



TOOLBOX OF RESOURCES

SEQUENCE 11: Editing and adapting images for narrative use (e.g. GIMP)

Target: Educators, Youth Workers, Trainers

Estimated duration: 60 minutes

Context: Formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts

Materials: tables, chairs, with blackboard/virtual board, computers etc., GIMP app

Activities can be carried out individually, collaboratively, or in facilitated settings, depending on the educational context and participants' needs.

1. OBJECTIVES

In addition to texts that spark curiosity and interest, Adventure Books need illustrations that not only enhance and complement the story but also provide support and a point of reference for readers with learning difficulties. Images have the power to illustrate and create logical connections.

Therefore, including images in the text is essential. Not everyone feels confident in being artistically talented, but there are many applications and AI tools available today that can help us.

The primary objective of this sequence is to support participants in technically adapting visual elements created in previous sequences (especially [Sequence 10](#)) using simple digital tools (e.g. GIMP), in order to make them functional, accessible and ready for integration into an Interactive Adventure Book.

In this sequence, images are not treated as decorative elements, but as tools to support understanding, decision-making and engagement within the story, in line with the educational objectives of the project.

At the end of the sequence, participants will be able to:

- create and adapt images, ensuring visual consistency throughout the story;



- create images that are understandable and accessible, even for participants with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD);
- use visual elements to support narrative comprehension and highlight key moments, choices, and consequences within the story;
- understand the value and narrative role of images, beyond their aesthetic quality;
- create images with transparent backgrounds useful for book layout (N.B.: this is a technical aspect that concerns specific programs such as GIMP).

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SEQUENCE

Illustrations serve to complement the text, providing visual support that highlights and clarifies what has just been read. Illustrations enrich the text, allowing the reader to recognize characters, understand situations, follow the development of the story, and orient themselves in their choices, thus playing a crucial role.

In an Interactive Adventure Book, visuals also support user navigation and decision-making, helping readers understand situations, anticipate consequences, and engage more deeply with the narrative.

This sequence focuses on editing and adapting visual elements already created ([Sequence 10](#)) in order to make them usable in a digital and interactive storytelling environment (e.g. Twine, Genially).

At this stage, the goal is not to create complex illustrations, but to obtain images that are:

- recognizable and consistent (the same character must be similar in different scenes);
- functional to the understanding of the story;
- suitable for different formats and educational needs;
- clear and readable, reducing cognitive load especially for learners with SLD;
- aligned with the climate narrative, helping to visualise environmental challenges, actions, and consequences.



Digital tools such as GIMP, Canva or Pixlr are used as practical instruments to adapt images, without shifting the focus away from storytelling and learning objectives (for full technical guidance, see [Tutorial 5](#)).

2.1. Expected output

At the end of the sequence, each group or participants should produce:

- a main visual element (e.g., a character or a key element of the story);
- two or three consistent variations of the same character (e.g., performing different actions or displaying different expressions and situations);
- the images created will be ready for digital use (e.g., in PNG format with a transparent background);
- a set of visual elements that clearly support narrative understanding and help users interpret key moments, choices, and consequences within the story.

After creating one character, proceed with creating the others and the scenes needed to illustrate the entire story. The materials created will be used to produce the digital Adventure book.

3. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Activity 1 - Selecting and checking a scene to illustrate

Duration: 10 min

Learners identify the various scenes to be illustrated in the text, selecting one of them, a character, an object, or a setting. Initially, they can start with something very simple.

With the support of the educator, they reflect on:

- clarity and visual legibility;
- consistency of the image with the story;
- need for adjustments (cropping, simplification, background transparency);
- at a later stage, it will also be important to consider consistency with the climate theme.



- how the image helps the reader understand the situation, the problem, or a decision point.

A short checklist can facilitate this phase.

Activity 2 - Adapting images for narrative purposes

Duration: 30 min

Participants work on the selected image to make it more suitable for the Adventure Book.

Activities may include:

- conceptualization, creation, and proportioning;
- simplification of details to improve readability;
- creation of a transparent background;
- production of multiple consistent versions of the same image.
- highlighting key elements that support understanding (e.g., environmental risks, actions, or consequences).

Participants are encouraged to reflect on how visual elements guide the reader's understanding and support decision-making within the story.

The main goal is to obtain usable and consistent images, not technical perfection.

For optional technical guidance on basic image editing (e.g. GIMP), see [Annex 1](#). This annex provides step-by-step support for educators and learners who need additional technical assistance. It is not required to complete the sequence and should be used only as complementary support to the learning activities.

Activity 3 - Preparing images for digital integration

Duration: 15–20 min

Prepare images for use on digital platforms:

- exporting them in the most suitable formats (e.g., PNG);
- naming the files clearly and consistently;
- checking compatibility with interactive tools (Twine, Genially);
- testing images within the final interactive environment (e.g. Twine, Genially) to ensure usability, clarity and readability.



Activity 4 - Presentation

Duration: 10 min

Each group briefly presents an adapted image and explains:

- what the image represents;
- how it supports the reader's understanding or choices;
- how the visual communicates the climate challenge or a specific decision/consequence;
- what changes were made during editing.

5. HOW TO APPLY THESE ACTIVITIES IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL CONTEXTS

Formal education contexts (e.g. school)

- creative workshops focused on visual storytelling;
- guided digital editing sessions;
- teacher-led demonstrations followed by individual practice;
- integration into ICT or digital literacy modules.

Non-formal and informal contexts (youth work, community settings)

- creative workshops focused on visual storytelling;
- collaborative editing workshops;
- peer support and experimentation;
- group reflection on how visuals influence understanding, engagement and interpretation of the story.

6. ADAPTATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SLD

Although images provide additional support for understanding, in order to ensure inclusion and accessibility, it is recommended to:

- use simple, high-contrast images;
- reduce unnecessary visual elements;
- maintain a consistent graphic style throughout the story;
- allow the use of images as an alternative to text;



- offer guided choices (color palettes, predefined templates);
- allow more time for adaptation activities;
- use images to reduce cognitive load by making key information immediately visible and easier to process;
- prioritise clarity over visual complexity.

7. RELATED TUTORIALS

- [Tutorial 5 - Using Digital & Multimedia Tools for Storytelling](#) - for more detailed technical guidance on tools such as GIMP, Canva and multimedia integration. (Note: this sequence focuses on applying these tools to support storytelling and learning objectives)



ANNEX 1

OPTIONAL TECHNICAL GUIDE - BASIC IMAGE EDITING WITH GIMP

This annex provides optional technical support for basic image editing using GIMP. It is designed to support [Sequence 11](#) and should be used only when additional technical guidance is needed.

It is not required to complete the sequence and does not aim to teach the full use of the software, but only basic actions needed to prepare visual elements for storytelling.

HOW TO CREATE AND EDIT CHARACTERS AND IMAGES USING GIMP

To provide a concrete example of how to use the suggested tools, here is some practical information for GIMP.

There are countless programs (Canva, AI) that can be used to easily create many images (landscapes, animals, cars, trees, etc.) for free, but illustrating a story requires some skill and attention to detail.

In the context of the Adventure Book, the objective is not artistic perfection, but clarity, consistency and usefulness for the reader.

For example, it is important to maintain consistency in the development of the same character across different situations, expressions, and movements throughout the story - it is essential that they always look similar.



Figure 1: an example created with Gimp's Paths tool. A girl with short hair, wearing a blue shirt and black pants, performing various actions: the first figure is running, the second is reading a book, and the third is crying (face shown from the side).



The following steps show simple ways to edit or create visual elements that can be used in the story.

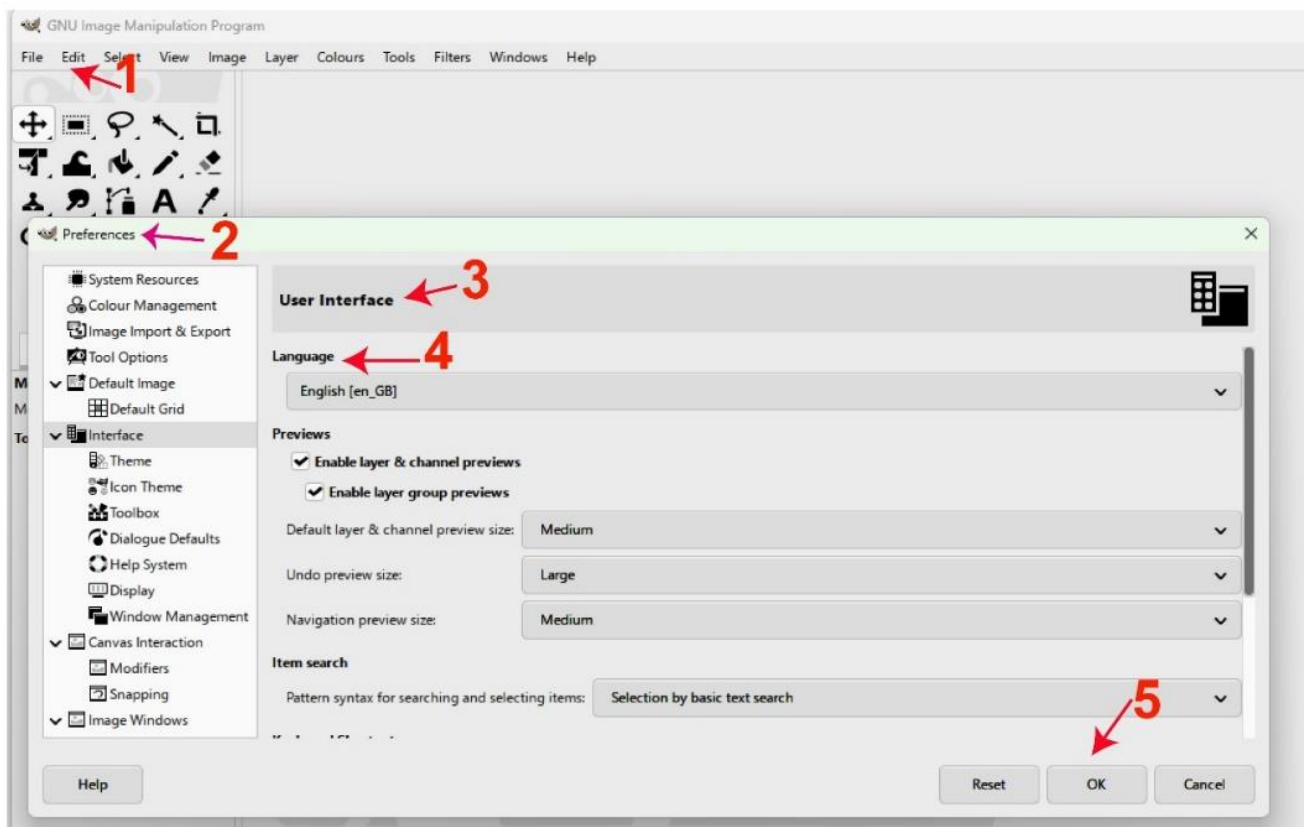
STEP 1: BEFORE STARTING

Changing the language

The first thing to do is change the interface language.

Go to Edit > Preferences > Interface > desired LANGUAGE from the drop-down menu > click on the desired language and click OK

It is necessary to restart GIMP to set the new language.



Creating & saving a new image

To create a new image: Go to File > New > select Size, Colour: RGB > click OK

If you want to import images from a folder, simply drag the image from the interface to the worksheet.



To save:

- File > Save (.XCF format – keeps layers)
- File > Export As (PNG/JPG for final use)

To undo your last action

Ctrl+Z (su Windows) or Cmd+Z (su macOS)

Ctrl+Y (Windows) or Cmd+Y (macOS)

STEP 2: BASIC EDITING ACTIONS FOR SEQUENCE 11

The following actions are the most relevant for adapting images for narrative use.

Cropping an image

Used to focus attention on the most important elements of the scene.

Adjusting brightness and contrast

Improves readability and visibility, especially for accessibility purposes.

Removing background

Go to Layer > Transparency > add Alpha Channel

Select Fuzzy Tool → click on background → Edit > Clear

Exporting with transparency

Export the image as PNG to preserve the transparency.

OPTIONAL: USING PATHS TOOL FOR SIMPLE CHARACTER CREATION

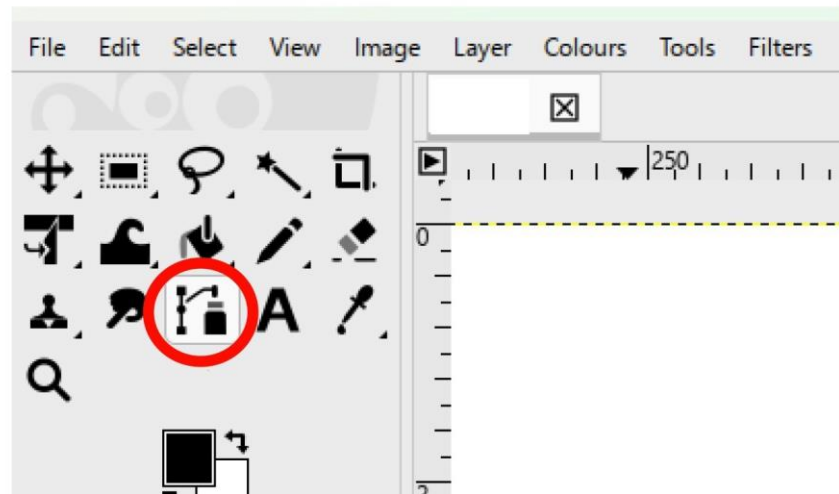
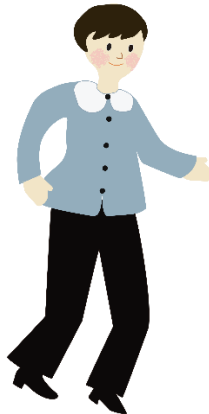
This step is optional and intended only for users who want to create simple original characters. It is not required to complete the sequence.

By using the Paths tool in GIMP you can create vector-like drawings.

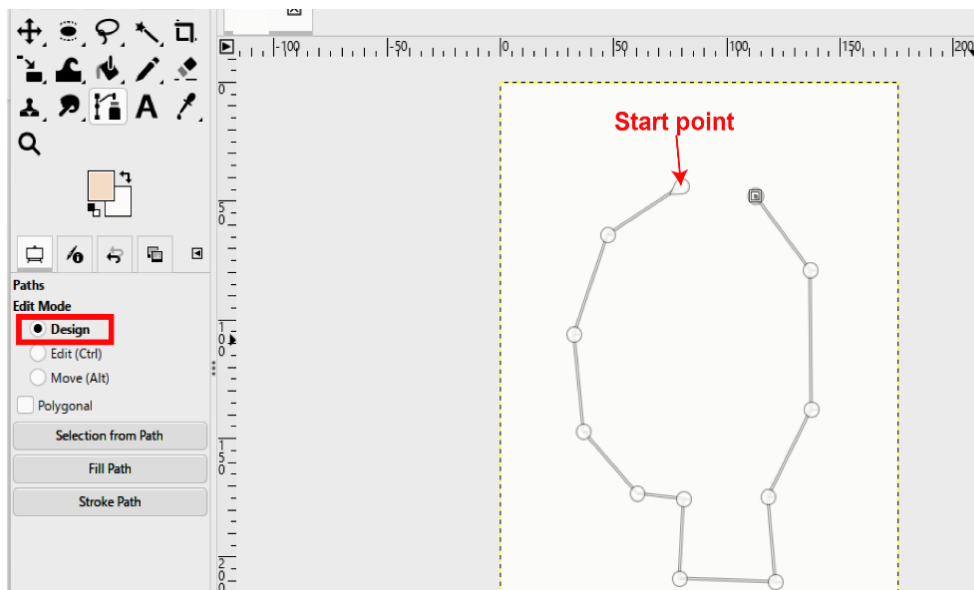
Once you've created the path, you can convert it to a selection and fill it with colour.



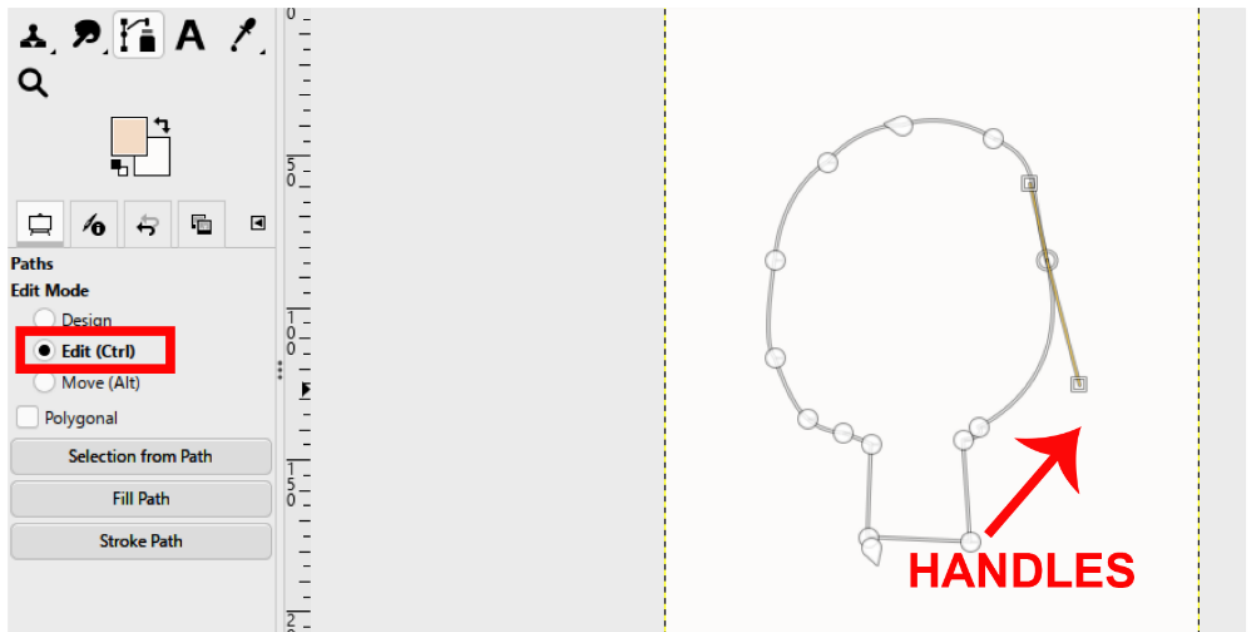
1. To begin, select the Paths tool



2. Use Design mode to create new anchor points and segments by clicking directly on the canvas and drawing the outline of the face

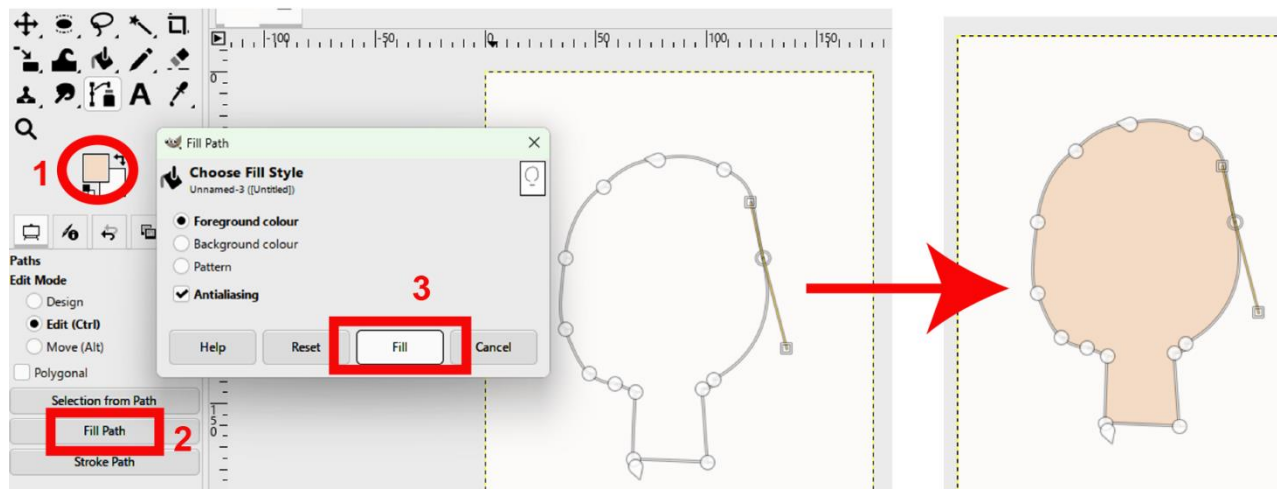


3. Switch to Edit mode to modify existing paths by moving and dragging the handles to achieve the desired curvature and shape.



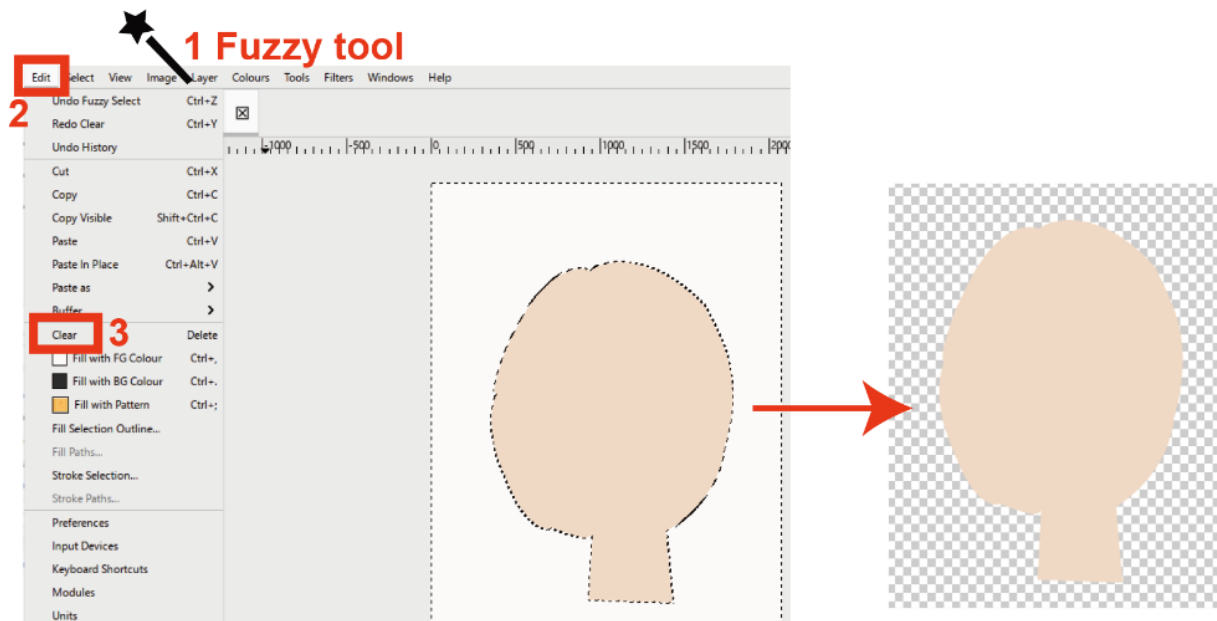
4. To fill the path with a color

Select a color > click Fill Path > press Fill



5. To give an image a transparent background

- Go to Layer > Transparency > add Alpha Channel,
- select Fuzzy Tool > click on the background to select it > Edit > Clear to remove it,
- export the image as a PNG to preserve the transparency.

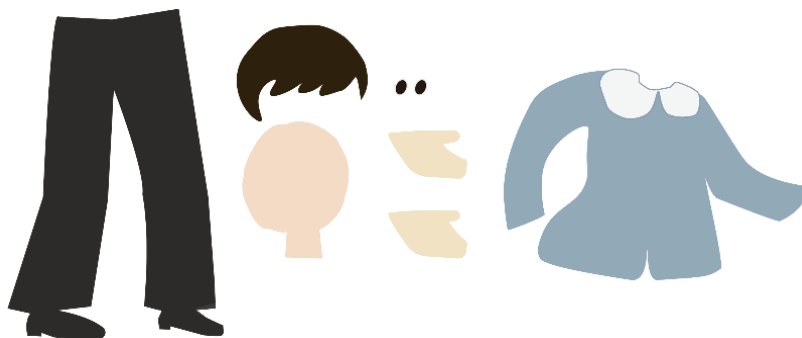


6. How to create a simple circle (e.g., for drawing the head or eyes)

- To create the head, select the Ellipse Select Tool (press E). Click and drag to start the selection, then hold Shift to constrain the shape to a perfect circle. Afterwards, fill the selection with the desired skin color.
- To create the eyes, you can make a small empty circle using the Select > Border command. After creating the circular selection, define the border width (it will vary depending on the overall size of the face: larger for a close-up and smaller for a more distant view), then fill the selection with the desired color.

STEP 3: NOW ASSEMBLE ALL THE PARTS YOU CREATED

Using all the instructions provided, create the different parts that make up the character's body.

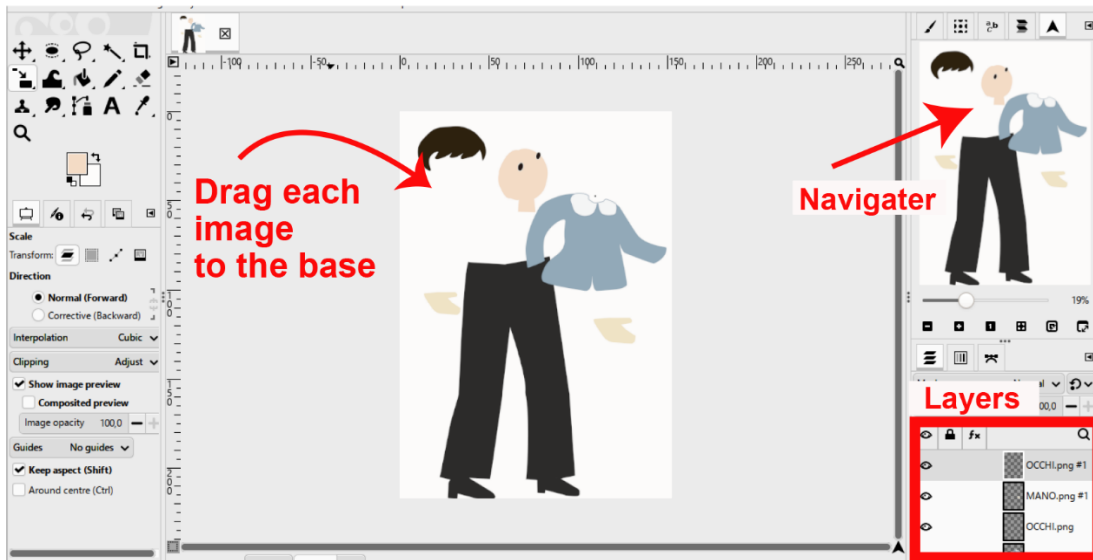




Assembling all parts

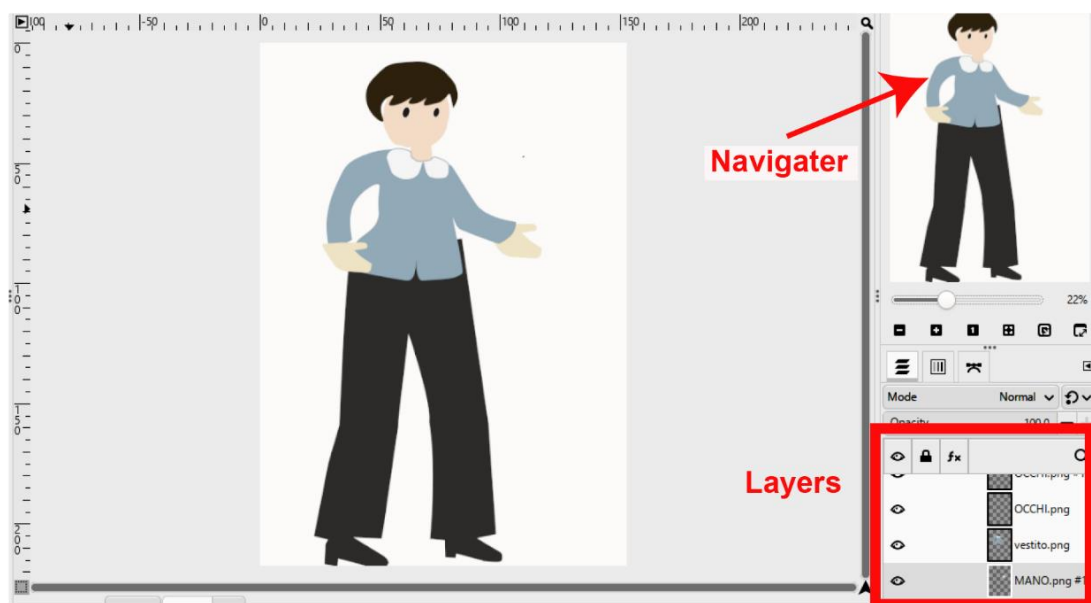
Create a new canvas that will serve as the base for composing the figure. Then import all the previously created parts to assemble the character's body.

From the folder, simply drag each image onto the canvas.



Rearrange layers to create a character

Each drawn element (face, torso, hands, etc.) is on a different layer. In order to overlay the various elements correctly, such as hair over the face, the layers in the Layers panel to set the proper order.

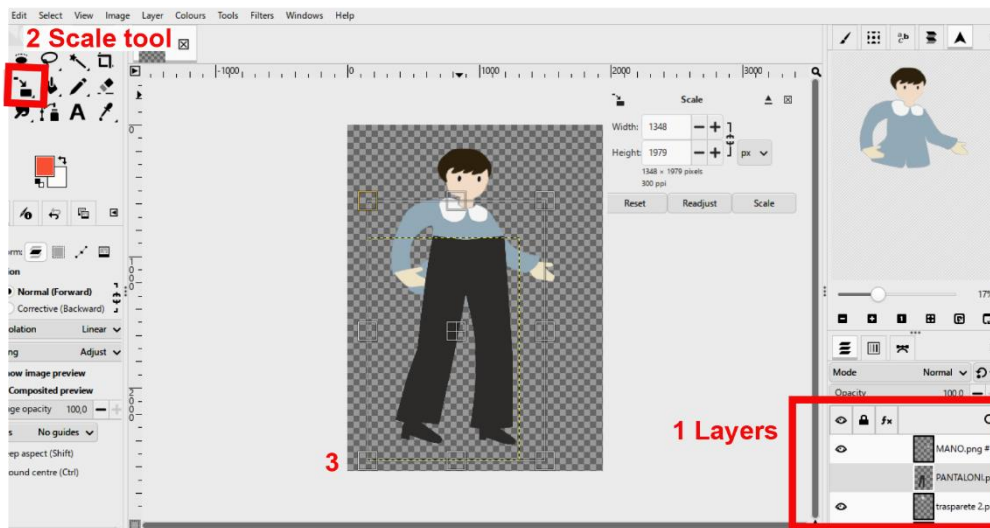




Adjust the size of each layer

To resize a layer:

- Select the desired layer > go to Layer → Scale Layer, enter the new width and height > Scale.
- For more control, use the Scale Tool (Shift + S) to resize the layer interactively.



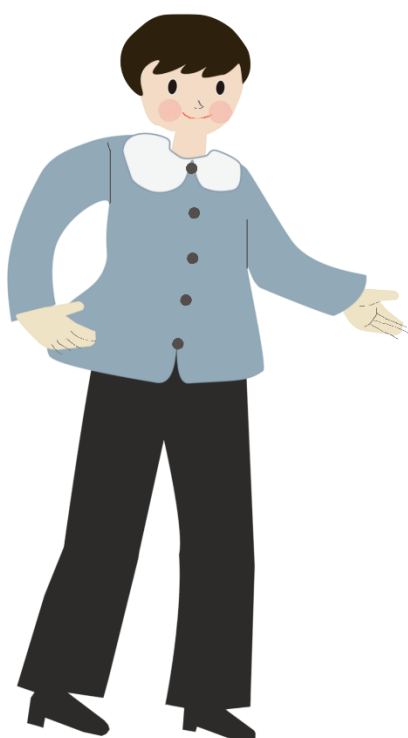
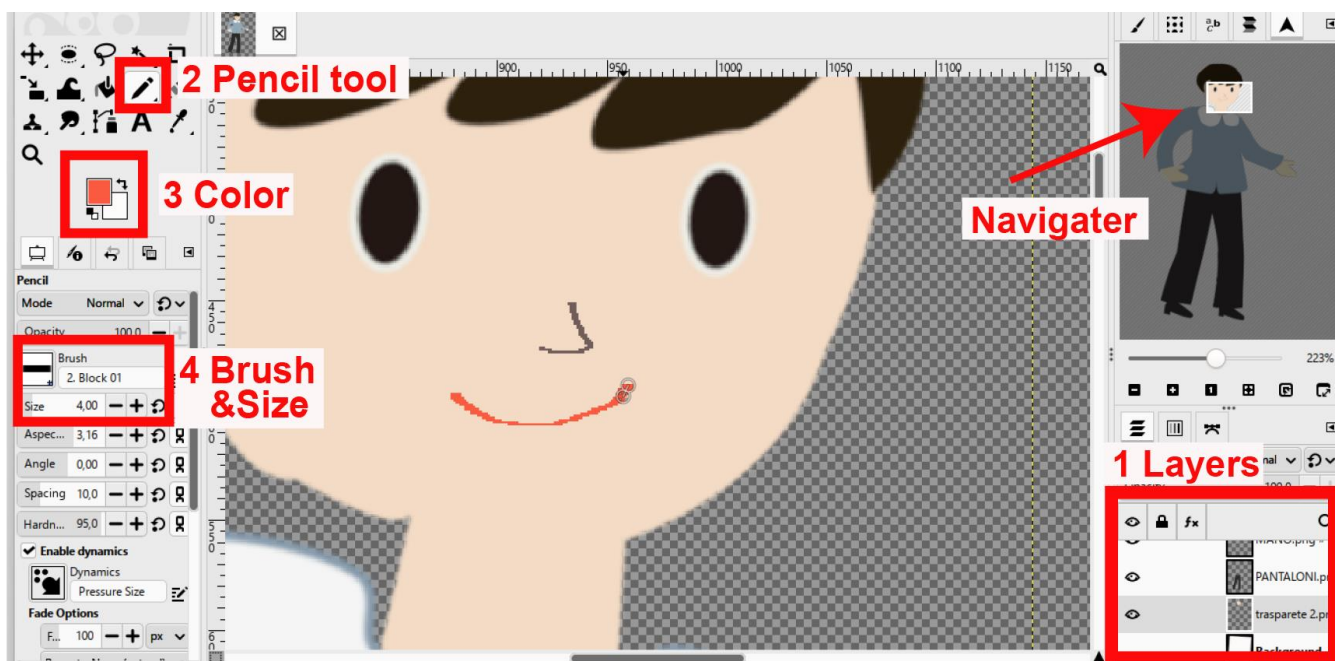
To rotate a layer

- To change the orientation of a character or object, select the desired layer > choose the Rotate Tool (Shift + R) > then drag the image or adjust the angle to rotate it in the desired direction.
- To verify the result, you can use the Navigation panel.

STEP 4: ADD DETAILS WITH THE PENCIL TOOL

With the Pencil tool, it is possible to add details by drawing them directly:

- Select the layer where you want to add details (e.g., the face).
- Choose the Pencil Tool, select a colour, and pick an appropriate brush.
- Adjust the brush size according to the detail you want to draw (e.g., mouth, eyes, etc.).



Keep details simple and clear to support readability and accessibility!



FINAL OUTPUT EXPECTATION

At the end of this process, images should be:

- clear and readable
- consistent across scenes
- simplified where necessary
- exported in web-ready format (PNG)

IMPORTANT NOTE:

This annex is intended to support technical facilitation only. Educators should prioritise storytelling, accessibility and clarity over technical complexity. The use of GIMP is optional, and alternative tools (e.g. Canva, Pixlr) can be used depending on the context.