixar's Incubated Animation Program

CREATING SPARKSHORTS

The SparkShorts short film program is unlike any other in the history of Pixar. Most of our shorts are for younger audiences, but these new short film projects — created by our young, diverse Pixar storytellers of the future — take on topics that can apply to viewers of all ages, especially families with kids ages 10-15. While they're fun, quirky, unique, and playful, each short aims to start conversations about navigating a diverse world and celebrating diversity.

SparkShorts filmmakers were given six months, a small amount of funding and all of the technology at Pixar to realize their vision, from storyboarding to animating and scoring. And what they produced was utterly remarkable. The shorts blew us all away — and definitely started conversations within our workspace about how to incorporate more stories like this into everything we create.

These SparkShorts tell new stories that extend the boundaries of topics we cover in animated films. We see the first featured Pixar character with autism in "Loop," learn to accept ourselves and others in "Purl" and "Float" and overcome adversity to form friendships in "Kitbull" and "Smash and Grab."

Here at Pixar, our greatest mission is to bring important messages to light through film and animation. These shorts have set the bar even higher, and we can't wait to see where the SparkShorts program will take us in the future.

This insider newsletter brings you a behind-the-scenes look at the entire process of creating SparkShorts, one frame at a time.

We hope you enjoy watching and learning about them as much as we enjoyed making them!

-Jennifer and Pete
Chief Creative Officers, Pixar

PIXAR PROFILE



Writer/producer Erica Milson talks about her SparkShort "Loop," which focuses on breaking down communication barriers that come with autism. The short is the first Pixar project to feature a character with autism, and as Milson says, she drew a lot from her own personal experiences learning how to communicate with her nephew who has Aspergers.

[READ MORE](#)

BEHIND-THE-FRAMES



Rosana Sullivan's SparkShort "Kitbull" is different than all the others — every frame was hand-drawn by artists, making the creation process even more laborious. Learn more about Sullivan and her process in these exclusive behind-the-frames videos.

[WATCH](#)

EXCLUSIVE CONTENT



Click below to sign into your Insider account and watch an exclusive sneak peek of the three unreleased SparkShorts — before they float away! Available in the Insider Portal until Nov. 20.

[LOG IN](#)

Keep an eye out for more insider content coming to a mailbox near you in our bi-monthly magazine. And stay tuned next week for more on:



Kids Newsletter



~ CREATING SPARKSHORTS ~

The SparkShorts animation program gives young Pixar creatives not much older than you a chance to make their own short films focusing on their own experiences. Over the course of six months, these creative minds made films that remind us of the power of young voices and teach us important lessons about accepting our differences and overcoming difficult times.

We gave our creators all of Pixar's technology and a small amount of money to make it happen — and they reached for the stars and made their film dreams a reality. In this newsletter, you'll go behind the scenes to learn more about how Pixar artists made each of the SparkShorts, and you'll even have a chance to make your own! Start sketching your SparkShorts character on the back of this newsletter, and visit our Luxo Learning blog at www.luxolearning.com/sparkshorts with a parent or guardian to enter into our coolest competition for kids yet!

We hope you enjoy watching and learning about these SparkShorts as much as we enjoyed making them!

Jen + Pete

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Follow the creators of SparkShorts through a day of their production!

8 a.m.
Arrive at Pixar Lot

"Walking up to the Luxo lamp and ball every morning was — and still is! — surreal. I'd always rub the lamp before I walked into work for good luck. It may not be an oil lamp, but I like to think some Disney magic would rub off on me and helped me with my creative process."

— Kristen Lester, "Purl"

10 a.m.
Storyboard

"By 10 a.m., I'd have looked through what we've done the previous day or week and written some notes. So then it was time to start delegating tasks. This was a great time in the storyboard room and we'd discuss what we're starting that day and what needed to be fixed, and then get right to work from there."

— Erica Milson, "Loop"

12 p.m.
Lunch

"Our team would always sit outside for lunch, so that we could study the wind. It's literally the title of our film, so we tried to figure out how we could take all of the time we could to interact with it, even our downtime. It helped us visualize wind in the short, for sure."

— Edwin Cheng, "Wind"

2 p.m.
Research Trips

"After lunch, we'd do more research for the scenes we were creating. For our film, that meant going to iFly one day to capture reference videos about how our main character would be lifted by the wind, and spending time at a nearby park with our kids. My son and I always wound up on the swings, which inspired the final sequence."

— Bobby Rubio, "Float"

4 p.m.
Hitting the Court

"After lunch, we'd do more research for the scenes we were creating. For our film, that meant going to iFly one day to capture reference videos about how our main character would be lifted by the wind, and spending time at a nearby park with our kids. My son and I always wound up on the swings, which inspired the final sequence."

— Brian Larsen, Smash and Grab

5 p.m.
Wrapping Up

"At the end of the day before we'd pack up, we'd sit in the theater and take a look at what we'd made that day, and give each other positive feedback about each scene. It helped us all form deeper bonds in our team and appreciate the role that everyone had to play."

— Rosana Sullivan, Kitbull

“What better time to give people a peek behind the curtain than when focusing on inclusion?”

-See the faces of creators represented as well: role models

Kids Newsletter

-Behind-the-scenes process

-Interactive activity

5. Screening & Refining

Once they had a rough cut of the entire short, teams held screenings of each short for the entire Pixar staff. Staff members submitted their comments and suggestions for the films, which then went into the final refining, or detail editing, process.

6. Sharing Everywhere!

And that's how we got to the Pixar SparkShorts that you see today! For more, see our online videos in the Pixar Insider e-newsletter.



1. Crafting a Concept

Writers and directors first had to come up with an idea, focused around themes of overcoming adversity and accepting differences. Many drew from their own personal experiences.



2. Pitching the project

Once their concept had a drafted storyboard and some early sketches, the candidates brought their pitches in to Lindsey Collins, executive producer of the SparkShorts program.

THE MAKING OF SPARKSHORTS

4. Sketching, Scripting and Editing (oh my!)

Teams then went straight to work, dedicating all of their energy for the next six months to making these films a reality. In the process, they created new workflows to expedite the process, which we continue to test in our upcoming full-length feature films, like *Onward* and *Soul*.



3. Teaming Up

Collins then selected a team from Pixar's creative minds to help create the shorts, including everyone from animators to composers.

These teams were given six months to make their vision a reality, from start to finish. They had a small amount of funding from Pixar, but in the end, it was their imaginations that brought their ideas to life.



SPARKSHORTS SKETCHES

Draw your own SparkShorts character here:



Five words to describe my character are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

VISIT THE LUXO LEARNING BLOG TO BRING YOUR CHARACTER TO LIFE AND ENTER TO WIN A TRIP TO PIXAR STUDIOS:
www.luxolearning.com/sparkshorts

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PIXAR KIDS!



Adults Newsletter



~ CREATING SPARKSHORTS ~

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— Bobby Rubio, "Float"

4 p.m.
Hitting the Court

"To break up the day, we'd usually do some sort of basketball exercise in the afternoon. Our team really took to playing short basketball games on the Pixar campus court — which is how we came up with the starting sequence for the film."

— Brian Larsen, "Smash and Grab"

5 p.m.
Wrapping Up

"At the end of the day before we'd pack up, we'd sit in the theater and take a look at what we'd made that day, and give each other positive feedback about each sequence. It helped everyone form deeper bonds and really appreciate the role that everyone had to play."

— Rosana Sullivan, "Kitbull"

-More adult-centered introduction, same age-spanning "A Day in The Life" article

Profile

PIXAR PROFILES



REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Float Writer/Director Bobby Rubio tells the story of his family unapologetically and celebrates differences through his SparkShorts film

When Bobby Rubio's son Alex was born, his whole world was turned upside down. He was overjoyed to have a kid, but from the beginning, Alex was different. Unlike Rubio's friends' kids, Alex didn't like being in large crowds. He would throw temper tantrums well past his "terrible twos." And Rubio had trouble connecting with Alex: he only wanted to play alone, and would get angry whenever his dad came over and tried to interact.

When his son turned six, everything became a little clearer. Alex was diagnosed with autism, which presented Rubio and his wife with a set of extra challenges along with the already daunting task of first-time parenting.

Or at least, that was how Rubio saw it at first. And he felt overwhelmed.

"When Alex was diagnosed, I really didn't handle it that well. I wanted to hide his differences from other people," Rubio said. "I told myself it was to protect him from the

judgement of others, but it was really to protect myself. I didn't understand why it was so hard, and I just wanted to make his differences disappear."

But eventually, Rubio came to celebrate his son's differences. And out of his own path toward accepting the challenges of autism and celebrating his son's gifts came the basic concept for "Float," Rubio's newest project as a short film creator for Pixar's SparkShorts film series. A story artist for the famed animation company, this short film is Rubio's first venture into writing and directing. But beyond that, it's the first time that he's telling the story of his family, unapologetically.

The short follows a son who has the unique ability to float, and his father who is desperate to hide his son's ability from their community. The father and son journey from a mom-and-pop shop to a distance from each other as they stay cooped up in the house to hide the son's differences. They argue incessantly. At the short's climax, when the son's floating is revealed at the neighborhood park, the father cracks, yelling at his son, "Why can't you just be normal?"

And while he never said it outright, this was how daily life felt for Rubio in the early months after Alex's diagnosis.

"It took a long time for me to come to terms with it, and that's not something that I'm proud of," Rubio said. "But I wanted to show the difficulties and frustrations involved in raising a child with differences in "Float" because I think it's important to acknowledge that the paths that families have to take when their child is differently-abled aren't always easy. It takes a lot of dedication and hard work, and you're not always going to do everything right from the beginning."

But the change in Rubio's relationship with his son, mirrored in the short, makes the sometimes difficult journey more than worth it. At the end of "Float," the dad realizes that he can bond with his son through swinging with him at the park, where they can "float" and reach new heights together. He accepts his son's differences and celebrates them in front of the entire neighborhood.

This tear-jerking final scene is straight from reality, according to Rubio. He was initially uncertain where the pivotal last sequence of happiness would take place, but he knew it had to be somewhere special

to him and Alex. It was their story, after all.

One of their favorite things to do together is go to the park and swing on the swings. It's the one place where they can look toward the sky and nothing else matters. On a research day for the film, Rubio and his team took their kids to the park.

"Alex and I ran right for the swings," Rubio said. "And in that moment, everything just clicked. Once that last sequence that's overflowing with love and acceptance and a celebration was meant to happen there."

-BOBBY RUBIO

characters."Then I heard myself, what I'd just said, and realized that was exactly the kind of closed mindset that keeps our community from being represented. So that solidified the decision to make it fully about us. And set it in my hometown."

Rubio is proud to be Filipino American. And he is proud to be Alex's father. He wanted to make sure what was shown on the screen reflected that.

Much like the father and son at the end of the short, Rubio has rewritten the story of his relationship with his son. Where he once saw challenges, he now sees new opportunities for growth. What was once a barrier is now just a different way of communicating. Alex is his beautiful boy, with unique abilities that allow him to reach for the sky.

When Bobby Rubio's son Alex was born, his whole world was turned upside down. From the beginning, Alex was special: he taught Rubio to love unconditionally, and to celebrate his own differences and the differences of others. Alex changed his perspective, and helped Rubio see the unique gifts we all have that allow us to succeed. Alex showed him how to float, so that together, they could fly.

And while the short is based on his and Alex's experiences, he hopes that its messages extend beyond their story.

"Float" is really for anyone who's been told by society that they're different than what's accepted," Rubio says. "It's a way to celebrate these differences, because at the end of the day, our differences are what make us unique and incredible."



However, not every decision came to him so easily. In the initial sketches, "Float" took place in a predominately white, suburban town, and the father and his son were white. Rubio and his son are Filipino American.

He remembers bringing the sketches in to present them at work one day, and talking to a coworker who was puzzled by Rubio's choice of character and setting.

"She said to me 'This is the story of you and your son... why are you sketching different people?'" Rubio said. "And I said something to the effect of 'I'm concerned that people won't want to see Fil-Am



-Telling the story of his family, unapologetically

-Acceptance: of differences in **all** forms and of **ourselves**

Blog Post



PIXAR'S
LUXO LEARNING 

Your one-stop blog for Pixar projects and family resources

HOME PROJECTS NEWS INSIDERS

STORYSHORTS
Storyboarding

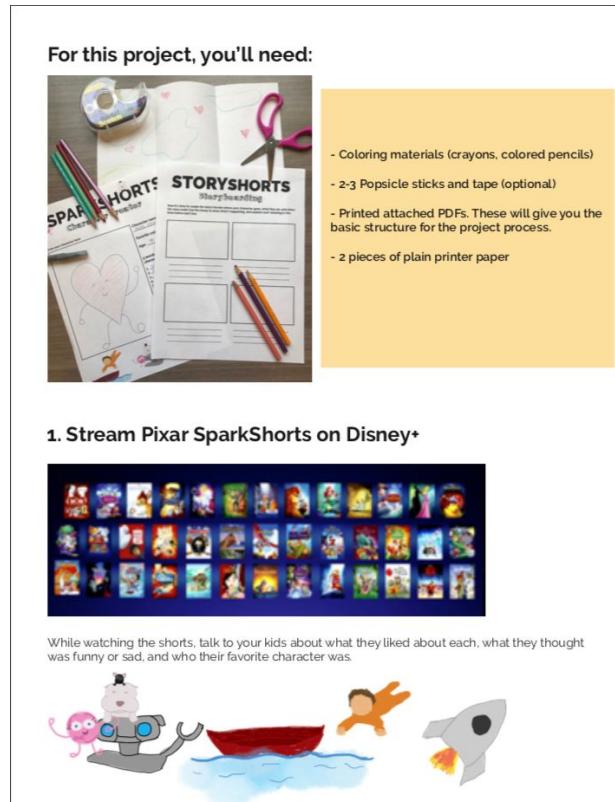
Now it's time to create the story! Decide where your character goes, what they do, and when the story ends! Use the boxes to draw what's happening, and explain each drawing in the lines below each box.

Become a SparkShorts Creator Right From Your Living Room!

By Pixar Chief Creative Officer Jennifer Lee

If you're a Disney+ subscriber, you've probably eagerly watched all of the new Pixar SparkShorts with your kids already. These shorts are unlike any you've ever seen before. They focus on diversity, inclusion and self-acceptance, and are great conversation starters with kids about being more accepting of themselves and others. How better to get the Luxo ball rolling on these discussions than with a hands-on family project making your own SparkShorts?

We ran project sessions like these for kids from AutismSpeaks and the Los Angeles Foster Care system, and they were a hit. So we figured we'd share the tools here to help your kids find their own creative spark right from your living room.



For this project, you'll need:



- Coloring materials (crayons, colored pencils)
- 2-3 Popsicle sticks and tape (optional)
- Printed attached PDFs. These will give you the basic structure for the project process.
- 2 pieces of plain printer paper

1. Stream Pixar SparkShorts on Disney+



While watching the shorts, talk to your kids about what they liked about each, what they thought was funny or sad, and who their favorite character was.



-Create-your-own gives kids a sense of involvement, insight and belonging

-Sparking creativity of the next generation

-Newsletter connection

Blog Post

2. Pick your favorite SparkShort



Ask kids to pick their favorite short. Then, start to do some word association. What do they think describes the short? Write these words down on a piece of paper for reference.

3. Pick your favorite SparkShort



Print multiple PDFs if your film has more than one character. As they create, you can prompt kids with guiding questions to talk about emotional and social cues, like "what does this character look like when he feels sad? What does this character look like when she laughs?"

4. Storyboard



Now, it's time to decide what adventures this character will embark on! Fold a piece of paper into thirds, create a backdrop with your child, and let their imagination run wild to decide what happens next. If you want, you can help them make a storyboard using the StoryShorts PDF. Use the word list you created to keep the creative juices flowing.

5. Create your film!



Cut out your character puppet(s), set up the backdrop, and part the curtains in your living room theater on your kid's latest animated film!

6. Enter to WIN!

We'd love to see what your family creates! Post a video of your film with the hashtag #pixarSparkProjects on social media, and you'll automatically be entered to win one of many prizes below.

1 GRAND PRIZE WINNER: Pixar Getaway
-Private tour of Pixar Studios, airfare and travel included.

-Tickets to Disneyland and Disney's California Adventure Park, with an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at Pixar Pier

-Exclusive Pixar SparkShorts swag bag, with more projects and tools to help kids unlock their creative spark and tell the stories of the future

20 SECOND-PLACE WINNERS: Sparking Creativity Prize
-Exclusive Pixar SparkShorts swag bag, with more projects and tools to help kids unlock their creative spark and tell the stories of the future

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR INSIDER NEWSLETTER!

SIGN UP NOW

-Create-your-own gives kids a sense of involvement, insight and belonging

-Sparking creativity of the next generation

-Newsletter connection

PIXAR



Stories of **tomorrow**