

Introduction to Image Editing

80 minutes

Digital Media Literacy

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

In this lesson, you'll explore the essentials of editing images using simple tools like Canva. Learn key techniques such as cropping, resizing, and applying filters, while understanding ethical editing practices to create impactful visual content responsibly.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Grasp the fundamental concepts and practical applications of image editing.
- Master key techniques such as cropping, resizing, and applying filters using digital tools.
- Develop skills to create and design original graphics with creativity and precision.
- Understand and apply ethical principles in image editing to ensure authenticity.
- Reflect on acquired skills to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Open canva.com yourself and confirm the school filter does not block it and that sign-up works from a school email.
- Sort out logins before the bell: decide whether pupils use existing accounts or sign up on the day, and have that plan ready.
- One device per pupil, charged, with a working browser. Pairing on a smaller number of devices also works.
- Have a sample image ready to demonstrate cropping and filters on the board so pupils see the tool before they touch it.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

Introduction
What is Image Editing?
Key Concepts in Image Editing
Getting Started with Canva
Cropping and Resizing in Canva
Applying Filters
Adjusting Brightness and Contrast
Using Layers
Exporting Your Images
Creative Task: Design Your Own Graphic
Ethical Considerations
Review and Self-Assessment

TEACHING MOVES

- 2. What is Image Editing? Pin the everyday reasons on the board: fix, add text, create a design. Introduce pixels and resolution with the screen zoomed in so pupils can actually see the dots.
- 3. Key Concepts in Image Editing. Name each skill they are about to use so the later steps feel familiar. Stress the framing idea: cropping makes the important part stand out.
- 4. Getting Started with Canva. Walk the sign-up and Create a design on the board first, then let pupils follow. Do not start until everyone is logged in and looking at a blank design.
- 5. Cropping and Resizing in Canva. Demonstrate one crop live, then flag the trap: resizing while holding proportions so images do not stretch or squash. Have them try both on one image.
- 6. Applying Filters. Show Grayscale and Sepia, then set the rule out loud: a filter should improve the photo, not hide the truth of it. Let them try two or three.
- 7. Adjusting Brightness and Contrast. Use a deliberately dark image to show brightness rescuing detail, then contrast adding punch. Warn against overdoing it until the image looks fake.
- 8. Using Layers. Build a three-layer example on the board: photo, shape, then text on top. Show that moving or deleting one layer leaves the others untouched.
- 9. Exporting Your Images. Contrast PNG for see-through logos with JPG for smaller photos. Have pupils export at least one file so you can confirm it actually saved.
- 10. Creative Task: Design Your Own Graphic. Offer a theme quickly (event poster, quote card, mini infographic) so no one stalls choosing. Circulate and prompt them to use at least three skills from earlier steps.
- 11. Ethical Considerations. Anchor it in the one rule: do not edit a person in a way that embarrasses them or misleads. Ask for real examples of edits that cross the line.
- 12. Review and Self-Assessment. Run the self-assessment aloud. Ask a few pupils to name one skill they now feel confident with and one they want more practice on.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Pupils resize an image by dragging one edge, stretching or squashing it because they do not hold proportions. Show the difference side by side on the board and have them drag from a corner to keep the shape.
- Pupils treat filters and brightness as things to max out, ending with images that look artificial. Frame every adjustment as improving the photo, not transforming it. Ask them to compare before and after and stop when it still looks real.
- Pupils assume finishing a design in Canva means it is saved, and lose work by not exporting. Make exporting an explicit step everyone completes, and check each pupil has a saved file before moving on.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Emerging: Pair a pupil stuck at login with one already in, and start them on a single skill (cropping) before adding more. Give them a ready-made image so they are not held up sourcing one before they can practise editing.
- Developing: Ask them to explain their crop or layer choice back to you so they are building the reasoning, not just clicking. Prompt them to combine two skills on one image, such as a filter plus a brightness adjustment.
- Proficient: Challenge them to build a full three-layer design and export it as both PNG and JPG, explaining when each is the better choice. Have them help a partner who is stuck, articulating the steps as they go.