Making animations is very simple.
Make a clone of the objects you want to animate. Uncheck export geometry in W3D Settings and hiracially link the orginal objects to their clones.
You have the frames bar at the bottom of the screen. Use the time configuration button towards the bottom right to set the timescale, frame count etc.
All your objects are in position at frame 0. Lets say you want your plant to sway back and forth. It should now look like it's leaning one way at the end of a sway, like it's leaning left.
Move the frame slider to the middle frame and press the animate button. It should turn red.
Rotate the clones, the original objects should turn with them. Rotate things untill the plant is leaning right. Press the Animate button again so it's no longer red.
Move the frame slider to the end and click Animate again so it's red.
Rotate the clones again so the plant leans left again, just how it was in Frame 0.
Press the animate button again so it's not red. Move the slider back to 0 and press the play button, see if your animation is any good.
If it spins round in circles instead of swaying, move the slider inbetween the first frame and the middle frame and hit animate so it's red. Rotate the clones untill the plant stands upright. Do the same at the midpoint between the middle and end frames.
Press play again and the plant should sway left to right and back again.

A few things to note, if you move objects when the Animate button is not pressed, it could drastically effect all the other frames in the animation. Also when somthing is moved while the animate button is pressed it creates a key for that object on that frame in the time bar (looks like a blue box), and the animation will automatically attempt to place the object in it's keys position and rotation on that frame. Always make sure you check the status of the animation button before moving anything!
Also, the only things you can modify in this sort of animation is position and rotation. You cannot modify the shape of the object during the animation. This wont work in Renegade without a WWskin.
That sort of animation requires use the WWskin and a lot more bones, very similar to tank treads.

Hope that helps