

Teens and Technology 2012

Using READ™ Design Studio to create dynamic programming and marketing materials



Tutorial #6

READ® Poster Basics

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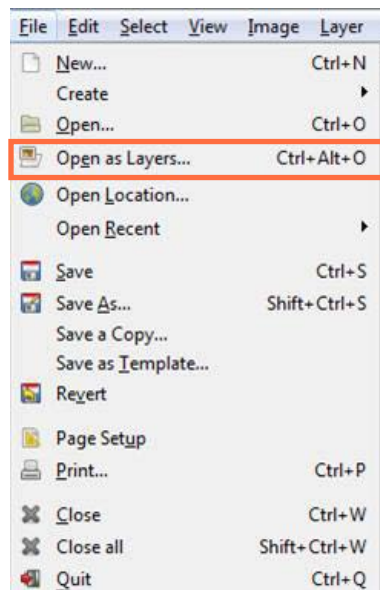
Opening a READ® Background File

You want to have the edited image you completed in Tutorial #5 open in GIMP before starting the next steps.

Your image should look something like this and have one layer similar to the screen shot on the right:



Step 1: Select File > Open As Layers

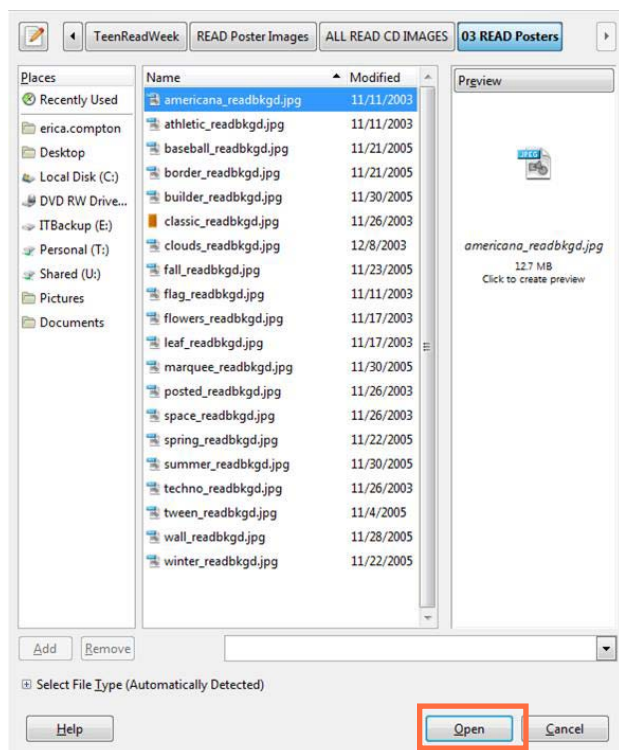


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Tip: A new dialog box opens.

Step 2: Navigate to the location of the READ files from your CD.



Step 3: Choose the background file you want to use with your image and Click **Open**. This file will become a second layer that is part of the Mask file.



Tip: For this tutorial we are going to use .jpg backgrounds only. Layered backgrounds are a bit more complicated and will be covered in another tutorial.

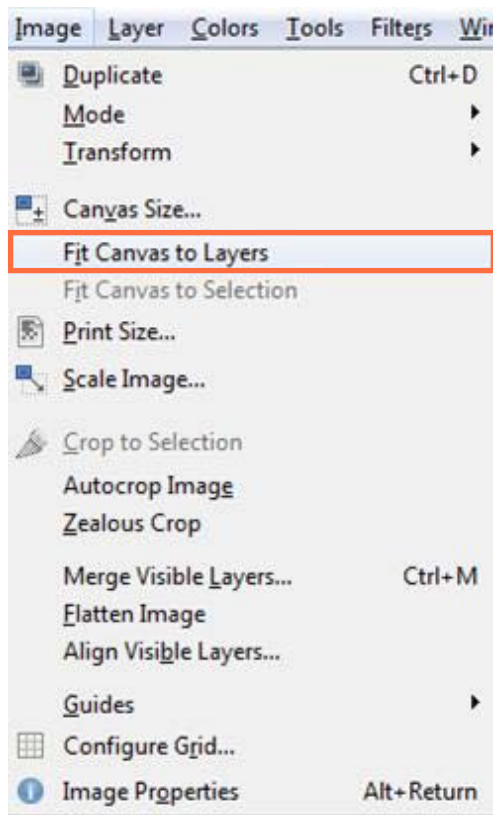
Step 4: The background you chose will open and fill the screen. Your image will “disappear” – but it is really just hidden from view by the poster background you just opened.



Tip: The entire READ poster may not show up in your image window. If this happens do the following step:

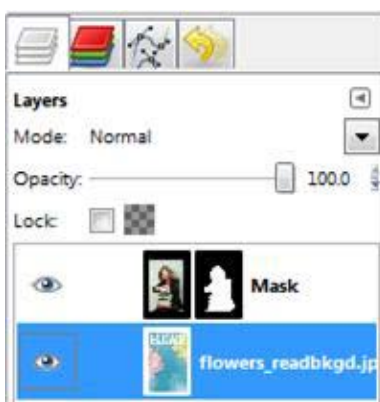
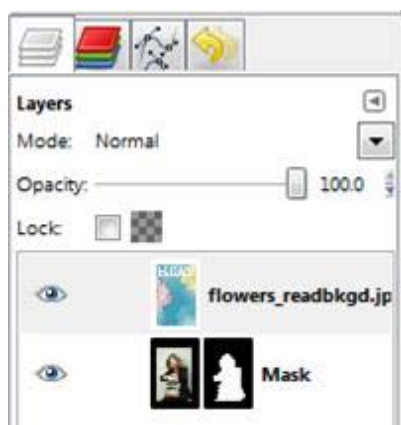
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Step 4: Select **Image > Fit Canvas to Layers**.



Tip: Your poster is automatically resized to fit the image window.

Step 5: Click on the **READ background** you opened and move it below the **Mask** layer.



Tip: Your image should now be visible on top of the background. But Ann is floating in the middle of the poster, and that doesn't look too realistic. So let's learn to move the image.

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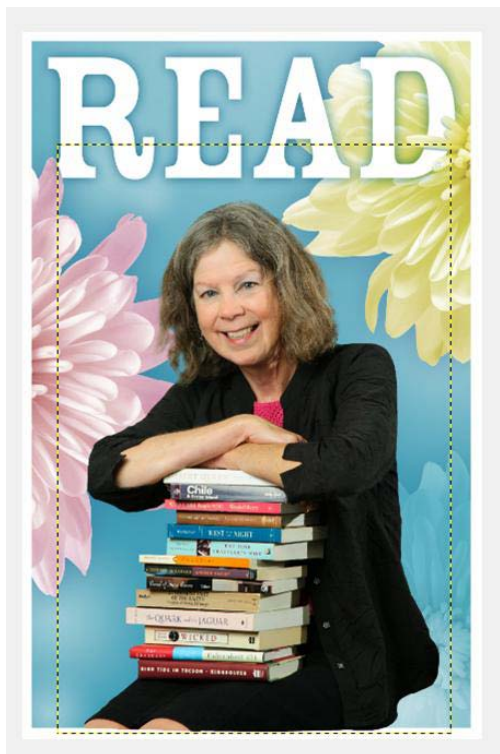
Moving an Image

Step 1: Select the **Move** tool in the toolbox.

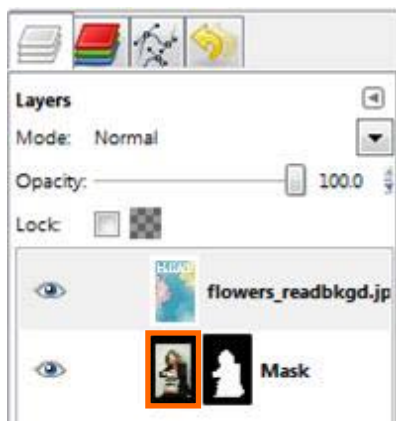


Step 2: Select the **Mask** layer to make it the active layer.

Step 3: Click on the image and move it so that it is aligned with the bottom of the poster background.



Tip: Make sure the image part of the **Mask** layer is selected. If the black and white image in the **Mask** layer is selected (bordered in white) the move tool will not work correctly.



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Resizing an Image



Step 1: Select the Scale tool in the toolbox.

Step 2: Hold down the **Control key** down while clicking the corner of the image and dragging to resize.



Tip: Holding the control key down ensures that the image is scaled proportionately. This is a very important step to remember. Otherwise your image can get skewed and look strange! You must click on scale in the dialog box to complete the resizing.



Tip: You may need to use the **Move** tool again to move the image around the background to get a good fit and ensure that it is centered in the poster. It usually looks best for your image to take up a large part of the poster, even if it covers part of the READ words.



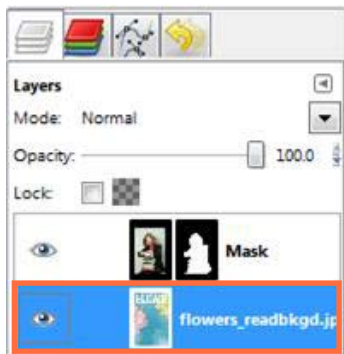
Tip: Once you place your image in the background, you may find that it overlaps the border as in the above screenshot. Because the poster is a .jpg, there is no layer to “hide” the image behind to create a clean and crisp border. We need to do one more step to make it look right.

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Creating an Outer Border on a Poster

We are going to create a white border layer to hide parts of the image that extend beyond the background and create a clean border for viewing or printing.

Step 1: Select the Poster Background layer.



Step 2: Select the **Rectangle Select** Tool in the Toolbox.

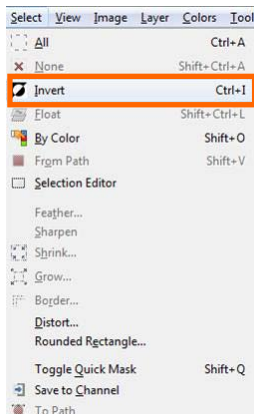


Step 3: Click and drag a box to select the entire inner (colored) part of the poster.



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Step 4: Click on **Select > Invert**.



Tip: This will invert the selected area to include the entire white border. You should see marching ants all around the inside and outside of the white border as seen below.



Step 5: Click **CONTROL C** to copy the selection

Step 6: Click **CONTROL V** to paste the selection.



Tip: Pasting creates a new layer called **Floating Selection (Pasted Layer)**.

Step 7: Double click this new layer and rename to **Border**.



Tip: The white border is now the top layer and should be covering any parts of the image that were outside the poster before this step. If necessary you can resize and/or move the image and it should remain behind the border.

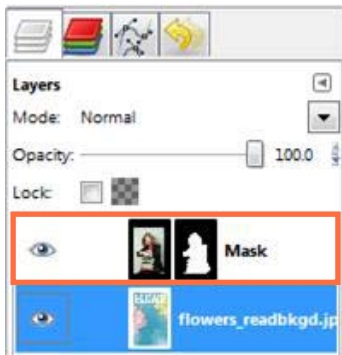
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Applying a Layer Mask

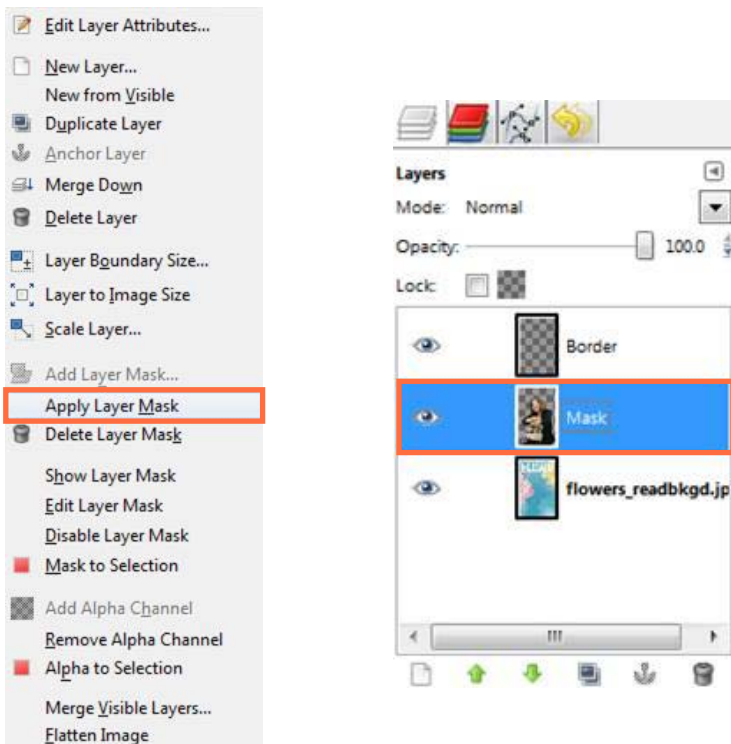


Tip: This step merges the image and mask layers. After merging the two, any changes to the image must be made using different tools.

Step 1: Click on the **Mask** layer to make it the active layer.



Step 2: Right Click and select **Apply Layer Mask**.



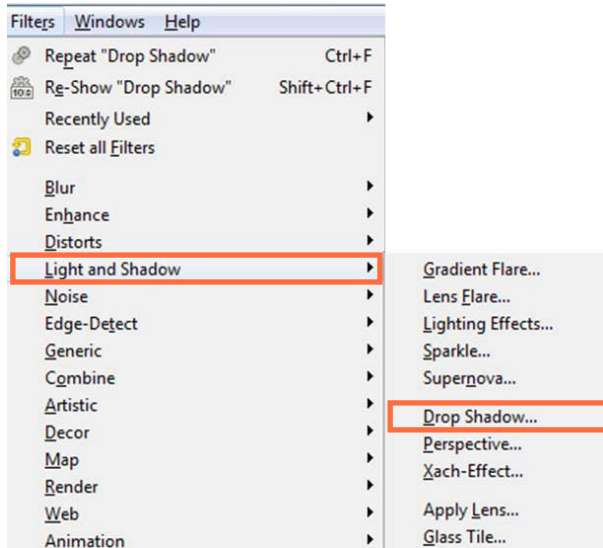
Tip: The layer will no longer have the two components to it. You will only see the image with a checkered background similar to the layer on the right.

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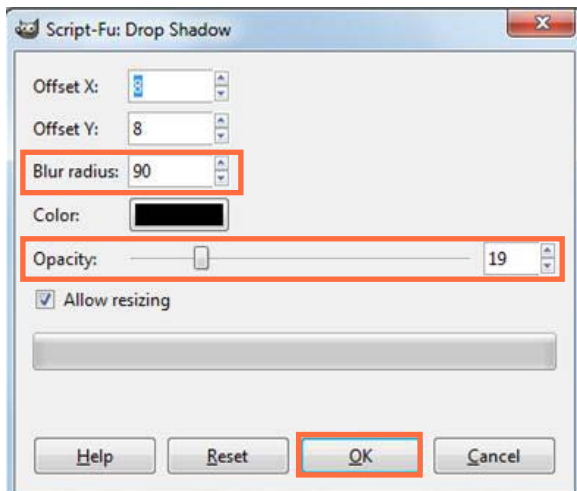
Adding a Drop Shadow to Your Image

To make your image look even more realistic we need to create some depth to the poster. We do this by adding a simple drop shadow to the image.

Step 1: Select **Filters > Light and Shadow > Drop Shadow**.



Tip: A new dialog box will open. **It may not be visible.** Check your task bar at the bottom to see if it opened, but is hidden behind the main image window. Just click the image of Wilbur to activate the window and bring it to the forefront.



Step 2: Set the **Blur Radius** to approximately 180 and the **Opacity** to approximately 20. Click **OK**.

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Tip: The blur radius is the width of the shadow and the opacity is the amount of transparency visible.



Tip: A new layer is created and automatically named **Drop Shadow**.



Tip: The change in the image may be subtle. You may need to select the Drop Shadow layer and use the Move tool to offset the shadow from the main image. If the shadow does not look correct, use your UNDO key (Control Z) to go back and re-do Steps 1 and 2 with new Blur Radius and Opacity. If you do not **undo** you will add another drop shadow layer to the file.



Shadow can be seen here...

...and here most clearly.

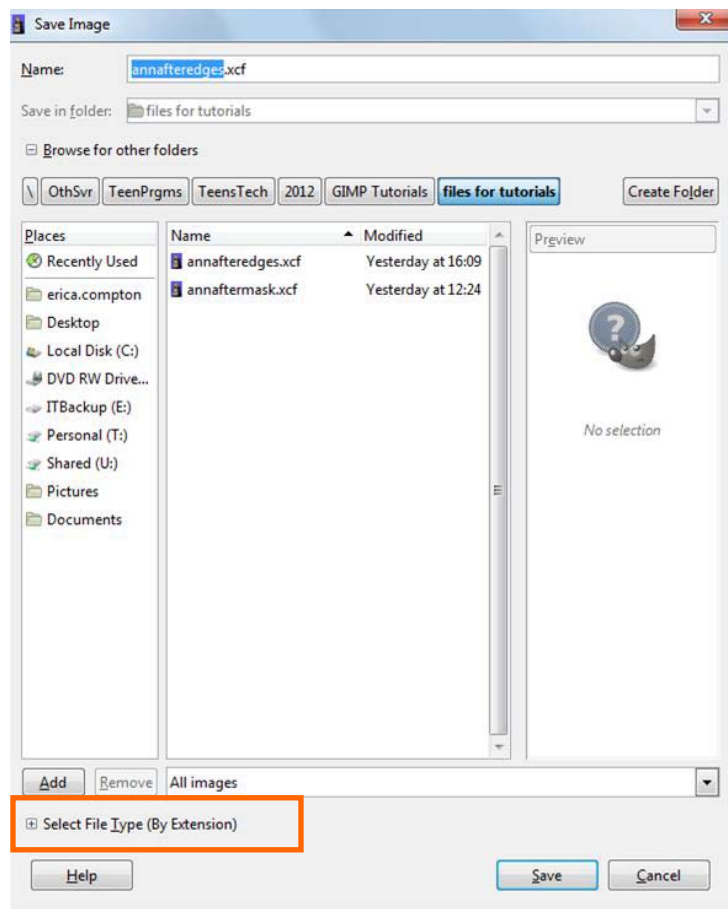
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Saving Your Poster File

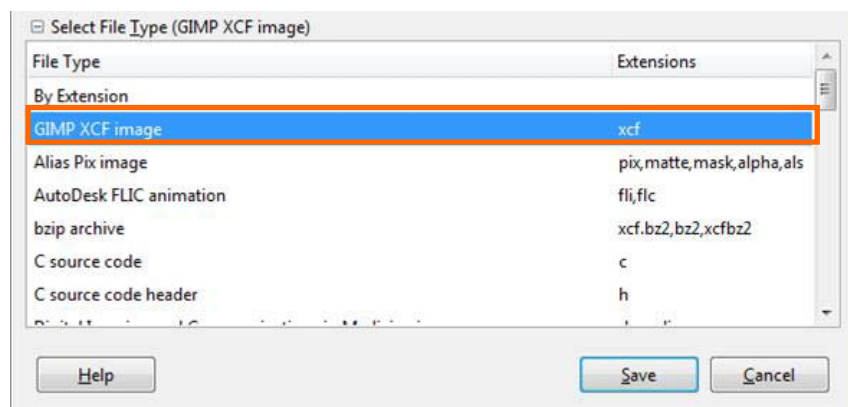


Tip: If you want to be able to edit your poster again, it is important to save it in the correct file format. You need to save it in a format that GIMP will recognize as “editable” and which will contain all the layers.

Step 1: Click **File > Save As**. A new dialog box opens:



Step 2: Click **Select File Type**. A drop down menu appears.



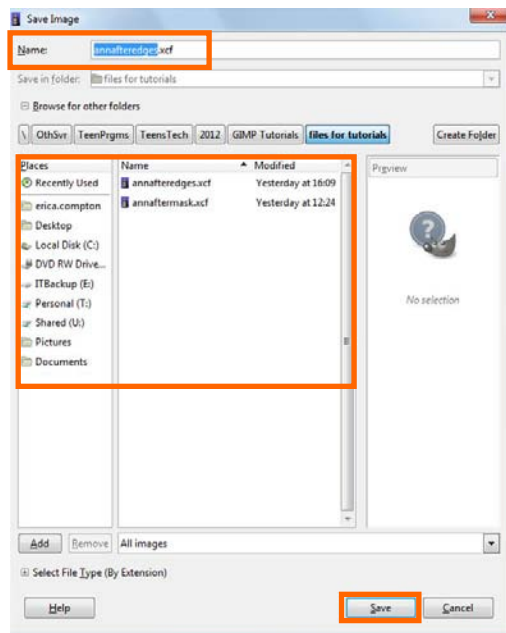
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Step 3: Select **GIMP XCF image** extension.

Step 4: Rename the file.

Step 5: Navigate to the location to save the file.

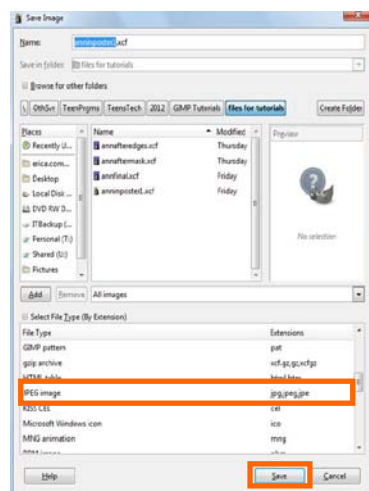
Step 6: Click **Save**.



Your file is saved! You will still be able to open it and edit it again if you need to.

But wait! If you want to send the poster to someone so they can view it, you need to save it as a .jpg so it can be opened by just about anyone. Follow **Steps 1** and **2** the same as above and then:

Step 3: Choose **JPEG Image** in the drop down menu. Navigate to where you want to save the file. Name the file and click **OK**.



Congratulations! You have just created a READ poster with your very own photo! While there are many other tools and techniques you can use to enhance and refine your poster, you have learned all of the basic tools necessary to create posters and other materials using GIMP and ALA's READ content.