

Visual Expression of Local Identities

Duration	Age	Difficulty
45-60 min	17-18	Medium
#ExpressYourIdentity #LocalArt		

DESCRIPTION

In this activity, students will explore their local identity through digital art. After investigating cultural or gastronomic elements of their region (such as symbols, architecture, cuisine, rituals, local figures), each student/group creates a digital visual composition that represents that identity. In addition to the technical design component, the activity promotes critical thinking about gender representations, invisible traditions and the role of women in local cultures. The final product will be shared in class or online, with an emphasis on visual expression as a form of cultural communication.

KEY COMPETENCES (EU)

- Digital competence
- Social and civic competence
- Cultural awareness and expression
- Competence to learn how to learn

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

- Explore the concept of local identity and artistic expression.
- Create a visual composition that communicates local cultural / gastronomic elements.
- Use free digital tools (e.g. Canva, Pixlr, Photopea) to create graphic art.
- To develop skills of visual communication and cultural literacy.
- Encourage gender inclusion and representation in visual representations.

- Provided by students
- Provided by the teacher/institution
- Downloadable Elements

MATERIALS



Notebook



Pencil



Computer with internet connection



Free account canva



Access to tutorials





PREVIOUS PREPARATION

- Divide students into groups of 2-3.
- Quick presentation of local visual references (gastronomy, architecture, crafts, festivities). Creation of shared folders online to save work.
- Discuss the question: "If you had to represent your hometown with an image, what would you include?"

CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ADAPTATION

Local identity is made up of a set of symbolic and cultural expressions that define a people. In this activity, students will have to think critically about what constitutes their identity and who represents it.

Examples to reflect on:

- Are there female or minority elements in the representations of my land?
- How do popular traditions express or silence certain groups?

 Tip: Encourage students to avoid stereotypes and seek cultural essence with an inclusive and creative perspective.

 The teacher gives the groups 3 minutes to respond verbally:

"List 5 things that only exist or are special in your country."

Examples: Typical gastronomy; Monuments; Popular phrases; Well-known people; Local colors or patterns.

Classroom activity

In small groups, students brainstorm elements that represent their local culture: What typical dishes do we know? | Are there monuments or festivals that define us? | What proverbs or popular expressions do we use?

Challenge: Create a list of 5 visual symbols that represent our land.

Each group presents their ideas and explains why these elements were chosen.

Note for the teacher

Ensure that all students, especially girls, actively participate in both technical tasks and leadership roles. This approach promotes inclusion, combats stereotypes, and reinforces gender equity in STEAM activities.





ACTIVITY

Step 1 – Cultural Research (10 min)

Each group identifies 3 to 5 visual elements linked to their community or neighborhood (e.g. tiles, religious symbols, festivals, local personalities). They can use:

1. Images from the internet
2. Quick interviews with family members
3. Cell phone photos
4. Research on representations of minorities (elderly people, immigrants, local artists)

Suggestion: Present 2 real images on the sheet as a reference.

Examples:





Step 2 – Planning and Storytelling (10 min)

Record in the “Identity” worksheet

1. Visual elements to represent
2. Main message (linked to cultural or inclusion values)
3. Short biographical note of the chosen woman
4. Sketch of digital composition and project title

Step 3 - Creating visual art in Canva (20–25 min)

1. Access to: https://www.canva.com/pt_pt/
2. Click on “Register” (top right corner).



3. You can use in the registration:
 - Google account (e.g. school account)
 - Email and password
4. Check your email to confirm your account.

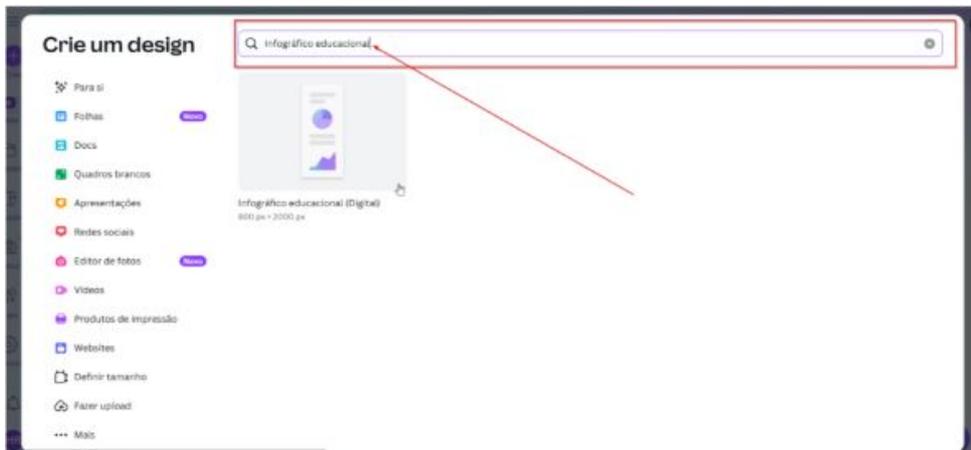


CREATE A DESIGN

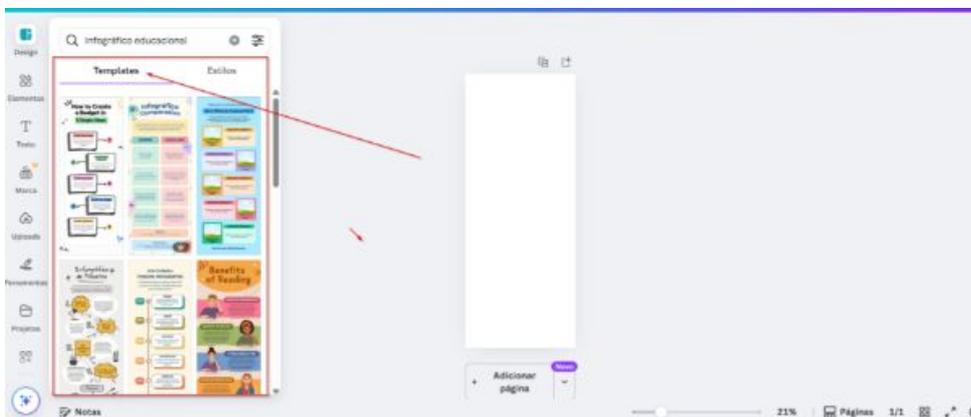
1. After logging into your account, click on “Create a design”



2. You will have several options, search for “Educational infographic”.

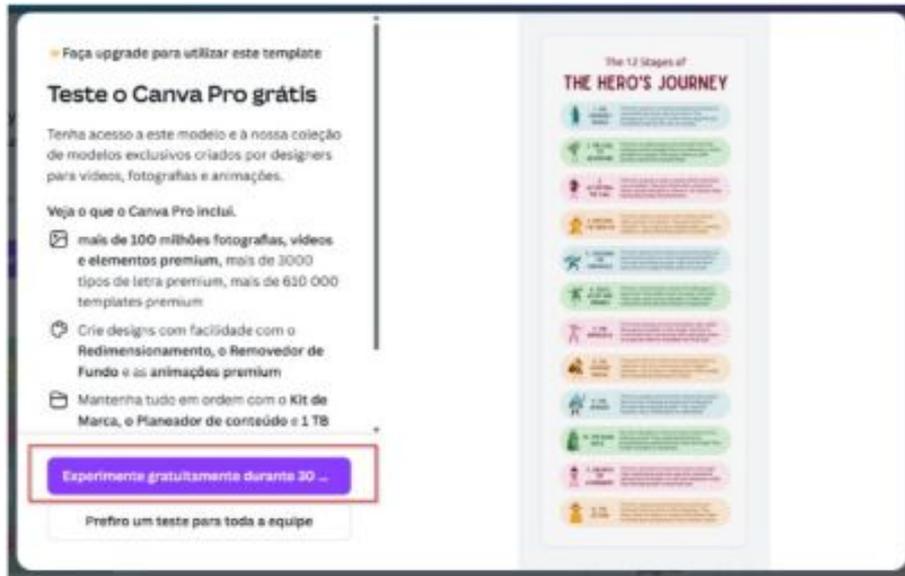


3. You will have several templates that you can choose and edit, choose a template to use in a group

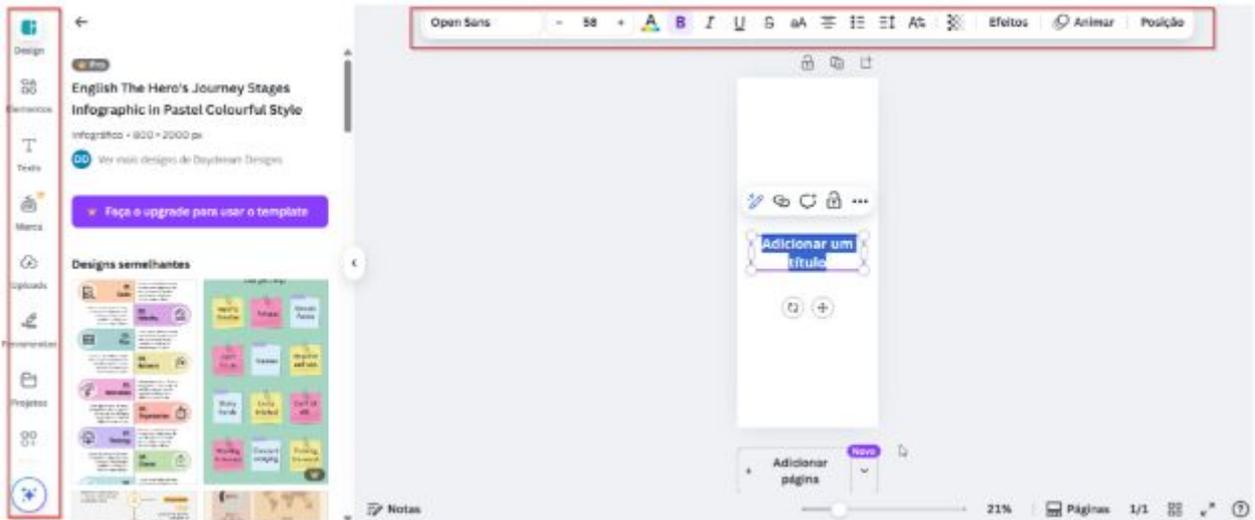




4. You can use existing templates but you will need to activate the 30-day free trial option:



5. Or create your template from scratch using the tools found on the platform:



6. You must present the following content in a clear and attractive manner:

- ✓ Title
- ✓ Representative visual elements
- ✓ Diversity inclusion(gender, generation, culture)
- ✓ Short message about what it represents



Example card:

In the end, your infographic should be easy to read, coherent and visually balanced.

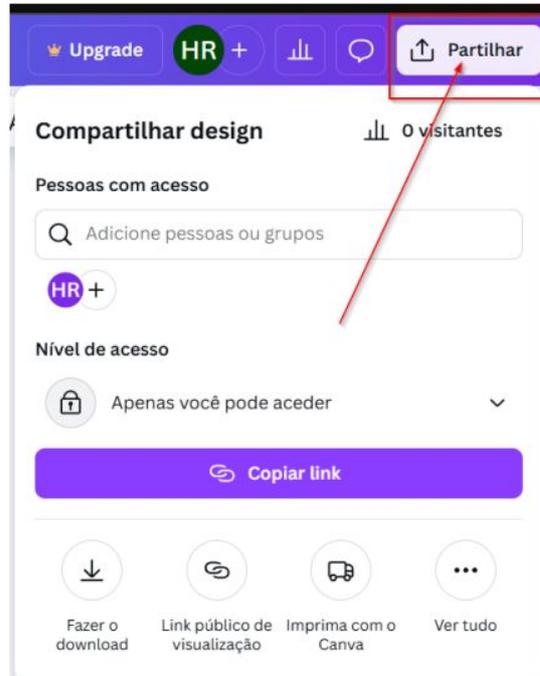
Express Your Identity



Embrace what makes you unique.



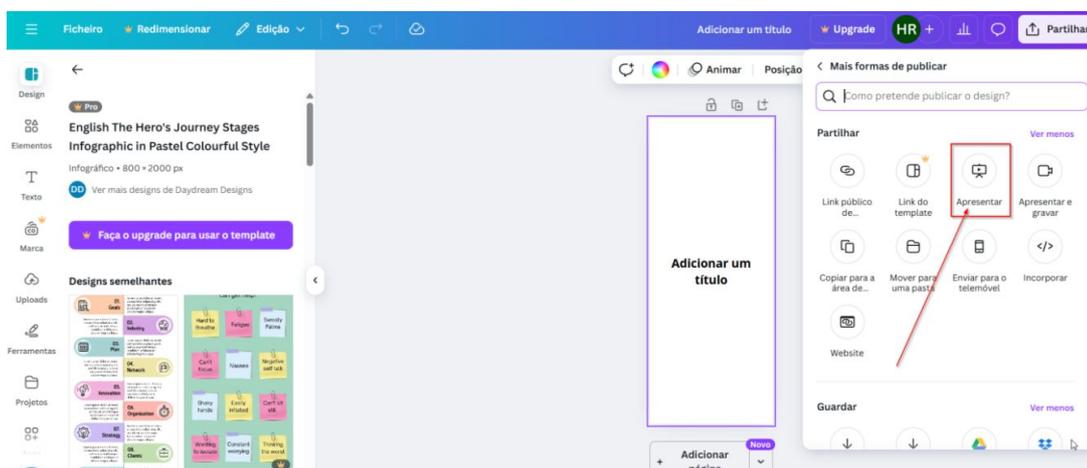
Exchange the map with another group to get structured feedback



Based on feedback, implement opportunities for improvement in design or content

STEP 4: PRESENTATION AND REFLECTION (20 minutes)

Use the “Present” function to present your work in class.



Each group presents their creation to the class, explaining their graphic and cultural choices.



CONCLUSION AND SHARING

1. After presenting the maps, lead a final reflection with the whole class:

- Which representations were most unexpected?
- What was left to represent?



2. The works can be displayed at school or published on the school's social networks with hashtags such as:

- #ExpressYourIdentity
- #LocalArt
- #STEMbrace

3. Students can create a slogan:

“My land is color, flavor and memory.”

Don't forget to take a photo of your experience and share it with us!



[LinkedIn](#)



[Instagram](#)



[X](#)



PROJECT EVALUATION

Activity Objectives	Key Competences (EU)	Evaluation Criteria
Explore the concept of local identity and artistic expression.	Cultural awareness and expression	The student correctly identifies symbols and visual elements that represent the chosen culture/location.
Create a visual composition that communicates local cultural or gastronomic elements.	Digital competence and cultural expression	The final work presents a clear, coherent and visually attractive graphic design, effectively conveying the local identity.
Use free digital tools to create simple, expressive graphic art.	Digital competence	The student demonstrates basic mastery of an online graphics tool (Canva, Pixlr, etc.), applying its resources in a functional way.
Develop skills of visual communication and cultural literacy.	Social and civic competence	The student clearly justifies his/her visual choices in the presentation and relates the elements to the culture local.
Represent diversity and inclusion in your visual creations.	Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship	The final work represents different local identities (gender, ethnicities, generations) in a respectful and inclusive way.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- Canva: www.canva.com
- Local artist example: www.joanavasconcelos.com
- STEAMbrace: www.instagram.com/steambrace_eu/

