LESSON PLAN

Level:	Grades 5-9
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Duration:	2-3 hours

Editing Emotion

This lesson is part of USE, UNDERSTAND & CREATE: A Digital Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools: http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/digital-literacy-framework.

Overview

In this lesson, students learn about the history of film editing and how shot composition, juxtaposition of images and the use of rhythm and repetition in film editing can affect the emotional impact of a film. Students begin by watching a video on the basics of film editing and answering questions to aid their comprehension. They then view and analyze a slideshow demonstrating basic ways in which the "building blocks" of film editing can affect a film's emotional impact, and discuss how this can affect a film's rating. Finally, students create their own film and/or storyboard, using the editing techniques they've learned to produce different emotional effects with the same collection of shots.

Learning Outcomes

Students will :

- Learn about the history and practice of film editing
- Understand how film editing can affect the emotional impact of a film
- Learn about film ratings
- Understand how the emotional impact of a film affects its rating
- Learn about and practice storyboarding
- Practice film editing
- Create and share a media product.

Preparation and Materials

Prepare to show the video *The Basics and Theory of Film Editing* (http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x9uvvj_the-film-lab-editing-the-basics-the_shortfilms).

Prepare to project the *Editing Emotion slideshow*

Photocopy the following handouts :

- *Video: The Basics and Theory of Film Editing* question sheet

- *Editing Emotion Assignment Sheet Junior Version* (for grades 5-6)

- *Editing Emotion Assignment Sheet Senior Version* (for grades 7-9)

- *Camera Shots*

- *Camera Moves*

- *Storyboard Template* (print multiple copies for each student)

Procedure

Optional: This lesson is based on the media literacy key concepts that all media are constructed and that each medium has a unique artistic form. To familiarize your students with these concepts, you may want to start the lesson by showing the Media 101 videos: *Media are constructions* and *Each medium has a unique aesthetic form*.

Who makes movies?

1. Ask students to name every person they can think of who's involved in making a movie (not a particular person's name but a job title -- actor, writer, director, etc.)

2. For each person named, ask the student to briefly explain what they think that person does. If, after five or so people have been named, nobody has suggested "editor," ask students what they think a film editor does. (Even if an "editor" has been named, students may be unclear on exactly what an editor's job is.)

3. Explain that **a film editor, in collaboration with the director, assembles shots into scenes and scenes into the final film**.

Introduction to Film Editing

Distribute the handout *Introduction to Film Editing*. Have students watch the "The Basics and Theory of Film Editing" video and answer questions 1-4 on the handout.

Take up the questions with the class except the last question: 5."How do you think editing can affect the mood or emotional impact of a scene?"

Emotion in Editing

Explain to students that the director and editor (along with other collaborators, such as the cinematographer) begin building elements of mood, rhythm and impact at the *storyboard* stage, when they plan out the *shots* that will eventually be filmed. A storyboard somewhat resembles a comic book. Each frame in a storyboard communicates not only what the camera is seeing but *how* it's seeing it -- how near or far away *(distance),* from what angle, how the camera may be *moving* during the shot and duration, how long the shot lasts (these last two would normally appear on a storyboard as notes under the image). These characteristics are referred to as the *composition* of the shot.

1. Project or distribute the first four slides of the *Editing Emotion* slideshow, pausing after each to ask what we know about the character we're seeing:

    a)   the first, neutral shot gives us little or no information;

    b)   the second, shot from above, could make him look weak or helpless, but also sympathetic;

    c)   the third, shot from below, might make him look powerful;

    d)   the fourth, shot in close-up, may make him look intense and determined.

2. Explain that the *arrangement* of the images is the beginning of the editor's work, communicating just as much as what's in each shot.

3. Show the sixth slide and point out that we now have the beginnings of the story: we don't know what the girl is thinking about, but it's definitely related to the cake; she's probably hungry.

4. Show the seventh slide and ask students what's going on. The story should be clear: the girl was sad, but is happy when she sees the cake. This is called a reaction shot, which tells the audience how to react emotionally to what we've just seen.

5. Show the eighth through tenth slides, which reverses the story. Point out that the two sequences use the exact same shots, but the *order* completely changes the meaning.

Now ask students: "How do you think editing can affect the mood or emotional impact of a scene?"

Make sure the following points come up:

a)   The *composition* of a shot can affect how we feel about the character(s) or what's happening.

b)   The *order* of the shots can affect what we think the story is and how we feel about it.

c)   *Reaction shots* can affect how we think a character is feeling.

Explain that in longer sequences of shots, *rhythm* also becomes important for setting a mood or communicating an emotion.

6. Show the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth slides and explain to students that hiding the knife from the viewer's sight in slide 11 when the knife is hidden, the object becomes more important. Cutting to the cake in slide 13 relieves the tension by showing why he needed the knife. Ask students what the effect might be if there were a different image instead of the cake.

7. Show slides 14-16 and ask students how the scene "reads" differently when we cut to a close-up of the girl's eyes instead of the cake. Is the tension broken as it was when we saw the cake, or increased? How do you think the girl is reacting when she sees the knife?

Ratings and Editing

Ask students how the emotional effects of editing can influence a movie's *film rating*. If students aren't familiar with the idea of film ratings, explain to them that each province has a method for rating films to help parents decide whether or not their children should watch them.

Film ratings include the minimum age at which it's considered appropriate for a child to see a film, as well as more specific information about content that might make the film inappropriate for particular children. As an example, explain to students that the Régie du Cinéma Québec, considers both the *content* of a film (violence, sexuality, etc.) and the way in which that content is *delivered* when it rates a movie, including the "impact of editing, sound and special effects," because these can make the *emotional impact* of a scene or film much more powerful.

Assessment/Evaluation Task: Editing Emotion

There are two versions of this task, one for grades 5-6 and one for grades 7-9. For both versions, you may choose to have students simply complete a storyboard or continue working further to complete it as a film project.

Grades 5-6

1. Divide the class into groups of 3-4 students and distribute the handouts *Editing Emotion Assignment Sheet (Junior), Camera Shots* and *Storyboard Template*.

2. Explain to students that they will be creating a storyboard and/or film that will use the *arrangement* of shots and the *order* of shots to create two works with very distinct emotional effects, one a comedy and one a suspense film.

3. Following the instructions on the assignment sheet, students will sketch **five shots** which must include:
    a)   An **action shot** of a character doing something
    b)   A **reaction shot** showing a character's emotion
    c)   A **detail shot** of an object or location

4. Once these five shots have been sketched, students will complete two more storyboards, one for a comedic film and one for a suspenseful film. Both of these must use the same five shots already sketched, but students may change:
    a)   The **order** in which the shots occur
    b)   The **composition** of each individual shots (a neutral shot might be done as a low-angle shot for one film and a high-angle shot in the other, for example, or the same shot might be a close-up in one film and long-shot in another)

5. Depending on time and technical constraints, you may have students submit their storyboards or continue further to film them.

Grades 7-9

1. Divide the class into groups of 3-4 students and distribute the handouts *Editing Emotion Assignment Sheet (Senior), Camera Shots* and *Storyboard Template*.

2. Explain to students that they will be creating a storyboard and/or film that will use *shot composition, arrangement* of *shots*, the *order* of shots and *rhythm* and *repetition* to create two works with very distinct emotional effects.

3. Following the instructions on the assignment sheet, have students sketch **ten shots** which they will use in both films. Once these ten shots have been sketched, students will complete **two** more storyboards, each with its own distinct tone or mood. Students may pick from the following tones:
    a)   Funny (like a comedy)

b)   Suspenseful (like a thriller)

c)   Sad (like a drama)

d)   Scary (like a horror movie)

e)   Exciting (like an action movie)

Both of the films will use at least seven of the shots already sketched, but students may change:

a)   The **order** in which the shots occur

b)   The **composition** of each individual shots (a neutral shot might be done as a low-angle shot for one film and a high-angle shot in the other, for example, or the same shot might be a close-up in one film and long-shot in another)

c)   The **duration** of each shot (how long it lasts before cutting to the next shot)

If your students produce short films, end the lesson by screening the films and have students discuss how and how well each film communicates its tone.

Video: *The Basics and Theory of Film Editing*

Question Sheet

Answer the following questions in the space below.

1. How is editing important to the success of comedic and dramatic films?

2. How is the invention of film editing connected to the beginning of storytelling in films?

3. How does the Kuleshov effect use film editing to communicate meaning?

4. How does a montage, such as the one in the film Rocky, use a small number of shots to tell a larger story?

5. How do you think editing can affect the mood or emotional impact of a scene?

Editing Emotion Assignment Sheet (Junior)

For this assignment you will be creating a storyboard and/or film that will, like the examples you've just seen, use *shot composition, arrangement* of shots (the Kuleshov effect) and the *order* of shots to create two works with very distinct emotional effects, one a comedy and one a suspense film.

1. Use the *Storyboard Template* to sketch **five shots** to use in making two different films.

2. For each shot, consider:

    a) The **angle** of the shot: Is it **level, low-angle** (looking up at the character) or **high-angle**?

    b) The **distance** of the shot: Is it a **long shot** (where all of a character can be seen), a **medium shot** (generally from the waist up or shoulders up), a two-shot (a medium shot broad enough to show two characters), or a **close-up** (usually just a person's face, or even closer for an **extreme close-up**)?

3. Once you've sketched out these five shots you'll complete two more storyboards: one for a comedic film and one for a suspenseful film. Both of these will use the same five shots already sketched, but you may change:

    a) The order in which the shots occur

    b) The **composition** of each individual shots (a neutral shot might be done as a low-angle shot for one film and a high-angle shot in the other, for example, or the same shot might be a close-up in one film and long-shot in another)

4. Make sure to **label** each shot in all three storyboards with a brief description of what is happening in the shot and the angle, distance and movement (if any).

Editing Emotion Assignment Rubric

	Insufficient	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Knowledge and Understanding	Film/ storyboard shows little or no understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.).	Film/ storyboard shows a beginning understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.).	Film/storyboard shows a developing understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.).	Film/storyboard shows a competent understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.).	Film/ storyboard shows a confident understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.).
Inquiry and Analysis	Film/ storyboard shows little or no insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact.	Film/storyboard shows a beginning insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact.	Film/storyboard shows some insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact.	Film/storyboard shows significant insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact.	Film/ storyboard shows considerable insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact.
Application of Skills and Knowledge	Film/ storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with little or no effectiveness to produce the desired tone.	Film/storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with a small degree of effectiveness to produce the desired tone.	Film/storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with some effectiveness to produce the desired tone.	Film/storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with significant or no effectiveness to produce the desired tone.	Film/ storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with considerable effectiveness to produce the desired tone.

Editing Emotion Assignment Sheet (Senior)

For this assignment you will be creating a storyboard and/or film that will, like the examples you've just seen, use *shot composition*, *arrangement* of shots (the Kuleshov effect) the *order* of shots and *rhythm and repetition* to create two works with very distinct emotional effects, one a comedy and one a suspense film.

1. Use the *Storyboard Template* to sketch **ten shots** which must include:
   a) An **action shot** of a character doing something
   b) A **reaction shot** showing a character's emotion
   c) A **detail shot** of an object or location

2. For each shot, consider:
   a) The **angle** of the shot: is it **level, low-angle** (looking up at the character) or **high-angle**?
   b) The **distance** of the shot: is it a **long shot** (where all of a character can be seen), a **medium shot** (generally from the waist up or shoulders up), a **two-shot** (a medium shot broad enough to show two characters), or a **close-up** (usually just a person's face, or even closer for an **extreme close-up**)?
   c) Any **camera movement** in the shot (a **zoom** that brings the camera nearer to or further from the character, a **pan** that moves from side to side, or a **tracking shot** that moves the camera through space).

3. Once you've sketched out these five shots you'll complete two more storyboards, each with one of the following tones:
   a) Funny (like a comedy)
   b) Suspenseful (like a thriller)
   c) Sad (like a drama)
   d) Scary (like a horror movie)
   e) Exciting (like an action movie)

   Both of these will use **at least seven** of the ten shots you sketched, but you can change:

   • The **order** in which the shots occur

   • The **composition** of each individual shots (a neutral shot might be done as a low-angle shot for one film and a high-angle shot in the other, for example, or the same shot might be a close-up in one film and long-shot in another)

   • The **duration** of each shot (how long it lasts before cutting to the next shot)

   Make sure to **label** each shot in all three storyboards with a brief description of what is happening in the shot and the angle, distance, duration and movement (if any).

Editing Emotion Assignment Rubric

	Insufficient	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Knowledge and Understanding	Film/ storyboard shows little or no understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.)	Film/storyboard shows a beginning understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.)	Film/storyboard shows a developing understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.)	Film/storyboard shows a competent understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.)	Film/ storyboard shows a confident understanding of the elements of film editing (angle, distance, movement, etc.)
Inquiry and Analysis	Film/ storyboard shows little or no insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact	Film/storyboard shows a beginning insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact	Film/storyboard shows some insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact	Film/storyboard shows significant insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact	Film/ storyboard shows considerable insight into the effects of editing on tone, mood and emotional impact
Application of Skills and Knowledge	Film/ storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with little or no effectiveness to produce the desired tone	Film/storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with a small degree of effectiveness to produce the desired tone	Film/storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with some effectiveness to produce the desired tone	Film/storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with significant or no effectiveness to produce the desired tone	Film/ storyboard applies editing techniques (angle, distance, movement, etc.) with considerable effectiveness to produce the desired tone

Camera Shots

A television program is made up of thousands of pictures, called shots. Each shot must be carefully planned. To make television programs more interesting, various types of shots are used.

Camera Distance

There are three main shots describing how near or far the camera is from the subject.

1. A **close-up** shows only one part of the subject, usually in great detail. Close-ups would include shots of a person's face, the paws of a dog walking down a path, a hand on a doorbell, or a tree branch.

2. A picture showing half of the subject, such as a character from the waist up or the back end of a car, is a **medium shot**.

3. A **long shot** shows the whole subject: a person from head to foot or the entire car. Any of these shots can show one subject or more at the same time.

These three shots are used for specific reasons. An **establishing shot** at the beginning of a scene tells viewers where they are; for example, a long shot of a car driving up to a hotel or a close-up of a sign for a restaurant. To show the effect of one person's words or actions on the other people in the scene, a **reaction shot** is used.

In general, television is a close-up medium: things look better in close-up because the screen is small. However, mixing the shots provides variety and gives information needed to keep the story moving.

Camera Angle

The angle from which a shot is taken is another way to give variety as well as information.

1. A **high-angle shot** positions the camera above eye level, looking down on the subject, which consequently appears insignificant, weak, helpless or small according to how extreme the angle is.

2. At **eye level**, the impression is neutral.

3. A **low-angle shot** has the camera looking up at the subject, which then appears important, powerful or domineering, again depending on how exaggerated the angle is.

4. Usually the camera focuses on the subject, but occasionally the camera shows what the subject is seeing. This is a **reverse-angle shot**.

Camera Moves

Another way to give television programs variety is for the camera to move.

1.   When the camera changes its position by moving left or right, it is called **tracking or trucking**.

2.   Changing the camera's position by moving it forward or backward is known as **dollying.**

3.   When the camera stays in the same position but turns left or right, it is referred to as **panning**, and when it turns up or down, it is known as **tilting**.

4.   Even when the camera is stationary and not turning, it can appear to move closer to or farther from its subject; by using a special ring or lever on the lens, the cameraperson can **zoom in or out**.

Although these moves are useful, they should not be overused or they will lose their impact. In fact, any camera movement must be planned and rehearsed so that it will be smooth and in tune with the action.
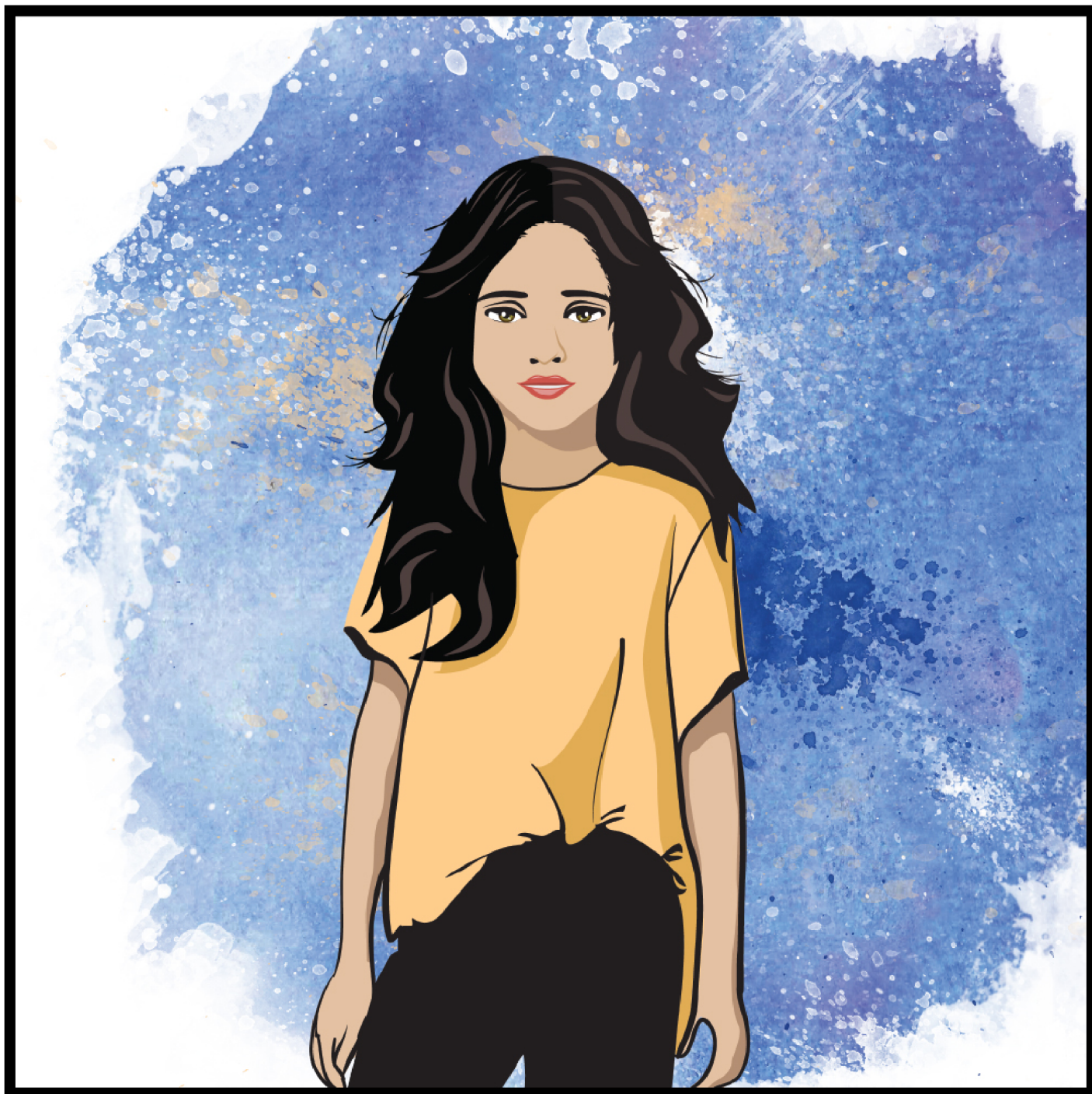
Illustration 1
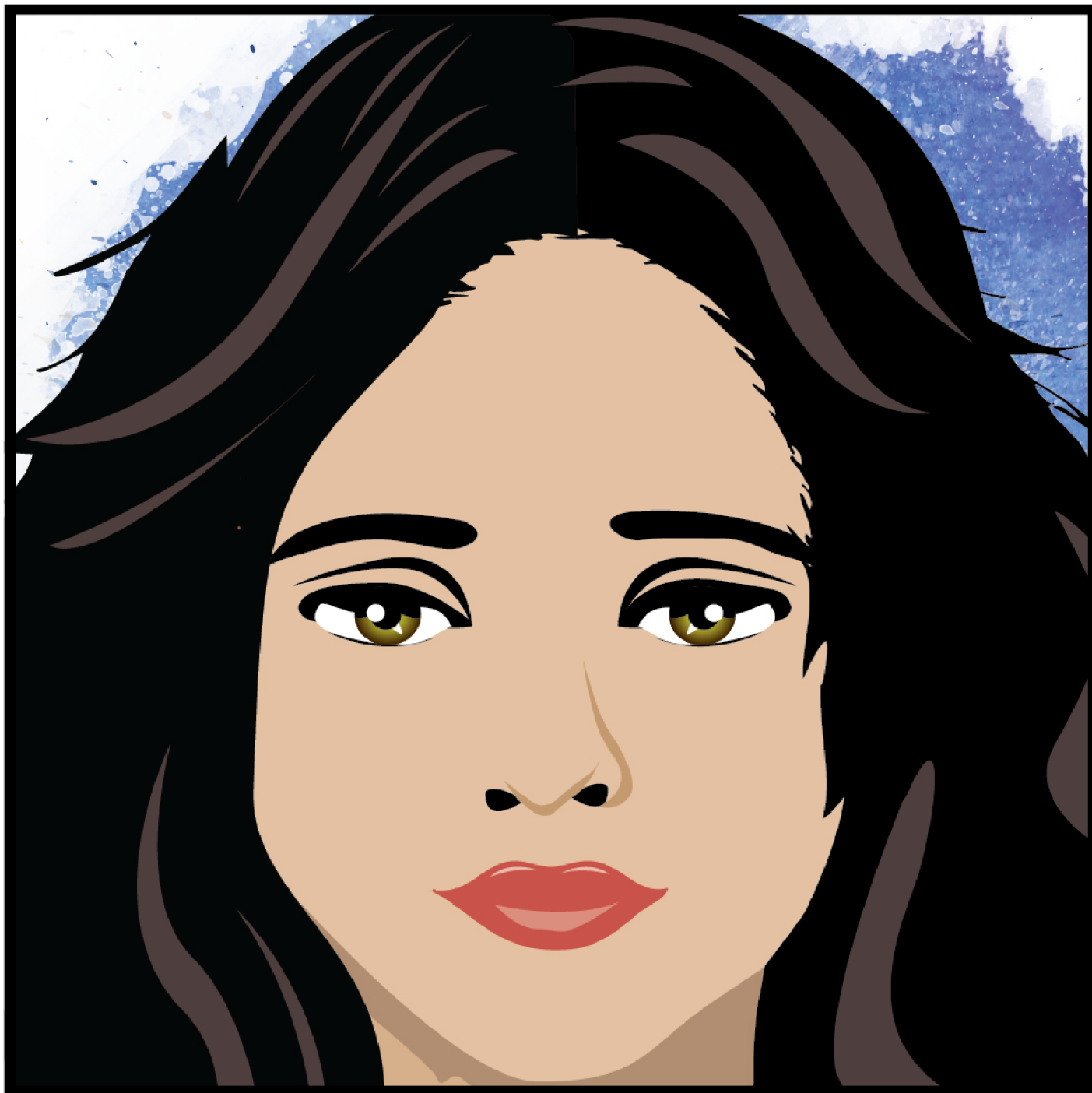Neutral Face

Illustration 2
From Above

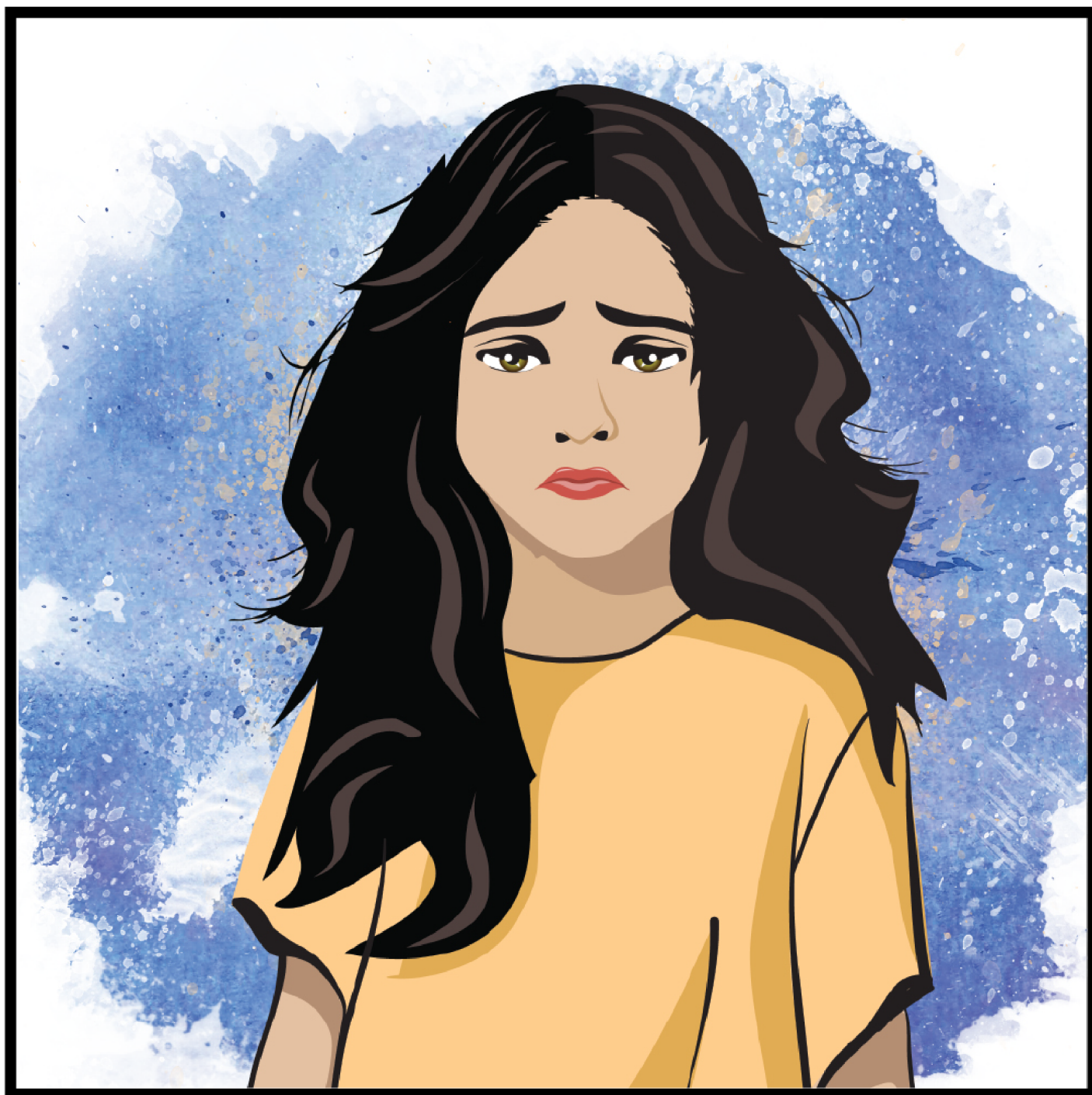**Illustration 3**
From Below

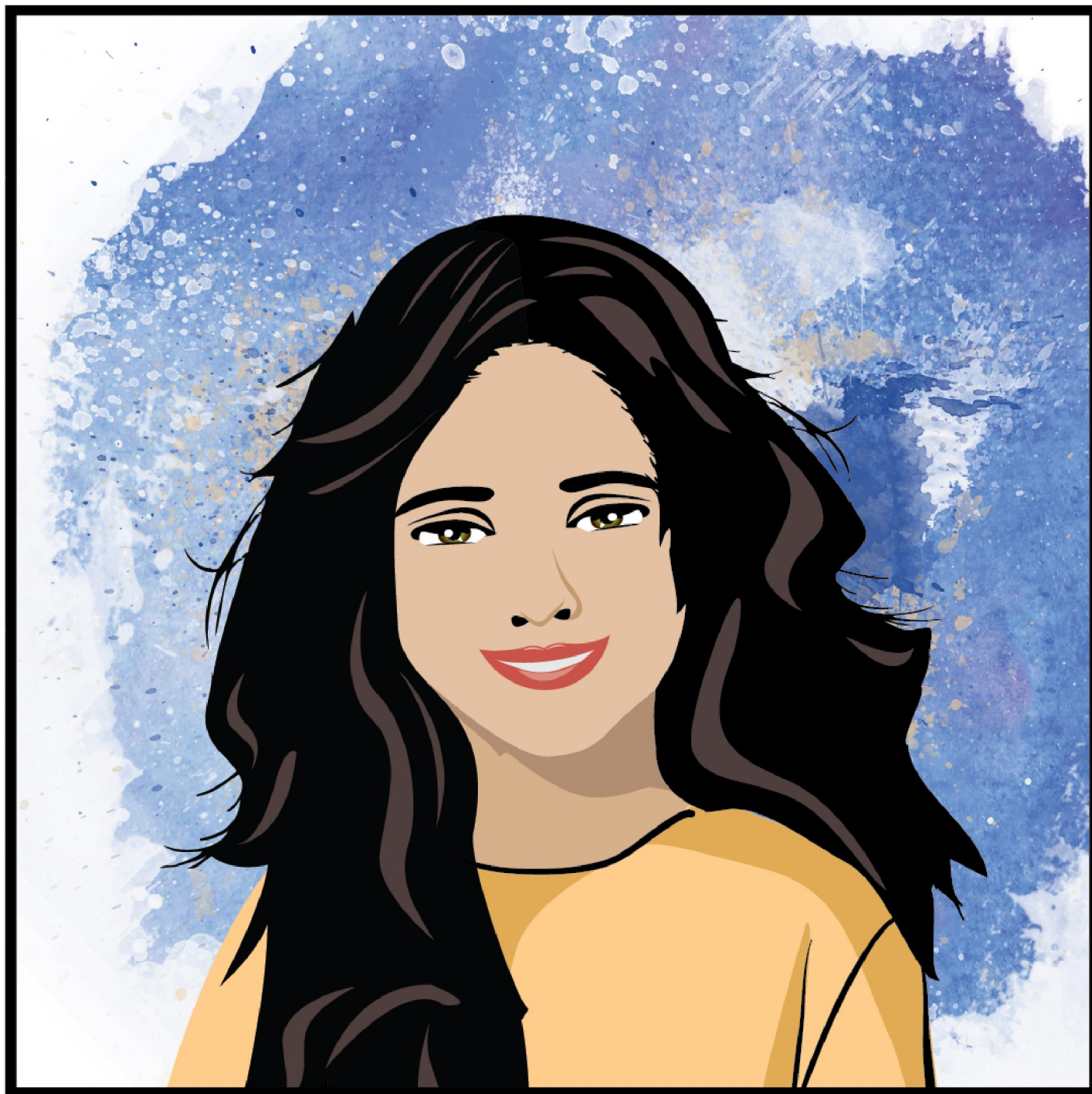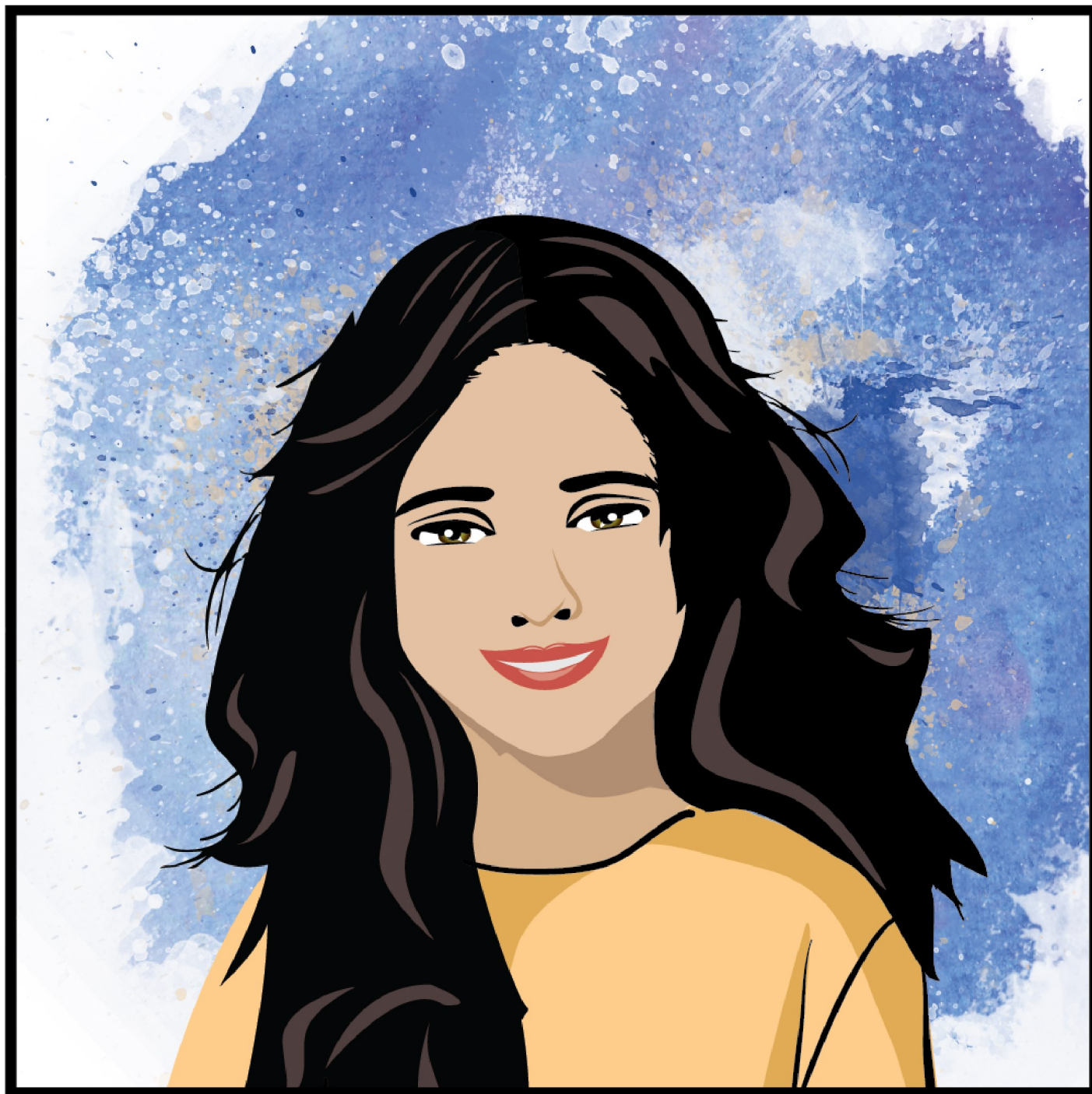**Illustration 4**
Close-up

Storyboards for the Production:_____   Page ____ of ____

Shot # ____
Action: _____
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Notes: _____
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Shot # ____
Action: _____
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Notes: _____
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