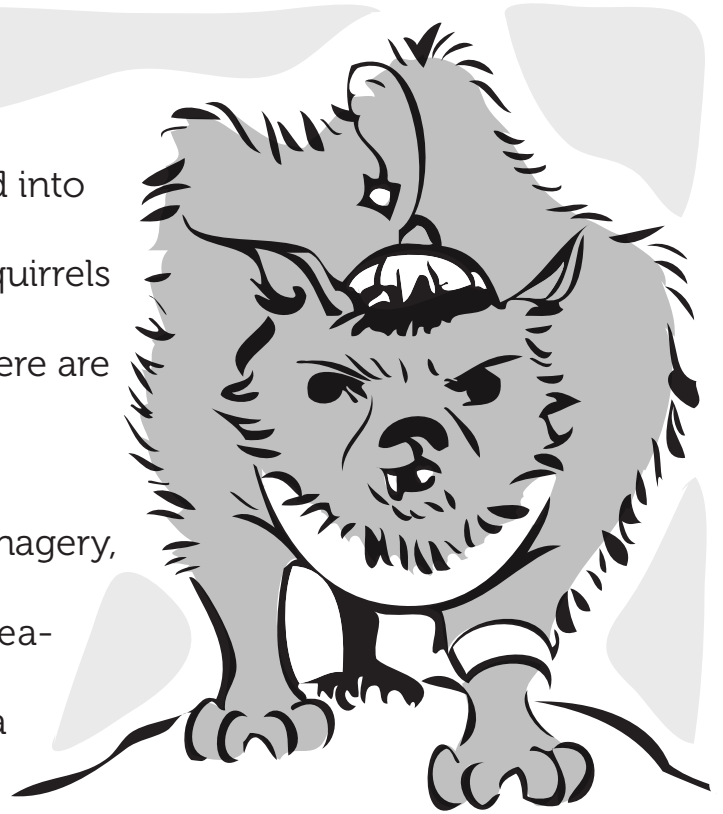


Cinema Magic: CGI

It's hard to forget the squirrels that turned into scary squogres in the magical land of Terabithia. Did you know that all the squirrels in the movie were pre-recorded and digitally added in? This is because there are no squirrels in New Zealand, where the movie was filmed.

Thanks to CGI, or computer-generated imagery, filmmakers can now realistically bring to life the wildest, most stunning creatures imaginable. CGI can change and add anything from weather elements to a crowd of thousands to action sequences like a city bursting into flames.



A movie's CGI can be made by a team of artists or just one person performing multiple roles. It starts with the artist drawing something, like a squogre, on a computer. She then "sculpts" it in 3-D using a sophisticated computer program. At this point, the squogre is like a clay statue, three-dimensional but gray.

Next, the artist uses a computer program to paint the squogre, a complex process that involves not just choosing colors but also textures—is it bumpy or smooth, shiny or dull, transparent or opaque? All these things change around as light hits and bounces off the creature in different ways.

Even though the squogre isn't a real creature, the artist must make it move like one in order for it to look realistic. That means creating its bone and muscle structure and accounting for things like gravity, even in a digital space. (After all, the squogre can't fly through the air like a paper airplane.) Finally, the artist expertly blends the squogre into the scene so you can't tell it apart from the real things and people!



(CONTINUED)

Cinema Magic: CGI

Use this chart to jot down 5 instances from the film you think may be CGI.

Identify: This box is for the thing, place, or event you suspect is computer generated.

Verify: Look it up on-line to check, or state what gave it away.

Think: Maybe it was cost, danger, weather; what's your opinion for why they went CGI?

IDENTIFY (WHAT IS IT?)					
VERIFY (IS IT CGI?)	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO
THINK (WHY DO YOU THINK THE FILMMAKERS CHOSE CGI?)					

