Hi,

My name is Michelle Ng. I would like to welcome you to Splash and specifically, to the Alice 3D Animation course.

During the beginning of class, I will ask you about your thoughts on animation. So please think about your favorite animated movies / games and be ready to share with our class.

For this course, I would like give an overview of how to use Alice to apply your creativity and learn problem solving skills. Of course, we will be working on creating animations too. Please remember to bring a USB key if you wish to make copy of your files - 512MB (1GB or more preferred) should be adequate to save your files.

Given the short period we have for this class, I will not be able to teach you everything. I hope to give you an introduction such that it will hopefully spark your interest to learn more about computer programming, animation and problem solving.

Also, I like to ask each of you to try and experience working with Alice (if you have a computer and able to download and install Alice). Please ask your parent/guardian or other trusted adults to help you. If you can't do it, it's not a big deal. I just want to give you a chance to get more acquainted before the weekend.

Alice is freely available for download here:
http://www.alice.org/index.php?page=downloads/download_alice

You are welcome to try the PC or Windows version (we will be using macs in the lab during class on Saturday).

To navigate through Alice, please do the following:

Note: The attached screenshots are examples on my machine, you may see something very different but the same concepts apply

1) Once Alice is installed, open the Alice application

2) Go to File > Open World, click on the Sample World tab

3) Select one of the world to open, Alice will take some time to render all the objects.

4) Once the world is set, you should see the world displayed (first screenshot attached - all objects are shown in the middle top panel). The actual program "code" is shown in the middle panel - feel free to take a look but don't worry about not understanding it right now. That's the main purpose of the class on Saturday.

5) Click on the "Add Objects" button, you will see that the local gallery objects are available (second screenshot attached). Try adding one of the animals into the world by dragging say a bunny into the middle panel.

Please click on the navigation buttons and test out the functions of moving an object around. These buttons have faces under "Move Objects Freely". And each button tells you what changes you should expect. When you are done, click on the "Done" button.

6) Click on the "Play" button on the upper left corner. You should see a new window pop up to run the animation (third screenshot attached). Try using the "Resume" "Pause", "Restart", "Stop" buttons. Adjust the speed bar to see whether it changes the speed of the animation. In some cases, you can use the arrow keys or move the mouse move the camera in the world.

7) If you have difficulty working with a "Sample World", then please feel free to work with the "Tutorials". Go to File > Open World, click on the Tutorials tab. Choose a tutorial to work with to get more familiar with the Alice interface.

Please feel free to play with Alice as much or as little as you can. Hopefully, you will enjoy your experience and see the similarity between your creation of Alice to other animations.

I can't wait to hear about your thoughts on animation and the Alice software. See you Saturday!

PS - I will be upload this email and other files to our class site and show you how to access it on Saturday.

Sincerely,
Michelle