

one film, made three times

The 3 levels of motion design with Claude

Claude Opus 5.5 made the same 20-second film three times, about the Claude Haiku 5.5 launch. Same model, same news, same empty folder. Only the direction changed. This is everything the video teaches, with all three prompts and a brief template to copy.

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Three levels, one film

All three ran on Opus 5.5 in Claude Code, from an empty folder, with web search on, because it's on by default. The only thing that changed was what Claude was told.

LEVEL 1

Prompt it

30

WORDS · 10 MINUTES

YOU GET

Claude's average: clean, with real numbers, and a spec sheet

USE IT FOR

Exploring. Never anything public with facts in it

LEVEL 2

Direct it

700

WORDS · 20 TO 30 MINUTES

YOU GET

Your story, told well, as far as you can describe it

USE IT FOR

Most real work: social clips, explainers, client work. About 80% of it

LEVEL 3

Orchestrate it

1,700

WORDS · ABOUT 3 HOURS

YOU GET

A film you didn't write, and a skill that makes the next one

USE IT FOR

Hero pieces, and anything you'll make again

WHO DECIDES

The story, the look, the facts, the sound and the checks

LEVEL 1

Claude, guessing

LEVEL 2

You

LEVEL 3

Claude again, now with your idea, real tools and a way to check its own work

the whole video in three lines

A prompt gets you Claude's average

A brief gets you your taste

A system gets you a director with a crew, and you only build it once

What a short prompt leaves out

Claude can't output a video. It writes code, and a browser records it frame by frame. So every colour, every movement and every word on screen is a decision. If you don't make it, Claude makes it for you.

```
Make a beautiful 20-second storytelling motion design video about Claude Haiku 5.5, the new AI model Anthropic just released. Show viewers what's new about it and why they should care.
```

THE STORY

THE LOOK

THE FACTS

THE SOUND

WHO CHECKS IT

That prompt doesn't say any of those five, so Claude guessed all five. For 30 words the film was genuinely good: it found its own hook (fast, cheap, smart: pick all three), went and got the real numbers and wrote its own soundtrack in code. But it was **a spec sheet with a clever frame, not a story**. No characters, nothing happens to anyone, a use case that isn't on Anthropic's page, and Claude's own colours and fonts. Every gap got the most average answer, because average is the safest guess. If you want a story, bring one.

The five-part brief

Level 2 makes those decisions in one page: you're the art director, and Claude does the work. Name the tool too (the brief asked for Remotion, a free framework for video in code). The five parts work on anything, not just video.

1 Source

Use only this page, and only these facts. That one line fixed level 1's biggest problem.

2 Structure

The story, beat by beat, with timings. The biggest jump in the video, because the story comes from you, not from Claude.

3 Look

Colours as hex codes, one typeface, and the characters described: Opus big and slow, Haiku small and quick, in sneakers.

4 Rules

Each one a number or a never: no linear easing, a 15% squash on landing, text cards held 1.2 seconds, text never touching a character. Never write *make it engaging*: Claude has to guess what you mean.

5 Check your own work

Render seven stills, critique each in a line, fix what's weak, check again. Claude can see images, so give it eyes and it catches its own mistakes before you do. The cheapest upgrade there is.

Make a [length] [format] about [subject], in [tool] ([size], [frame rate]). Follow this brief exactly. Where it's silent, make the choice a senior [motion designer] would make, and tell me what you chose.

1. SOURCE

Use only [link or document]. Don't put any number or claim on screen that isn't there. The only facts allowed on screen:

- [fact]
- [fact]

2. STRUCTURE

The story in one line: [who has what problem, what changes, how it ends].

- [0-4s]: [what happens] / On screen: [text]
- [4-8s]: [what happens] / On screen: [text]
- [8-15s]: [what happens] / On screen: [text]
- [15-20s]: [the ending] / On screen: [end card]

3. LOOK

- Colours: [hex] for [job], [hex] for [job], [hex] for [job] (five at most)
- Type: [typeface], [size] for headlines
- Characters and objects: [shape, size, colour, and how each one moves]
- Layout: [where things sit, and what never overlaps]
- Sound: [music, effects, voices, or none]

4. RULES (each one a number or a never)

- No linear easing anywhere. [Entrances use ..., landings use springs.]
- Every text card holds for at least [1.2] seconds.
- [Text never touches a character.]
- Never [...]

5. CHECK YOUR OWN WORK

1. Before the final render, render stills at [5 to 7 frames, one per beat]. Write a one-line critique of each: legibility, composition, and whether the beat reads with the sound off. Fix anything weak and check those frames again.
2. Render the final file and confirm its length [and that it has sound].
3. Show me the stills, and list every on-screen claim next to the line in the source that supports it.

The ceiling. Claude executes every line you write, and only those lines. The brief said cream background and never described a room, so the film got a cream wall, simple shapes and no voices. Level 2 is only as good as what you can describe.

The fastest way to level 2 today: take the level 2 prompt on page 6, keep its five parts, and swap in your own story.

Level 3: Claude directs

The first thing to do is delete your story. The level 3 prompt is longer, but none of it says what the film looks like. At level 2 you direct Claude. At level 3, Claude directs everything else.

1 The idea, in one paragraph

Opus is drowning in work it shouldn't be doing, hands it to Haiku, and is finally free to think. The story, the look, the jokes and the camera are Claude's call. The prompt even says: *your capabilities are far beyond what you assume.*

2 A crew

Claude can't draw an image, voice a character or compose a track. So it gets image models, a voice and music tool, and other copies of Claude to review its work.

3 Plan first, with a gate

Three versions of the story. It picked the one with a joke on every beat, then stopped for approval.

4 Art as reference only

Three image models tested on one prompt, three worlds drawn, a cozy attic picked, then character sheets and a key pose per beat. None of it is in the film: the image models drew the key poses, and Claude drew every frame in between, in code, like an in-betweenner.

5 Sound before picture

Voices auditioned for both characters, two soundtracks tried, every movement timed to the music. The audio drives the picture.

6 Checks

A fresh copy of Claude watches with no sound and tells the story back. Then a review as the harshest motion designer in the room, and the top problems fixed.

THE LAUNCH-FILM SKILL

Make a launch film for [URL] about [idea].

The last step of level 3 saves the whole process as a skill. The next film starts from one line: level 1 effort, level 3 result. Expensive once, then it's your default. Free on the resource page.

WHICH LEVEL DO YOU NEED

Level 1 is for exploring. Level 2 is for most real work. For level 3, ask three questions. **Two yeses, and it's worth doing.** On a one-off clip, it's over-engineering.

01 Will I make this again?

02 Is it a hero piece?

03 Does it need something Claude can't make on its own, like voices or images?

■ LEVEL 1 · PROMPT IT · 30 WORDS

COPY AS IT IS

Make a beautiful 20-second storytelling motion design video about Claude Haiku 5.5, the new AI model Anthropic just released. Show viewers what's new about it and why they should care.

■ LEVEL 2 · DIRECT IT · 708 WORDS

SWAP IN YOUR OWN STORY

Level 2 prompt: Direct it

Make a 20-second motion design video about the Claude Haiku 5.5 release, in Remotion (1920x1080, 30fps, 600 frames). Follow this brief exactly. Where it's silent, make the choice a senior motion designer would make, and tell me what you chose.

Source of truth

Use only <https://www.anthropic.com/claude-haiku-5-5>. Don't put any number or claim on screen that isn't on that page. The only facts allowed on screen:

- Haiku 5.5 is Anthropic's fastest model to date.
- It costs around 75% less to run than Haiku 4.5, on average.
- It's built for high-volume work like summaries, classification and subagents.
- Model ID: `claude-haiku-5-5`.

The story (this is not a spec sheet)

Opus is buried under small tasks. It realizes it can hand them to Haiku. Haiku clears them in seconds. Opus is free to do the hard work.

| Time | Beat | On screen |

| --- | --- | --- |

| 0-4s | Opus at a desk, under a growing pile of paper planes (tasks). One more lands and the pile wobbles. | Text: "Opus has a problem." |

| 4-7s | Opus freezes. A lightbulb pops above it. Everything stops for a beat. | Text: "... Haiku." |

| 7-10s | Opus taps a phone. Haiku zips in from off-screen with a speed blur and a hard stop. | Text: "Fastest Claude model yet." |

| 10-17s | Opus throws the pile up. Haiku catches the planes in mid-air one after another, and each turns into a ✓ sheet that flies back. The pile visibly shrinks. A rubber stamp slams onto the last sheet. | Stamp: "~75% CHEAPER TO RUN" |

| 17-20s | The desk is clear. Opus unrolls a big blueprint. Cut to the end card. | "Claude Haiku 5.5" + `claude-haiku-5-5` |

Characters (draw them in code: SVG or canvas, no image files)

- Both are rounded rectangles with simple faces (two eyes, small mouth), in the same family.
- **Opus:** large (about 380px tall), calm, slow movements, warm terracotta `#D97757`.
- **Haiku:** small (about 140px), quick, bouncy, lighter apricot `#F0A57A`, small white sneakers.
- Use expressions as keyframes: tired (half-closed eyes), surprised (wide eyes), happy (curved eyes).

Look

- **Paper:** cream background `#F4EFE6` with subtle grain (an SVG noise filter), ink lines `#1F1E1C` at 3px, and a slightly wobbly hand-drawn line (jitter outlines by ± 1.5 px, changing every 4 frames).
- **Palette:** cream, ink, terracotta, apricot, plus a single accent: sticky-note yellow

`#F2D16B`. Nothing else.

- **Type:** headlines in a heavy grotesk (use an installed system font, Inter Display Bold or similar), at 96px. The stamp in a condensed uppercase.
- **Layout:** characters in the lower two-thirds, text in the top-left third. Text never overlaps a character.

Motion rules

- No linear easing anywhere. Entrances use expo-out (`Easing.bezier(0.16,1,0.3,1)`). Throws and drops use spring physics (`spring()`) with damping around 12).
- Squash and stretch on every landing: 15% for Haiku, 6% for Opus.
- Paper planes travel on curved paths (quadratic bezier) and rotate along the path.
- Hold every text card for at least 1.2s before it leaves.
- Hard cut on the eureka (frame 120): the background flashes to yellow for 2 frames.

Sound

Write a simple score yourself as a WAV, synthesized in code (Node or Python, no samples from the internet), 20s at 120 BPM:

- Soft plucks in beat 1 that get busier.
- Silence at 4s, then a bell at the lightbulb.
- A kick and snare enter when Haiku arrives (7s).
- A swoosh on every plane catch.
- A final chord on the end card.

Add it to the composition with ``.

Process: check your own work

1. Build the scenes as separate components (`Desk`, `Opus`, `Haiku`, `PaperPlane`, `Stamp`, `EndCard`).
2. Before the final render, render stills at frames 30, 110, 125, 200, 300, 450 and 580. Look at each one and write a one-line critique: legibility, composition, whether the beat reads without sound. Fix anything weak and re-check those frames.
3. Render the final MP4. Confirm it's exactly 20.0s with an audio track.
4. Show me the contact sheet of those frames, and list every on-screen claim next to the sentence on the source page that supports it.

Level 3 prompt: Orchestrate it

You're directing a 20-second animated short about the Claude Haiku 5.5 release. You're the director, the art department, the animator, the sound designer and the QA team, and you have real tools to call.

I'm giving you the idea, the tools and the quality bar. Everything else, from the beats to the look to the jokes, is yours to design. I trust your taste more than a beat sheet I could write. Your capabilities are far beyond what you assume, so work like it: plan carefully, push the craft, and use the tools and the time this deserves. Spend generously where it improves the film and economically everywhere else.

Final output: `out/level3.mp4`, 1920×1080, 30fps, exactly 20.0 seconds, with voices, music and sound design. At the end, you'll also save your process as a reusable skill.

1. The idea

****Opus is overloaded with work it shouldn't be doing.**** It's buried in small, repetitive tasks: summaries, classifications, lookups, compactions. Then it has a realization: it can hand all of that to Haiku. It calls Haiku, Haiku arrives fast and clears the pile, and Opus is finally free to do the hard, important work it's built for.

That's the premise. How you tell it is up to you: the staging, gags, rhythm, camera, character beats, what the eureka moment looks like, how Haiku arrives, and how the delegation plays out. Sonnet can appear if it earns its place.

****Fixed points:****

- 20.0 seconds, 16:9.
 - Opus and Haiku are characters in the same family as the Claude character.
 - The film must read with the sound off.
 - The ending respects reality: Haiku takes the volume, and Opus keeps the hard thinking.
- Anthropic says Opus 5.5 and Sonnet 5.5 remain the better choice for complex agentic coding, so Haiku is never shown replacing Opus.

2. Style reference

The reference is Jake Moran's "Animated agent session story": <https://www.prompt-motion.com/jake11moran-a269c4>. It was made with this skill: <https://github.com/heygen-com/hyperframes-community-skills/tree/master/skills/session-story>. Read the skill, including its references on motion and the room.

Take from it:

- The hand-drawn watercolour-on-paper look.
- A cozy room as a world.
- Cartoon blocks with faces as characters.
- Physical paper props that carry the story (paper planes as tasks).
- A score that's cued to every action.

Don't copy it. Use it as a starting point and push it further: richer staging, better acting from the characters, more cinematic camera, and a stronger hook. It should look like it belongs to the same family, made by someone who studied it closely.

3. Facts (lock these before any creative work)

Fetch <https://www.anthropic.com/claude-haiku-5-5> and write `facts.json`: every claim you might use, each with the exact supporting sentence from the page. Only claims in `facts.json` may appear on screen or in dialogue.

This is a story first, so use one or two facts at most, woven into the world rather than presented as slides. For example, a price tag being re-stamped, or Haiku's speed shown rather than stated. The film must end on a card with **Claude Haiku 5.5**.

4. Audience and hook

The audience is AI and developer Twitter/X: people who use Claude every day and know the model names and the jokes about them. Before writing the treatment:

- **Research:** spend a little time on how people currently talk about Opus, Sonnet and Haiku, and what's being said about this launch. Find one or two references or running jokes this audience would recognize and enjoy. Use them only if they fit the story naturally. Never use real people or brand logos.
- **The hook:** the first second has to work as a still frame on a busy timeline. Someone scrolling should instantly see "a character drowning in work" and want to see what happens.
- **Text on screen:** this is motion design that tells a story, not a lyric video. Use text sparingly and only where it adds something: a beat the picture can't carry alone, the fact stamp, and the end card. Integrate it into the world (painted, stamped, written in marker) rather than overlaying it.

5. Tools

The keys are in `.env`. Pick the best tool for each job, and tell me which you chose and why.

Tool	Key	Use it for
Web search and fetch	—	Source page, style reference, audience research
Higgsfield (connector)	—	Image generation; call `models_explore` first to pick the best model for flat illustrated characters. Also music or sound effects if its audio models are the best fit.
GPT Image (OpenAI)	`OPENAI_API_KEY`	A second image model. Test both on the same prompt and keep whichever matches the style better.
ElevenLabs	`ELEVENLABS_API_KEY`	Character voices, sound effects, and music (Eleven Music)
Remotion	—	The film itself
ffmpeg + Python	—	Audio analysis, frame extraction, checks
Subagents	—	Parallel research and independent review

6. Order of work

Step 1: Treatment

Write `treatment.md`:

- Your take on the story in one paragraph.
- The beat sheet with timings.
- What happens in each shot: camera, acting, the gag.
- Where the music hits.
- What each character says.
- Which fact appears and how.
- Why this version is the strongest way to tell it.

Write two or three distinct treatments, then pick one and explain why.

Step 2: Style bible

Write `style/bible.md`:

- Palette: 6 colours maximum, with hex values and a reason for each.
- Ink line rules: weight, and the "boiling" redraw jitter.
- Watercolour and paper texture.
- Lighting.
- Type: local font files only.
- Character design rules for Opus and Haiku: size ratio, shapes, how each one moves, and their expression set.

Step 3: Key art (images as the base, no video generation)

The generated images are your key frames and design references. You are the in-betweener.

Generate:

1. **Style frames:** 3 options of the world. Pick one.
2. **Character sheets:** Opus and Haiku, each with front, three-quarter and side views and their full expression set. Use the chosen style frame as a reference so everything shares one world.
3. **Key poses:** one image per key pose in your treatment (roughly 6-10), each built from the character sheets and the style frame, matching the camera and composition of the shot.

Put everything on one contact sheet.

Stop and wait for my approval before building anything.

The images are references. The final film is drawn in code to match them, and generated images never appear on screen. Trace the shapes, poses, proportions and composition from the key art into SVG, and animate between them.

Step 4: Audio first

The film's timing comes from the audio.

1. **Voices:** audition at least 2 ElevenLabs voices per character. Opus should feel warm, low and deliberate. Haiku should feel quick, bright and eager. Generate each line separately, with 2 takes, and keep the best delivery.
2. **Music:** generate a track that fits your treatment, about 22s long, with its structure matching your beats: for example, a drop when Haiku arrives. If the generated track won't land on your beats, trim and offset it with ffmpeg rather than changing the picture.
3. **Sound effects:** a sound for every physical action. Paper, whooshes, impacts, the lightbulb, stamps.
4. **Timing map:** detect the music's beat onsets and write `timing.json`. It holds every beat time, the drop frame, each voice line's start and end frames, and every key action snapped to the nearest beat. All animation timing reads from `timing.json`, with nothing hardcoded.

5. Play me the audio-only mix before building the picture.

Step 5: Build in Remotion

- **Components:** one per character, prop and set piece. Story beats live as data in `story.json`.
- **Drawing:** watercolour fills via SVG turbulence and displacement filters, a multiply-blended paper texture, and boiling ink lines.
- **Motion craft:** anticipation before every big action, follow-through after, squash and stretch, springs for landings, arcs for every moving object, and no linear easing.
- **Acting:** the characters have to perform. Give them readable poses, holds where the audience needs to read a face, and timing that's funny.
- **Mouths:** mouth shapes driven by the voice track's loudness. They must be still when the character is silent.
- **Camera:** push-ins, a whip or a shake where it helps. Motivate every camera move.
- **Mix:** music, voices and sound effects on separate layers. Duck the music under dialogue.

7. Verification loops (do not skip any)

1. **Key-pose match:** at every key pose, render the frame and compare it side by side with its key art. Write what differs and fix it.
2. **Sound-off read:** render a silent cut. A fresh subagent that has seen nothing else reviews a contact sheet at 2 frames per second and retells the story. If it can't, the staging failed. Fix it and repeat.
3. **Sync check:** list every catch, landing, stamp and dialogue line with its actual frame vs its `timing.json` target. Everything must be within 1 frame.
4. **Fact check:** every word on screen and in dialogue, matched to `facts.json`. Cut anything unmatched.
5. **Technical:** duration exactly 20.0s, stereo audio, peaks below -1 dBFS, no unintended dead air.
6. **Director's review:**
 - Watch the whole film at least twice as frames.
 - Write a brutal critique as the most demanding motion designer you know: what feels assembled, what's slow, what doesn't land.
 - Fix the top 3 issues, then review again.
 - Only then hand it over, with a 10-frame contact sheet.

8. Package it as a skill

Save the full pipeline as `.claude/skills/launch-film/SKILL.md`, so that next time `"Make a launch film for [URL] about [idea]"` is enough.

The skill should include:

- The fact lock
- The treatment process
- The style bible as a reference file
- The key-art process with both image models
- Voice auditions
- Music and sound effects
- The timing map
- The reusable Remotion components
- Every verification loop

Approval gates

1. `facts.json` and the chosen treatment
2. Style bible, character sheets and key poses → ****wait for my approval****
3. Audio-only mix and `timing.json`
4. Final film, contact sheet and critique
5. Skill

Keep a task list throughout. At each gate, show me the work, not a description of it.