How To Make a YouTube Thumbnail in CANVA

When you make videos for YouTube, you want the small thumbnail image to be attractive, and not just a clip of your video. In this video, I show you a step-by-step walkthrough on how to make YouTube thumbnails for FREE with Canva. You can also use this technique to create custom images for blogs, websites, or online ads.

1 Navigate to www.canva.com/templates

2 Select "YouTube Thumbnails"
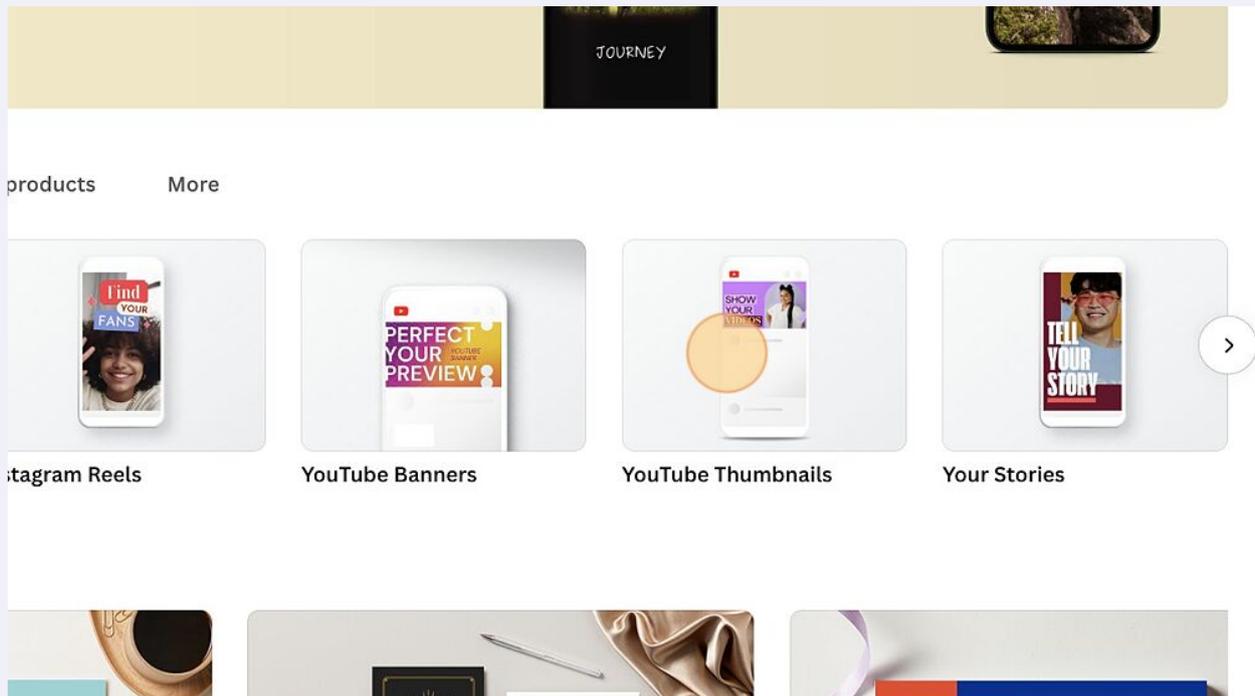
3 Find a template that you would like to customize.
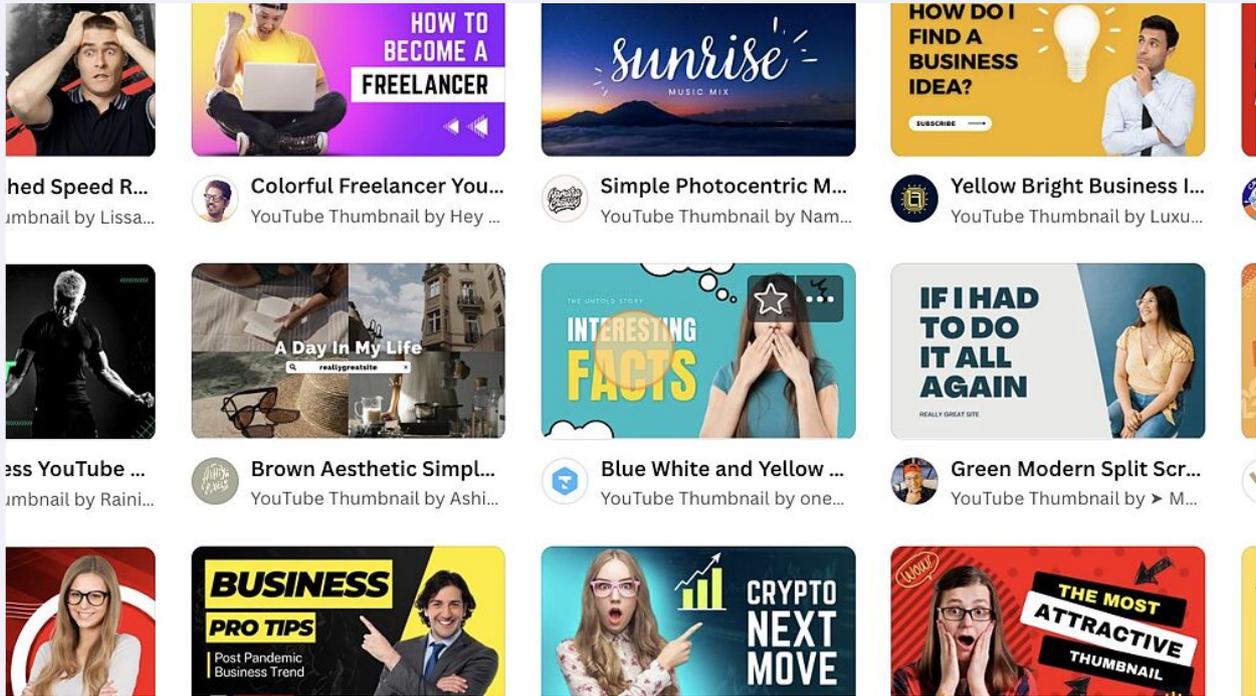
4 For details, click on the template. Click on "Customize this template".

Blue White and Yellow Attractive Interesting Facts Youtube Thumbnail

YouTube Thumbnail • 1280 × 720 px

By onedsgn

Customize this template

- 100% fully customizable
- Edit and download on the go
- Share and publish anywhere
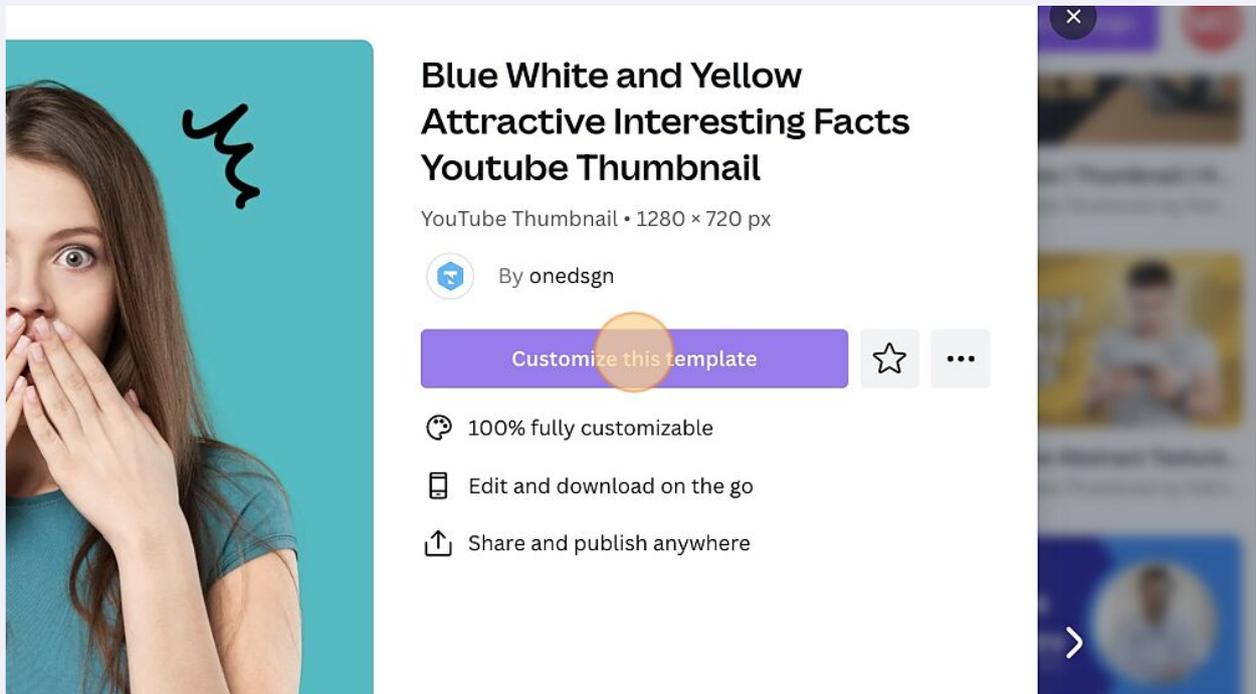
5 While you can go with the stock images, it is recommended to change the "Elements" of the template to distinguish your thumbnail from others. To add graphics, photos, videos, sounds, or music, click on "Elements"
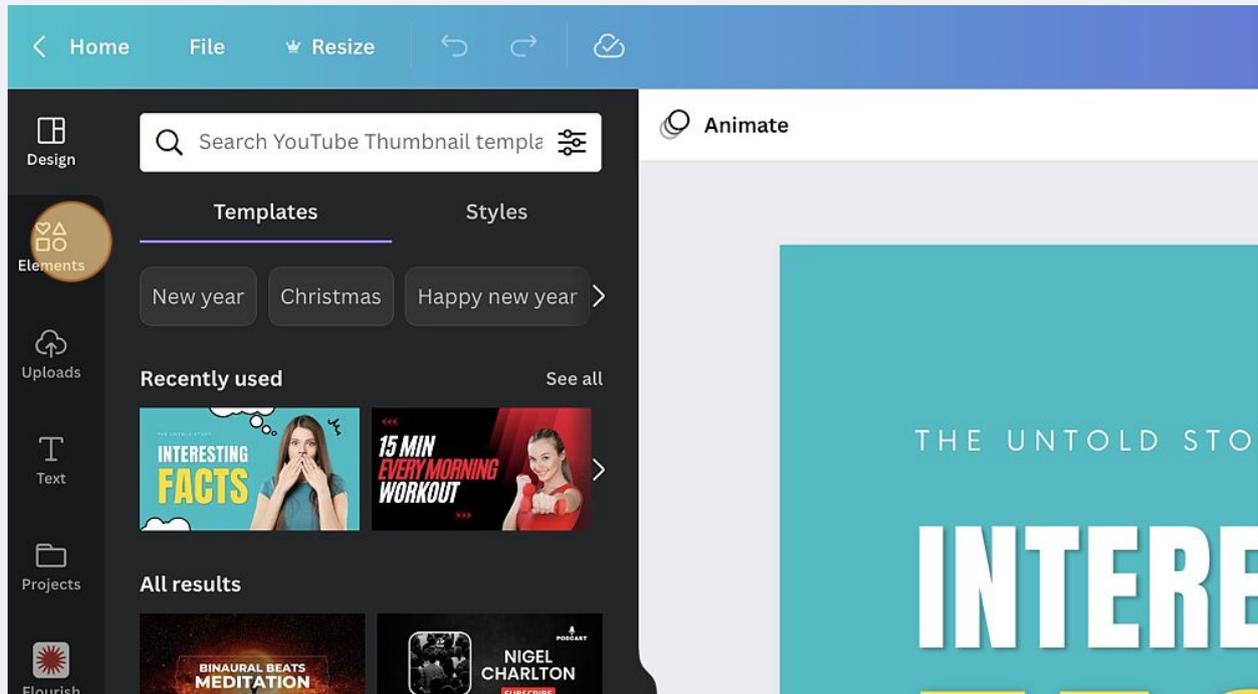
6 Click the "Search anything from Canva" field. You can search for just about anything, such as images, background colors, small gifs for background effects. For example, let's say I want to replace the stock image of a woman in this template.
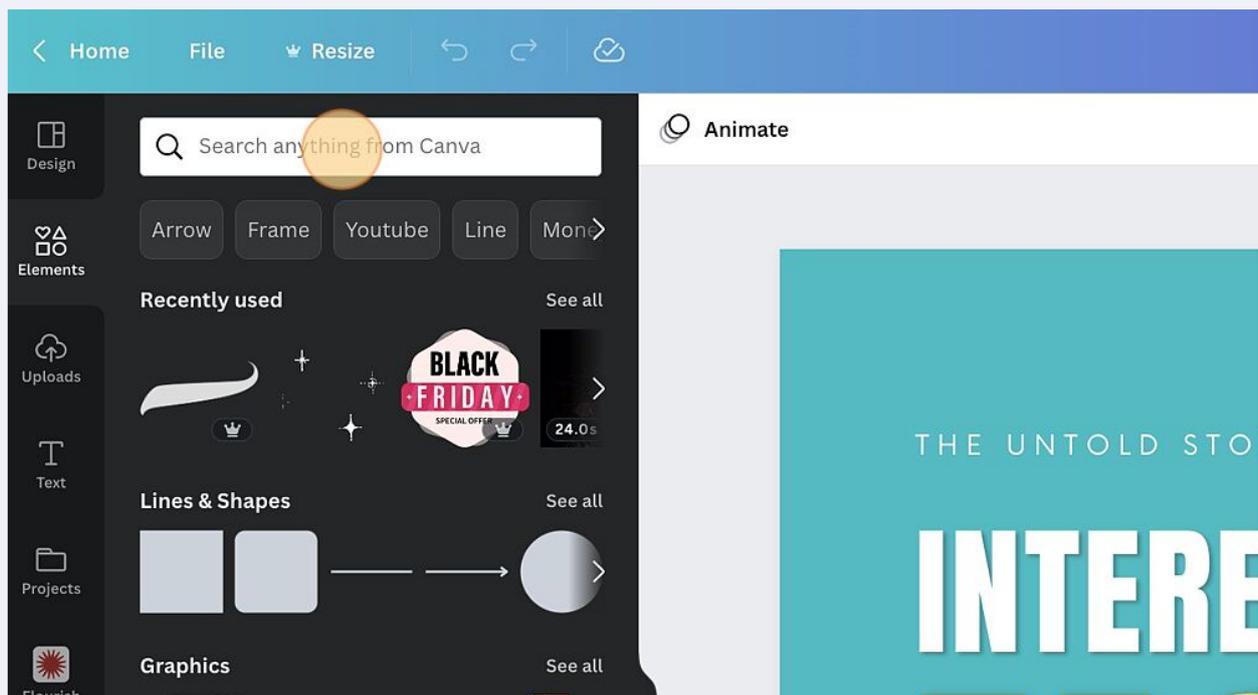
7   In the search field, I will type "woman confused and click [[enter]]"

8   You can see that it immediately displays graphics, photos, and videos of a "confused woman. I will replace the stock photo with custom photo. Click "Photos"
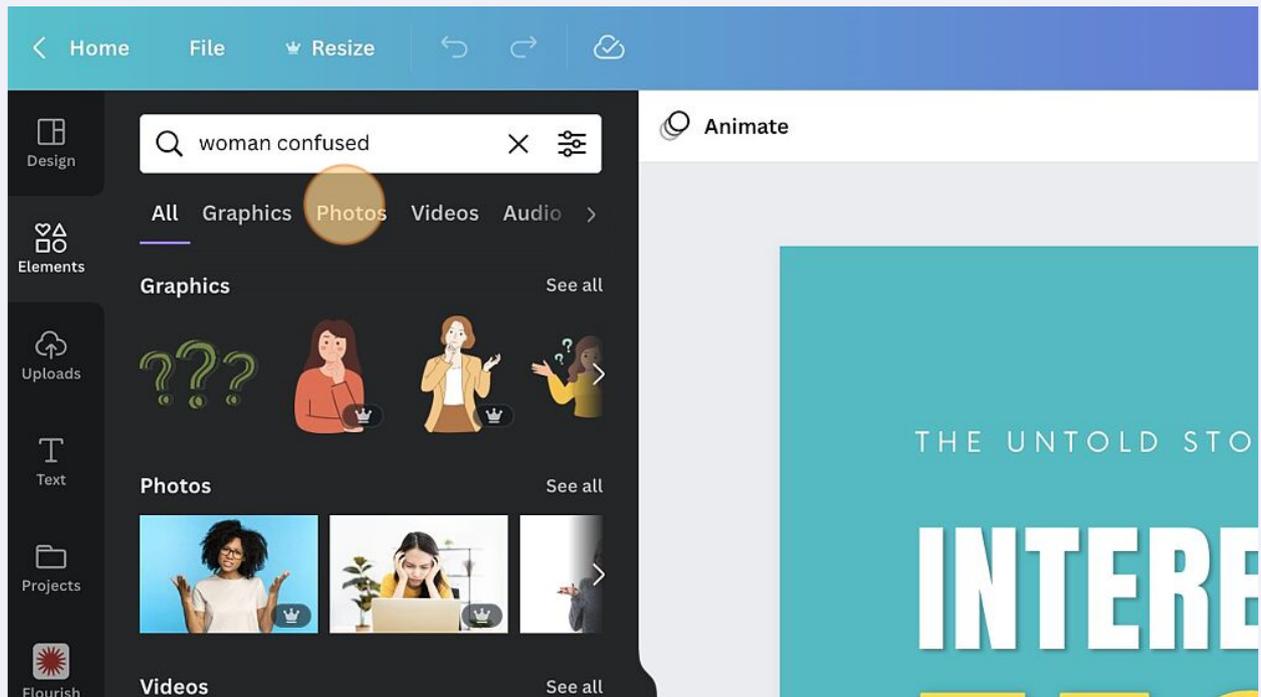
9 Next, I will click back on the template stock image of the woman and hit [[delete]]

10 Then, go back and select the custom image you would like to add. You can either click on the image, or drag-and-drop to where you want it. Click "Add this photo to the canvas"

11 Re-size and position the image anywhere you want. In the next step, I will show you how to remove the background of the custom image.
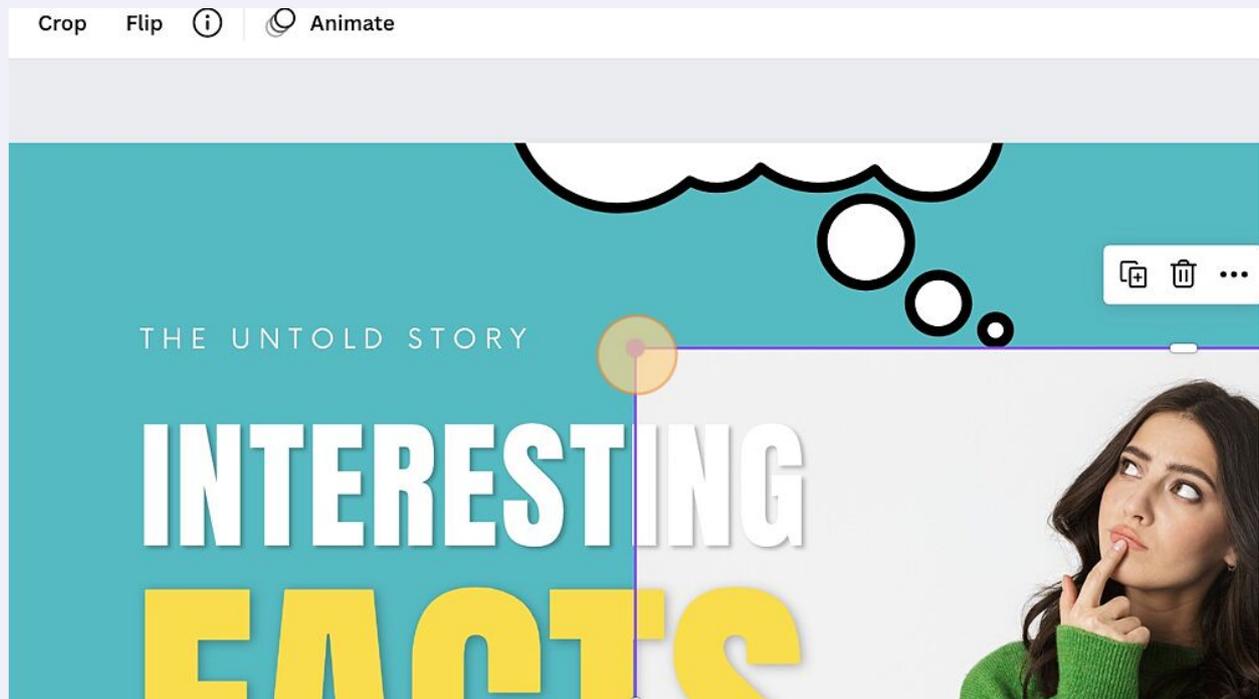
12 Select the image, then click on "Edit image" on the top menu.
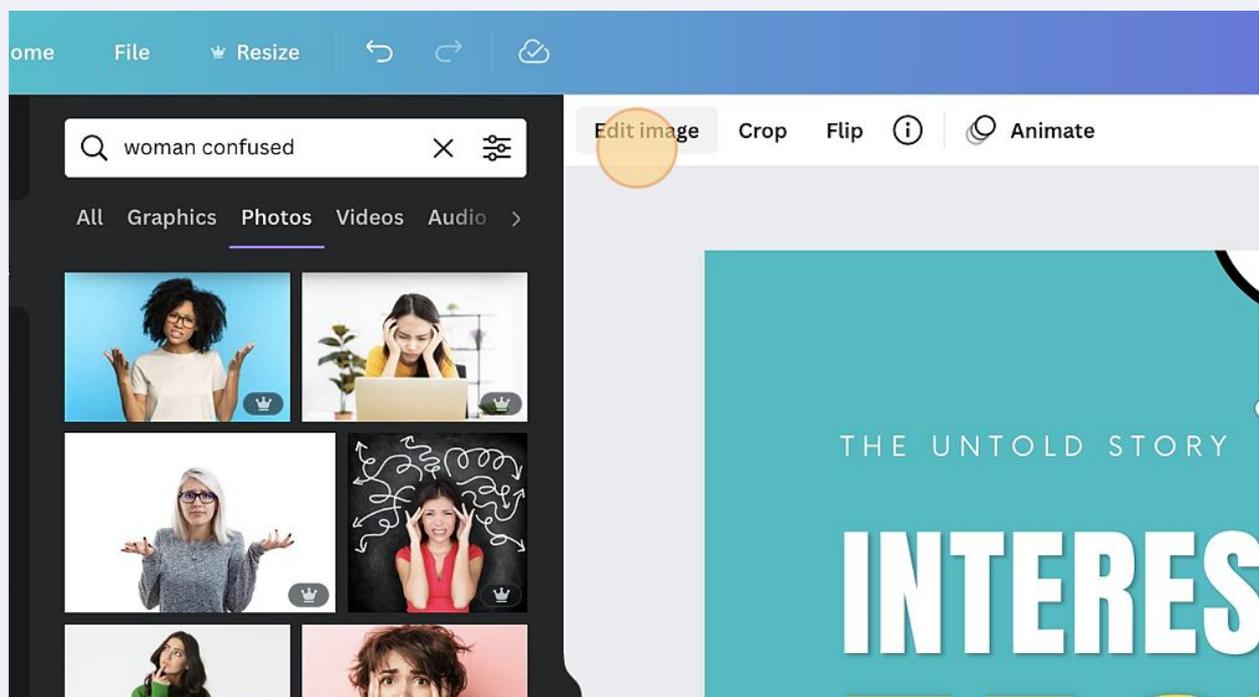
13 Here, you will see a number of choices to enhance images. Select "BG Remover" and it will take several seconds for the tool to remove the background. The effect can be reversed if needed.
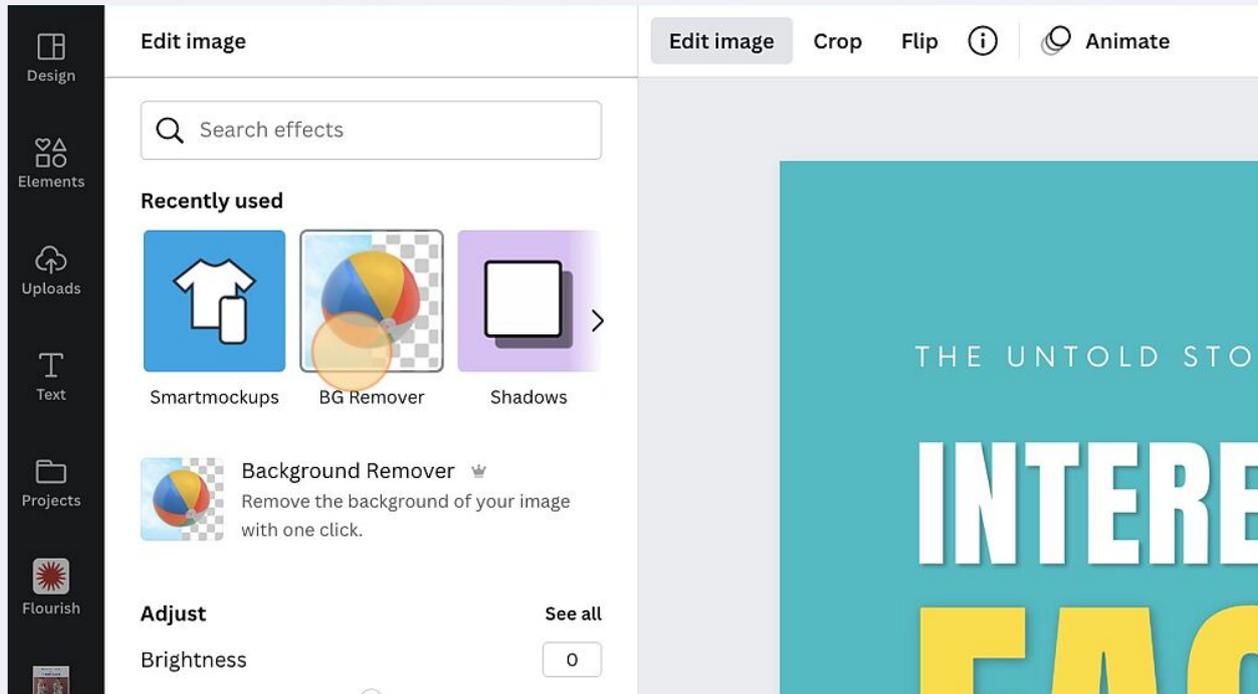
14 Now that the background is removed, you can finalize the size and position of the custom image.

15 You will want to change the text. Double-click "THE UNTOLD STORY" and press [[delete]], then enter your own text
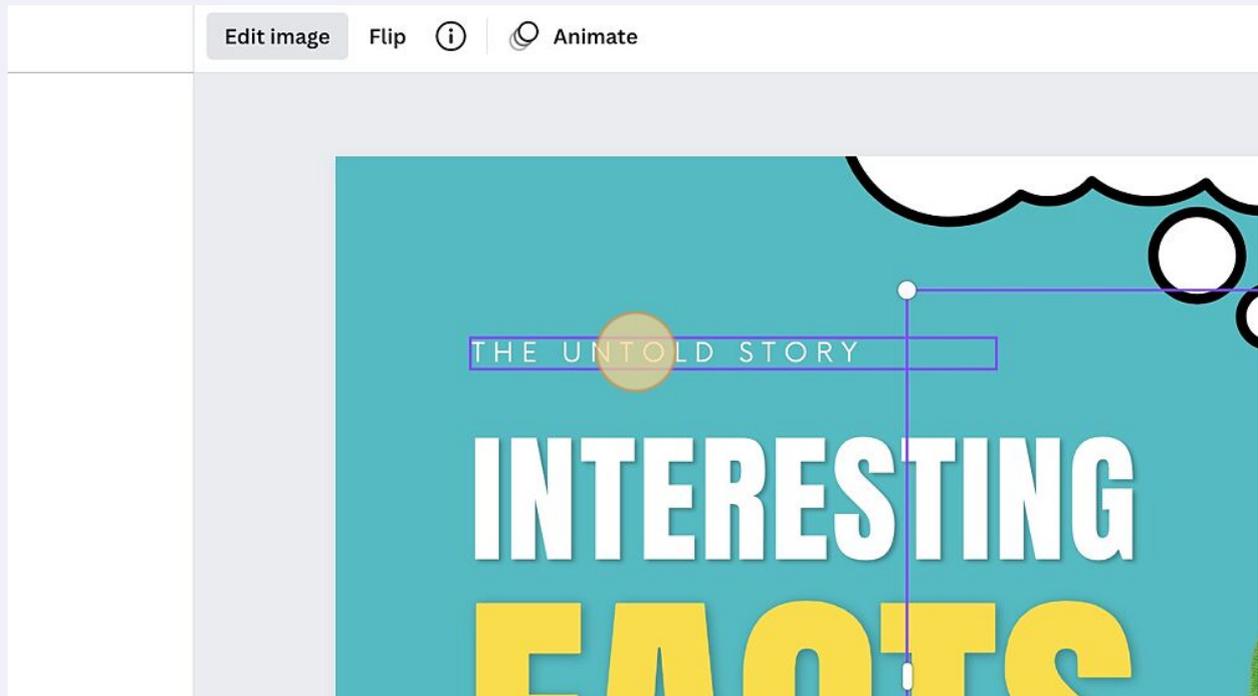
16 For this example, I have altered the text to "Unraveling DENTAL MYTHS"
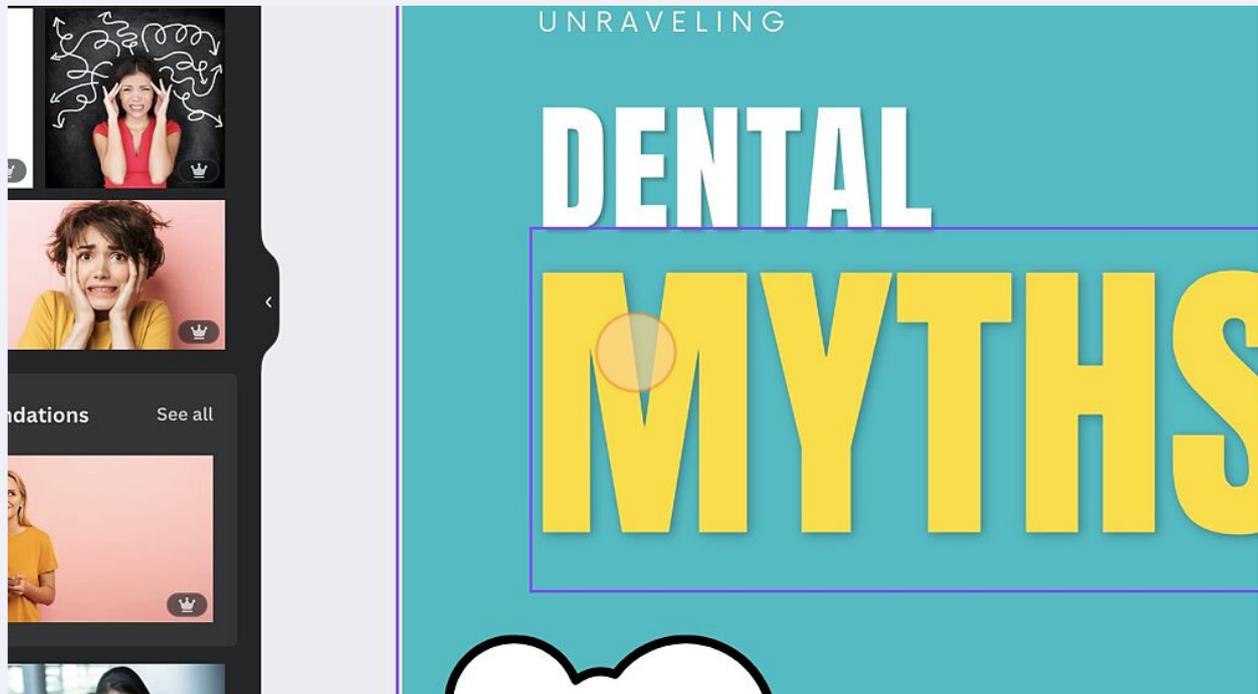
17 You can also create animations to any text or element. Select the element or text, then Click "Animate"
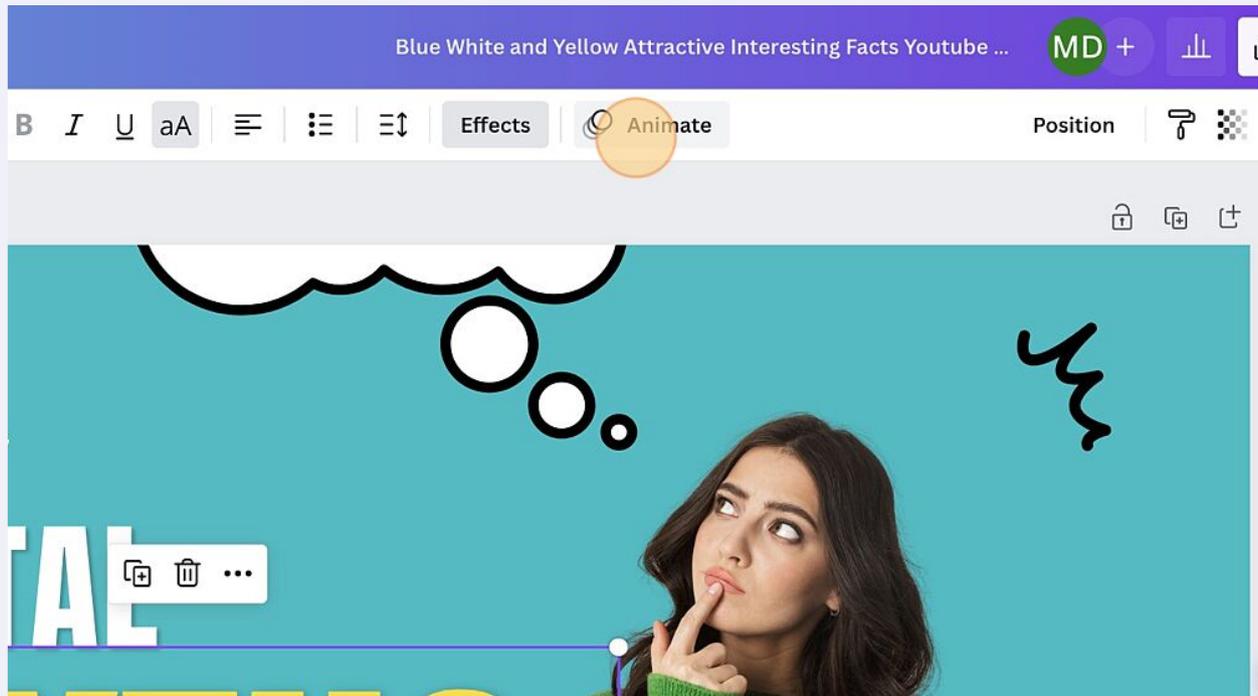
18 Scroll through the various choices, and select the tool to see a preview. Remember, select the text or element on the image first, then select tools from the top menu, such as "Animate" or "Effects". Effects changes the static appearance of the text or image, while "Animate" alters how the image is presented onto the page.
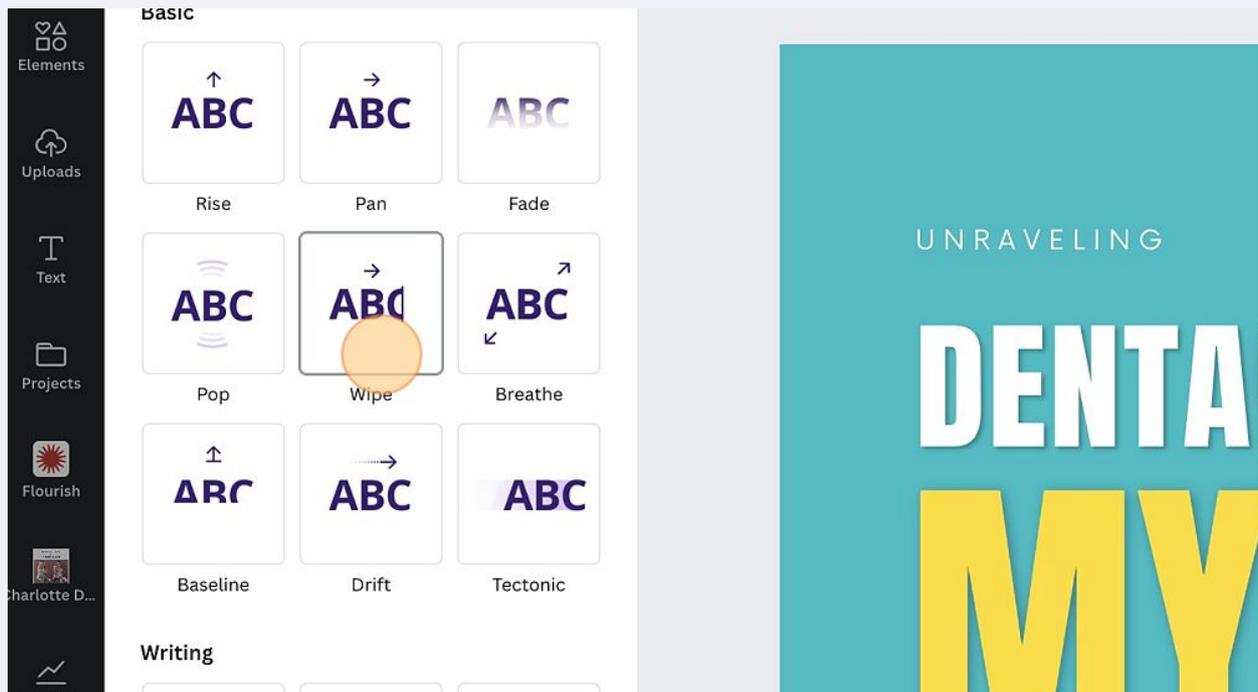
19 Sometimes, it is easier to just copy and paste stock images. For example, I will copy this small ink flourish, either by right clicking, or using keyboard shortcuts …
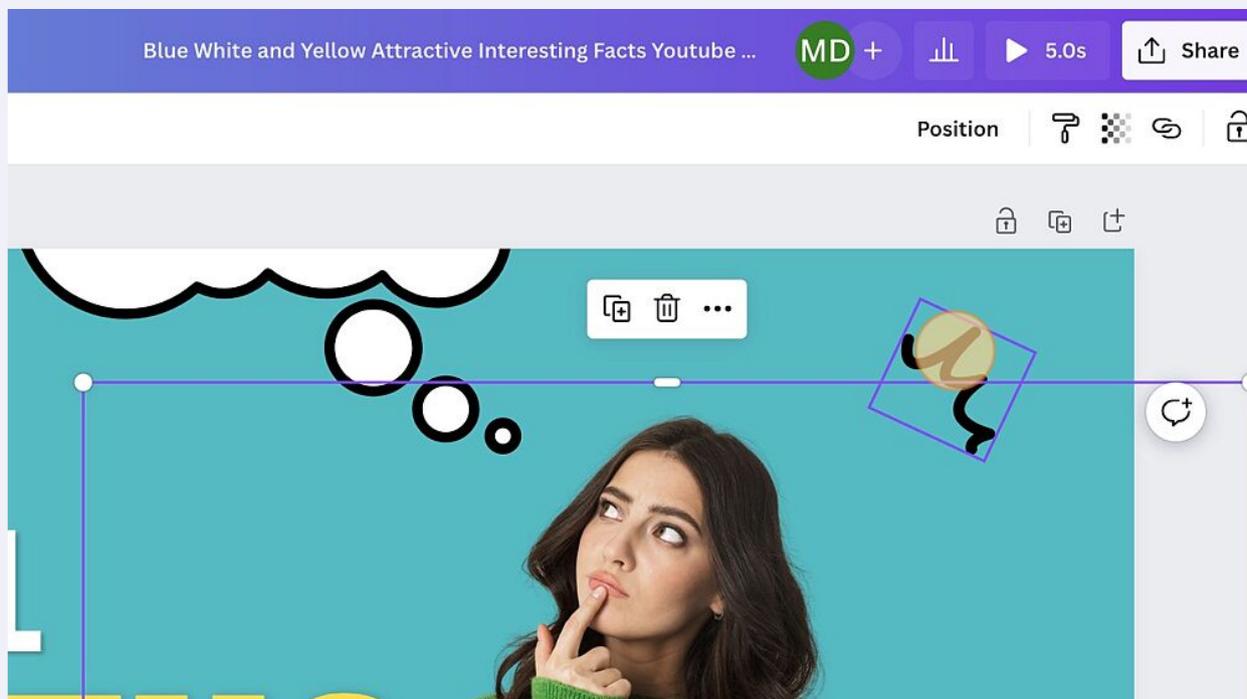
20 … then paste it and re-position it elsewhere on the image.
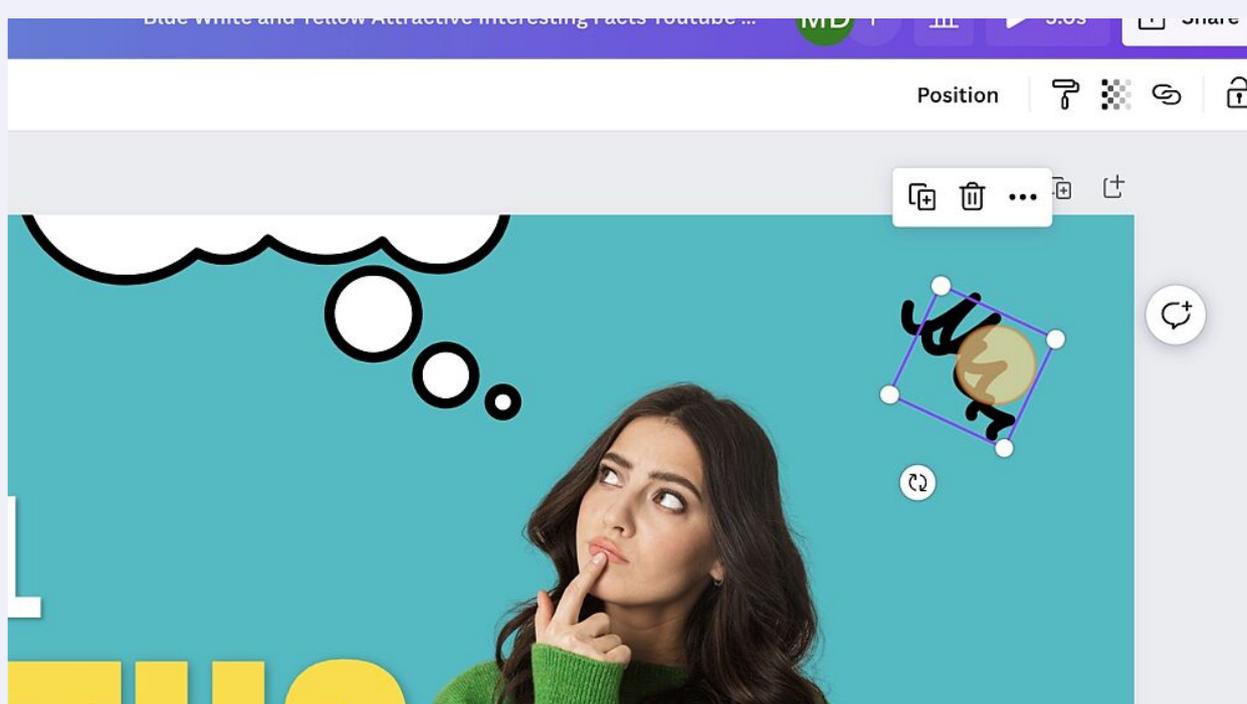
21 You can see here, that I have re-positioned it on the left side of the image. You can flip the image sideways or vertically, by clicking "Flip" in the menu
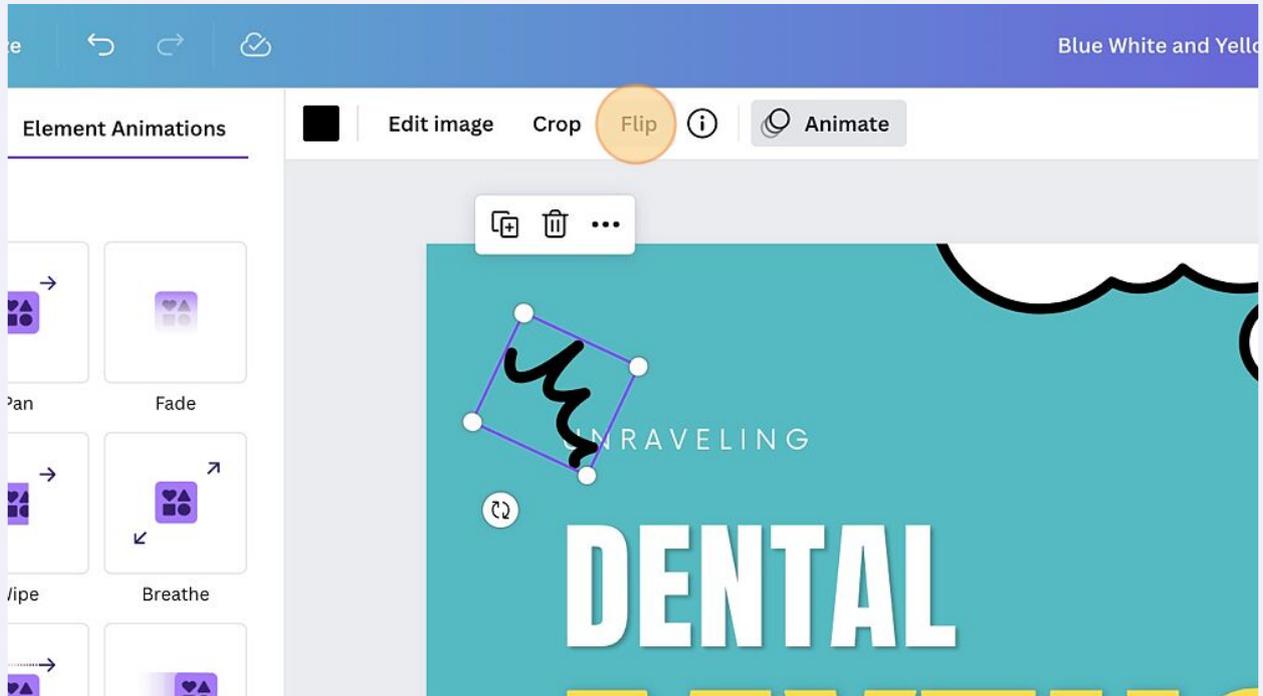
22 Click "Flip horizontal"
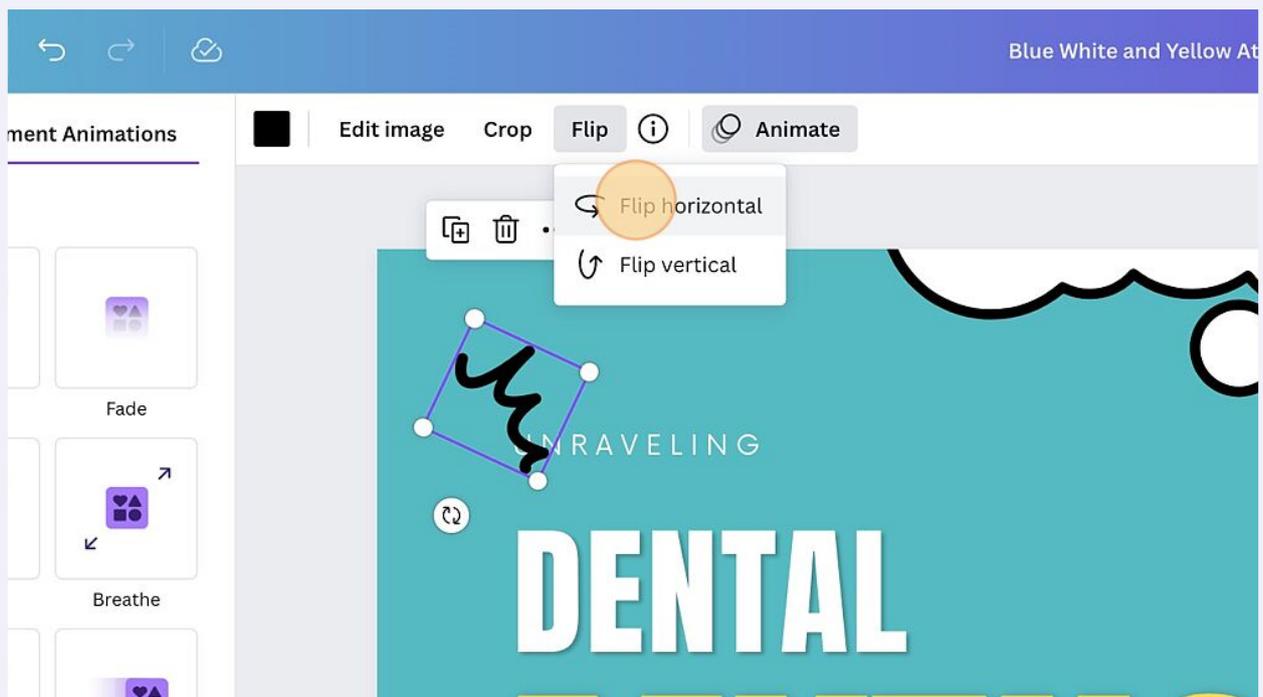
23   And re-position
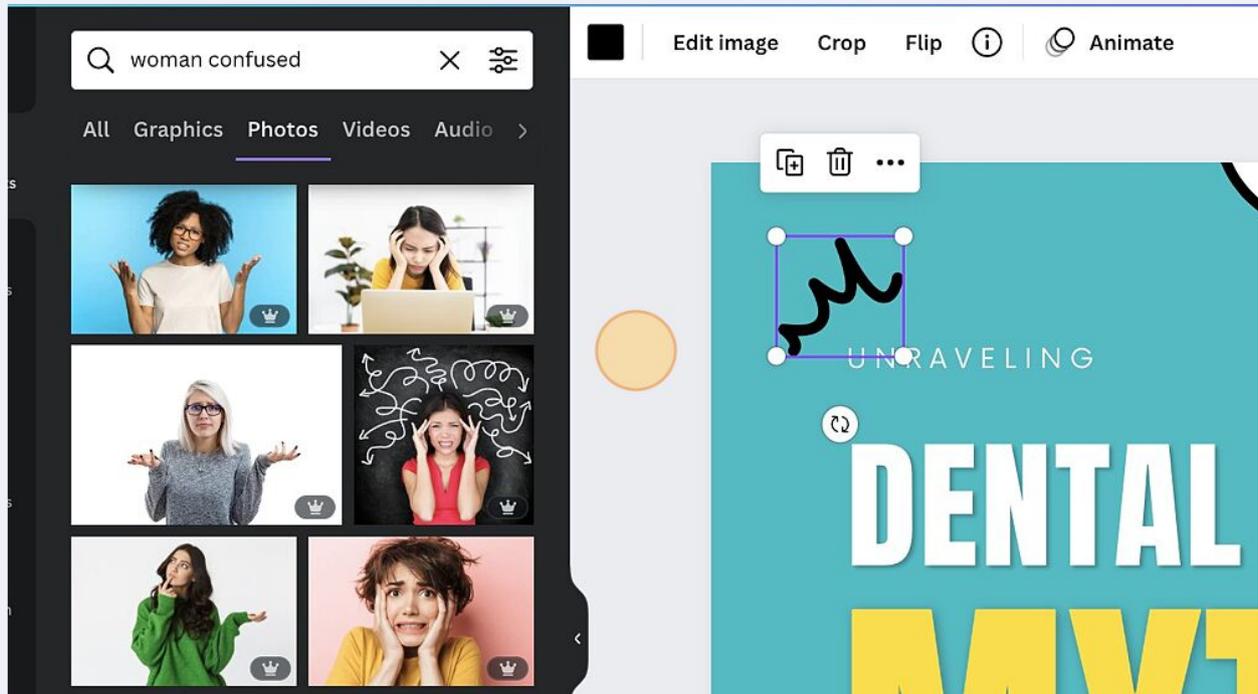
24   You can also upload custom images or AI images using the "Uploads" button on the Left Side Menu
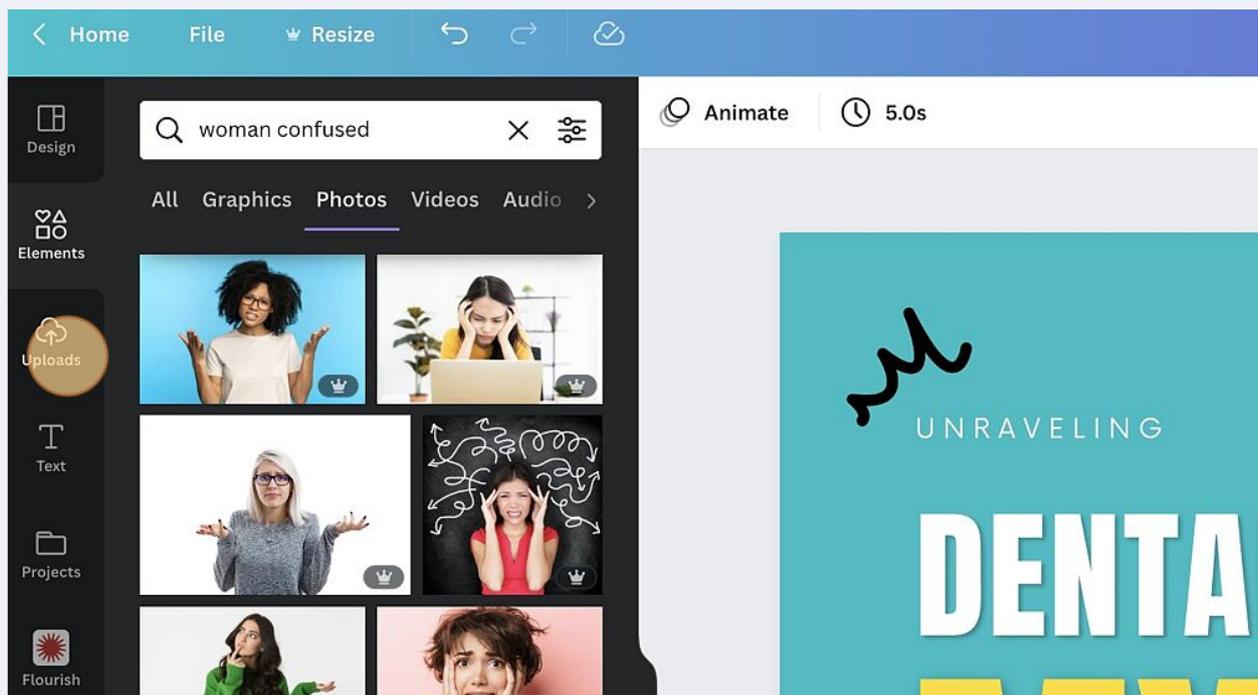
25 In this example, I will add my custom logo to identify my work. Click on the image to "Add this photo to the canvas"
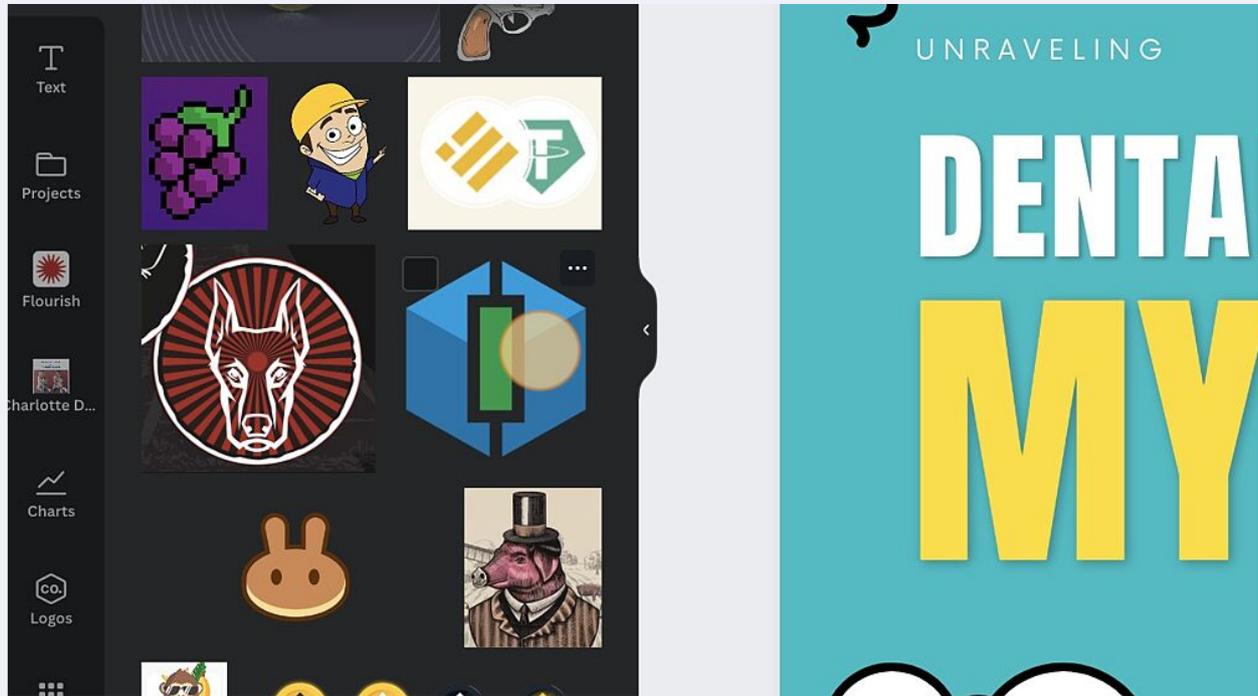
26 The uploaded image or element will appear on your canvas.
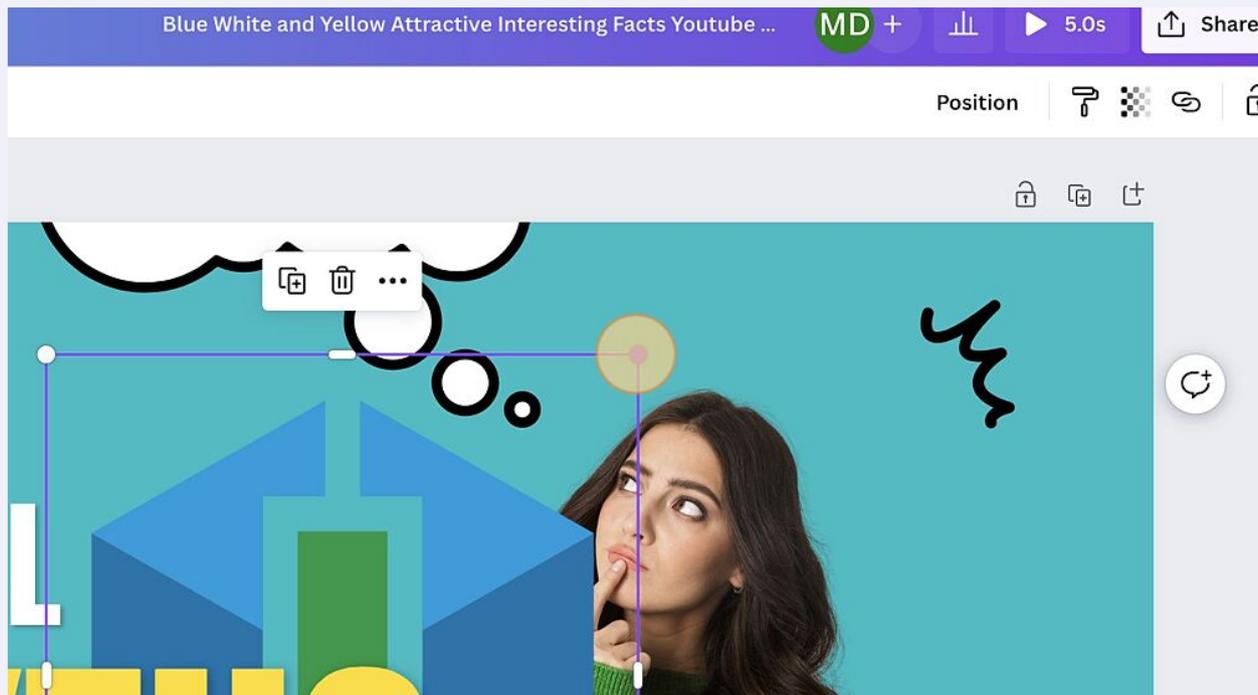
27 Re-size, and re-position where desired.
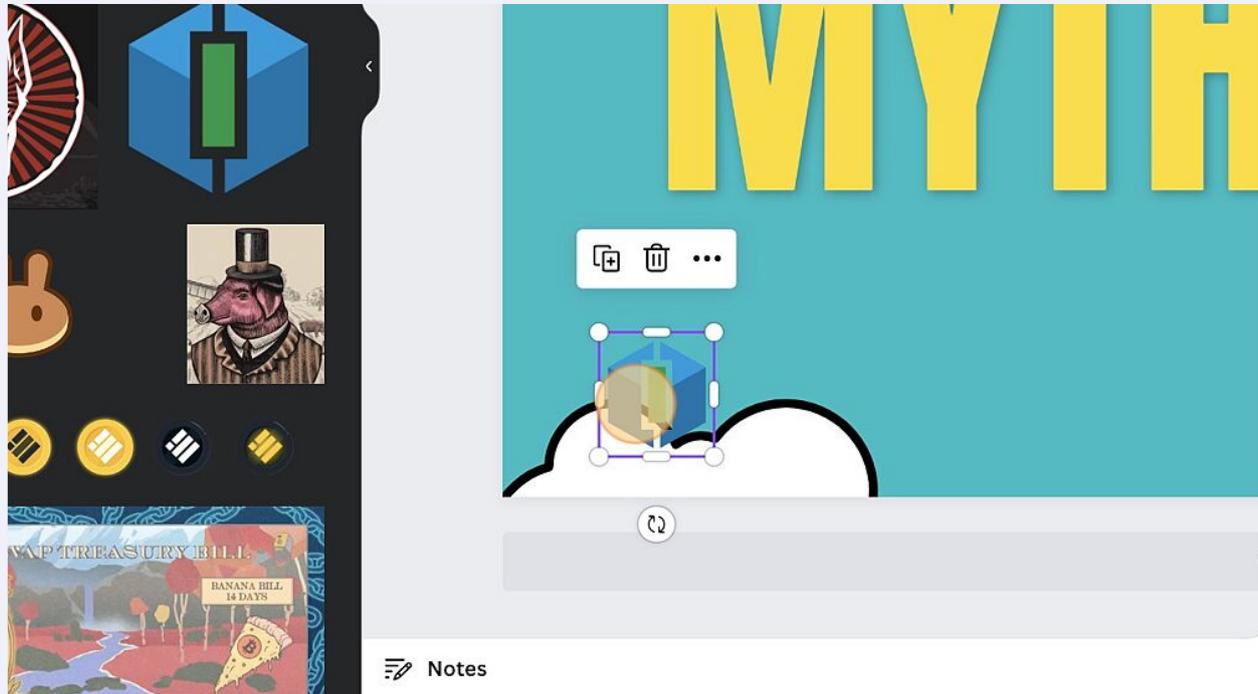
28 Optional: To give my images a subtle, but customized feel, I will often alter the translucency of my logo, so that it does not take away from the main theme of the canvas message.
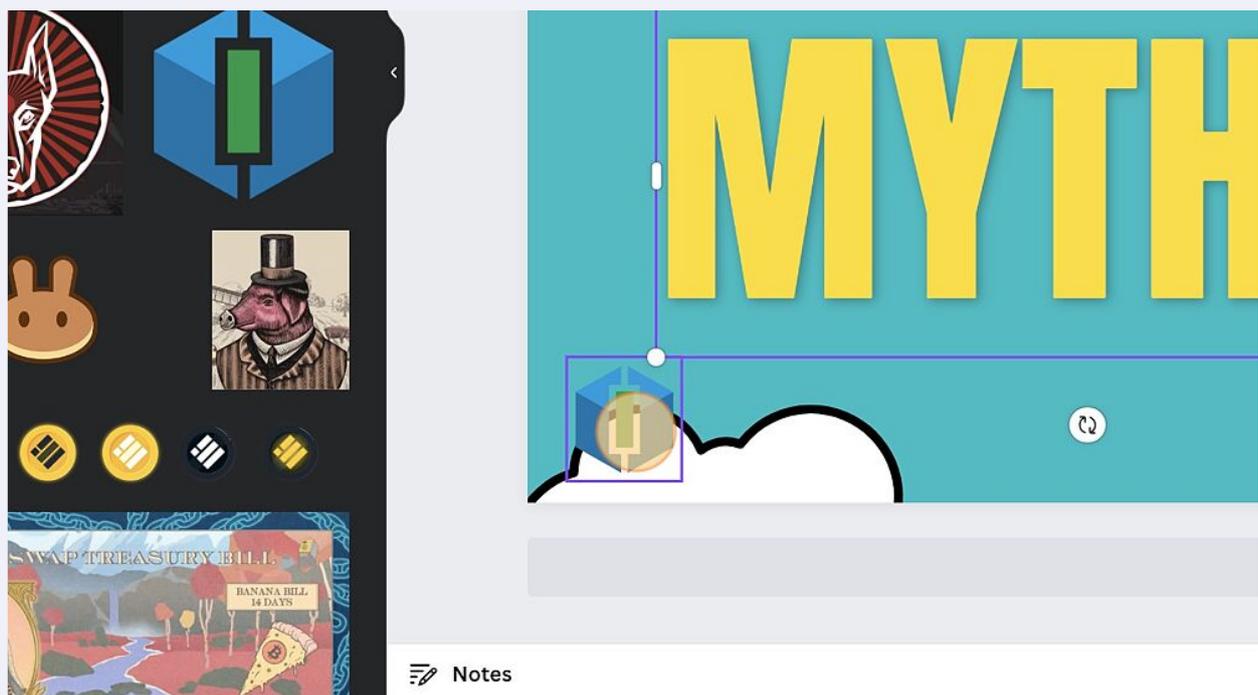
29 Click the cubes Icon on the Upper Right menu
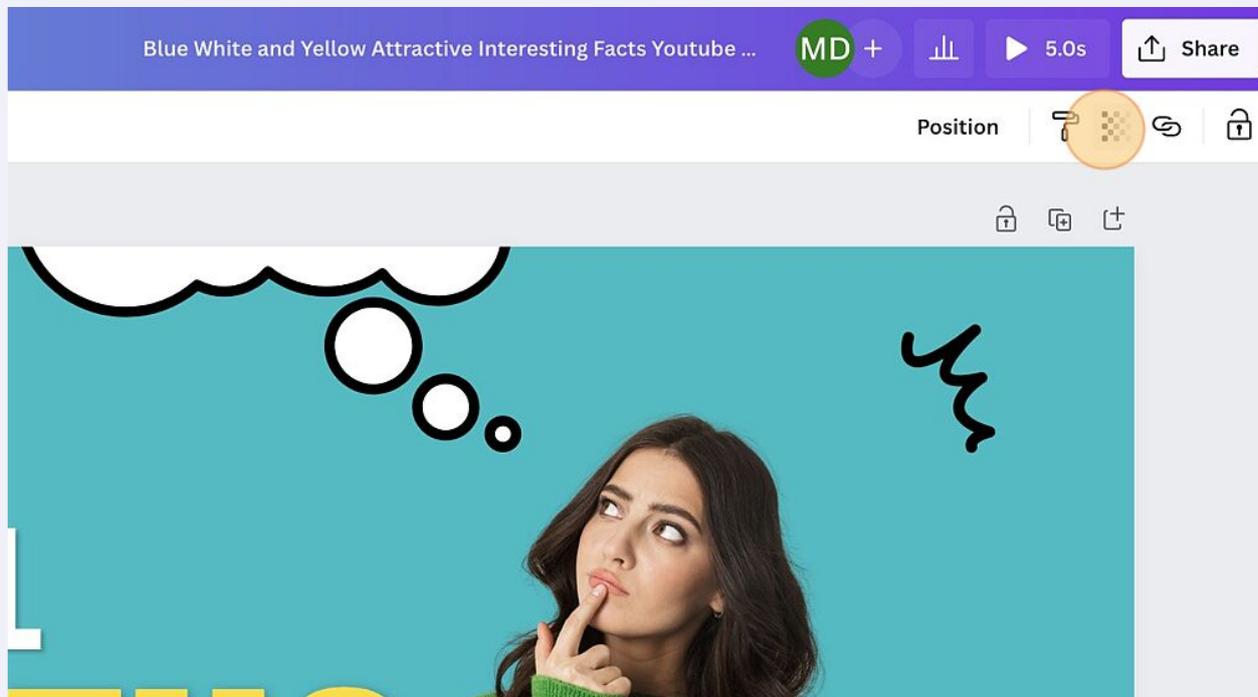
30 And alter the translucency of any element, if desired.
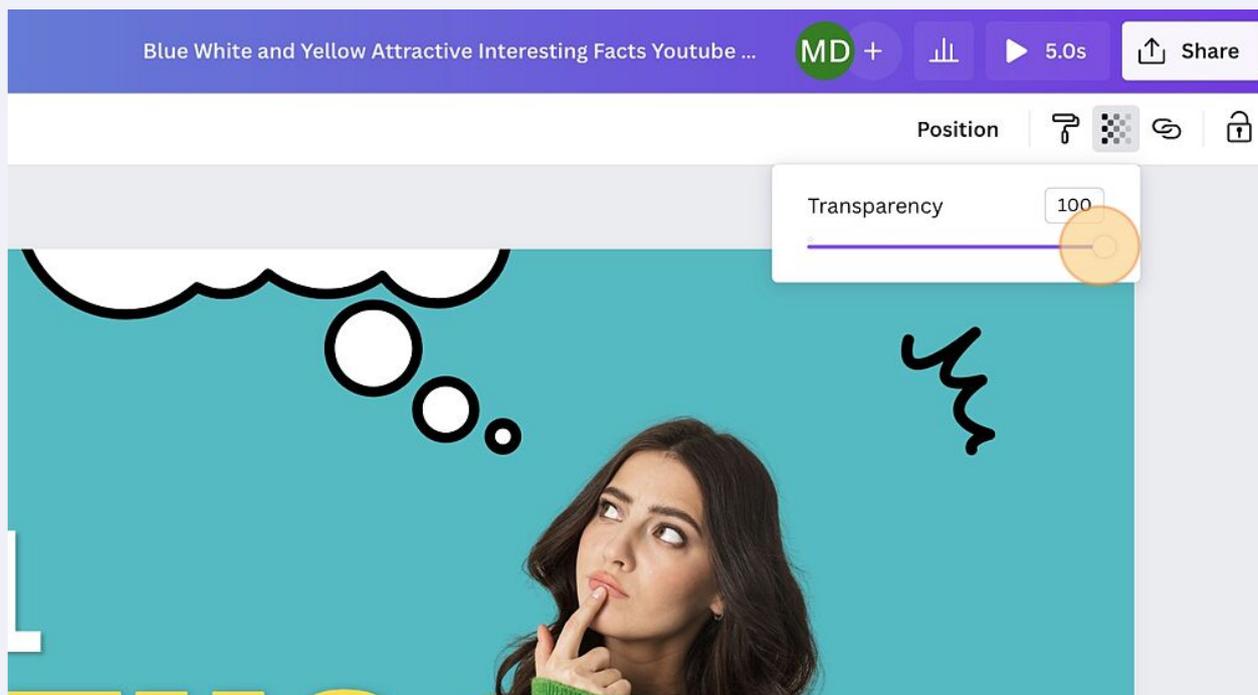
31 Next, I will show you how to re-position Layers of Elements.
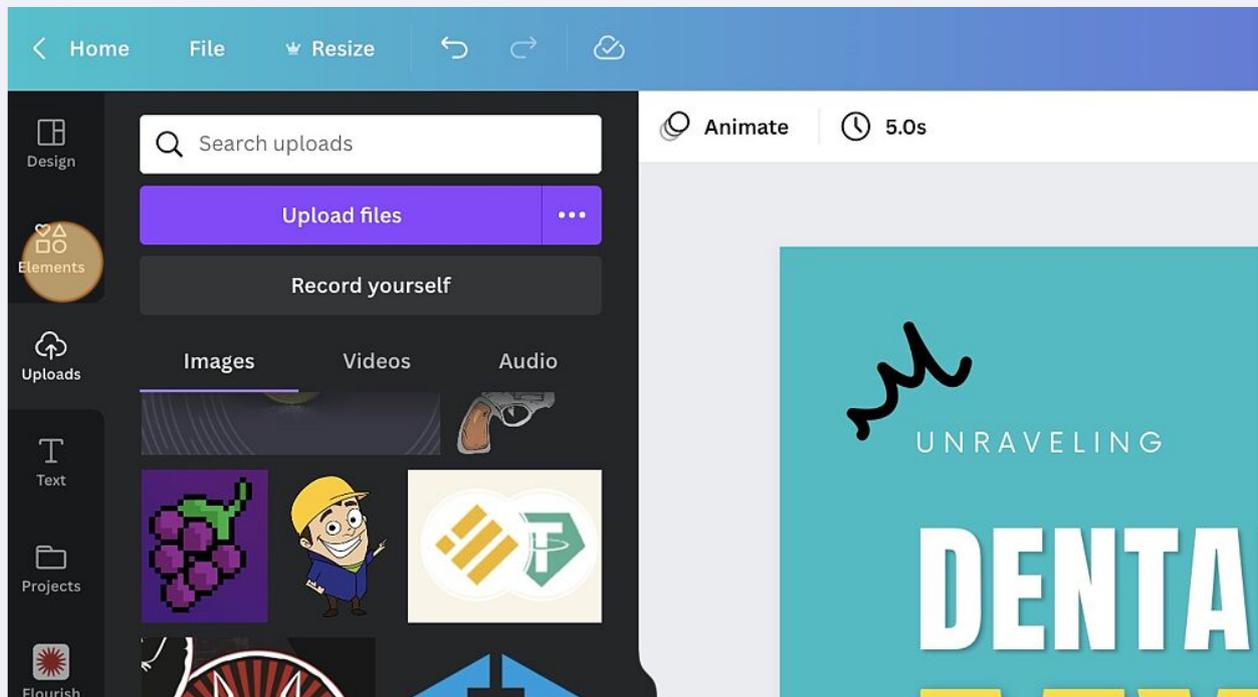
32 Find an image you would like to add. In this example, I will search for a background to place behind the image of the woman. Click the "Search Canva photos" field and search for "Backgrounds"
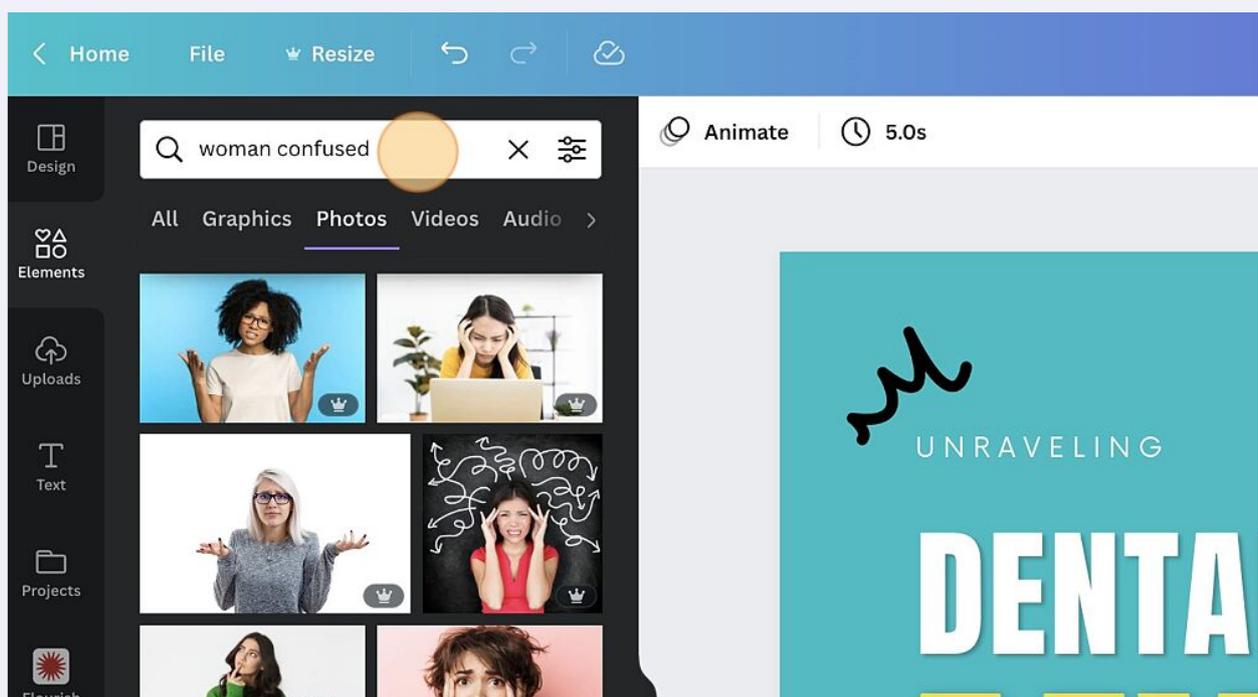
33 Click "Graphics"
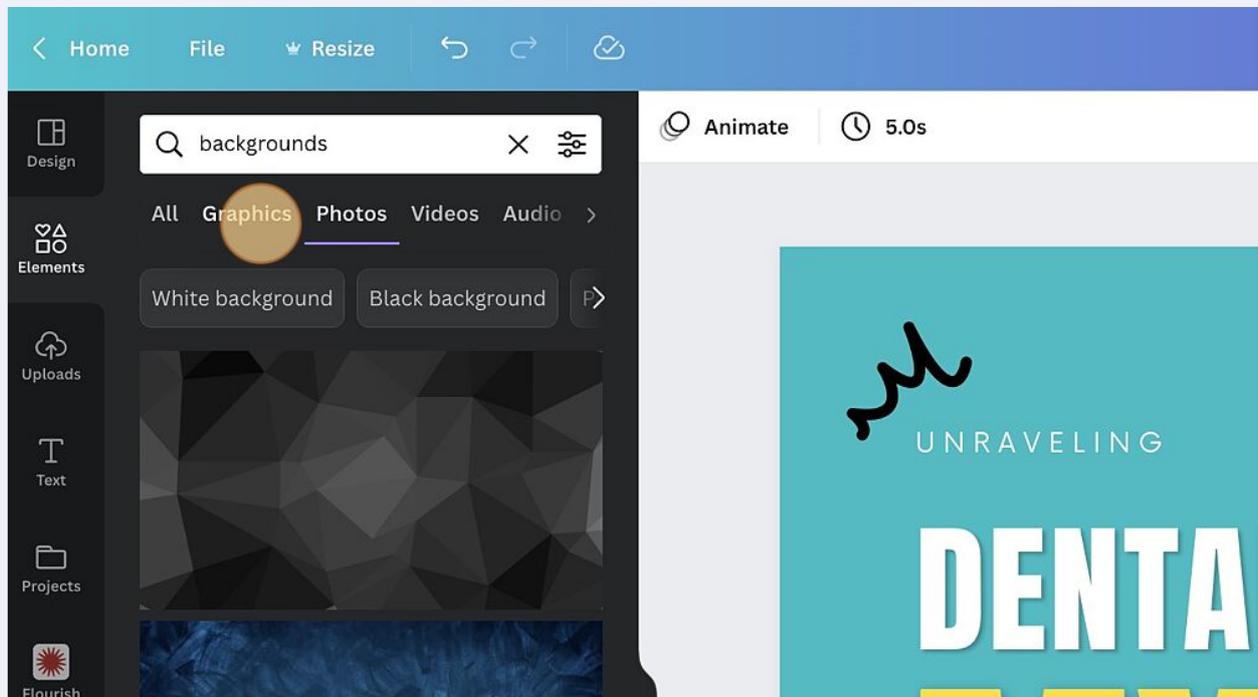
34 Select a background you like and Click "Add this photo to the canvas"
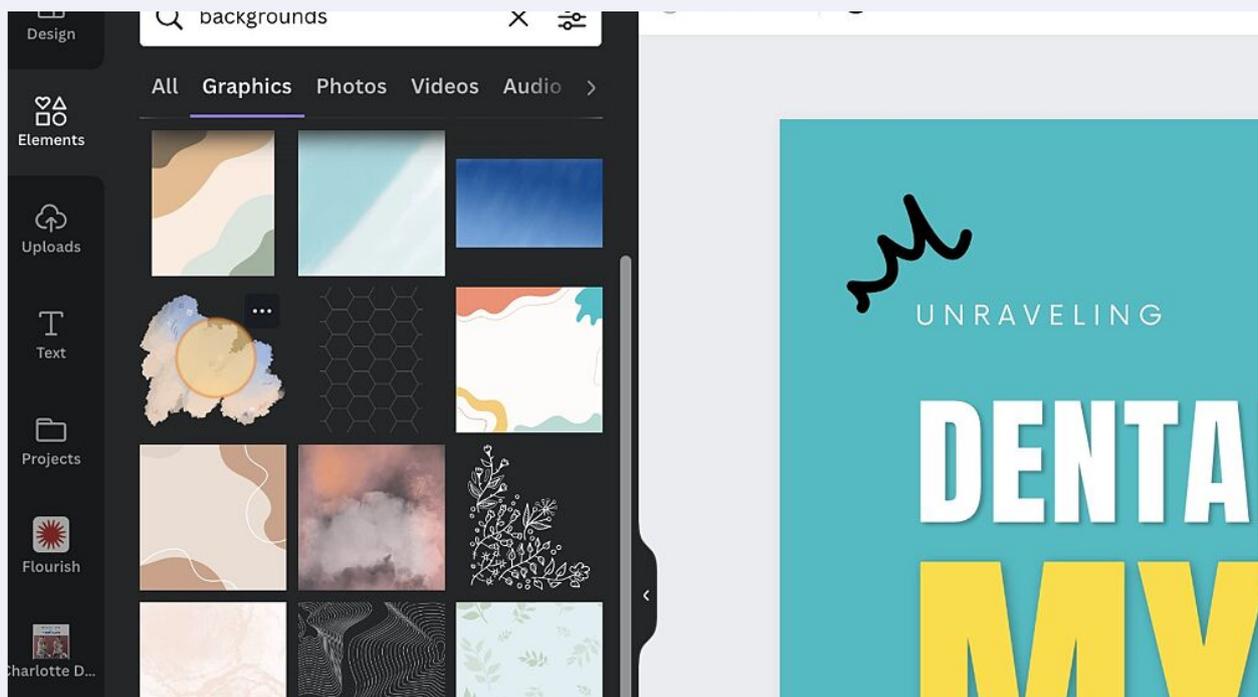
35 You can see here that the background element was placed on my canvas, but on the wrong layer in front of the woman. To place it behind the woman, select the image ...

36 Then Click "Position" on the Top Right menu, and position the element where you want it. In my example, I will click "Backward" to place the background image behind the image of the woman
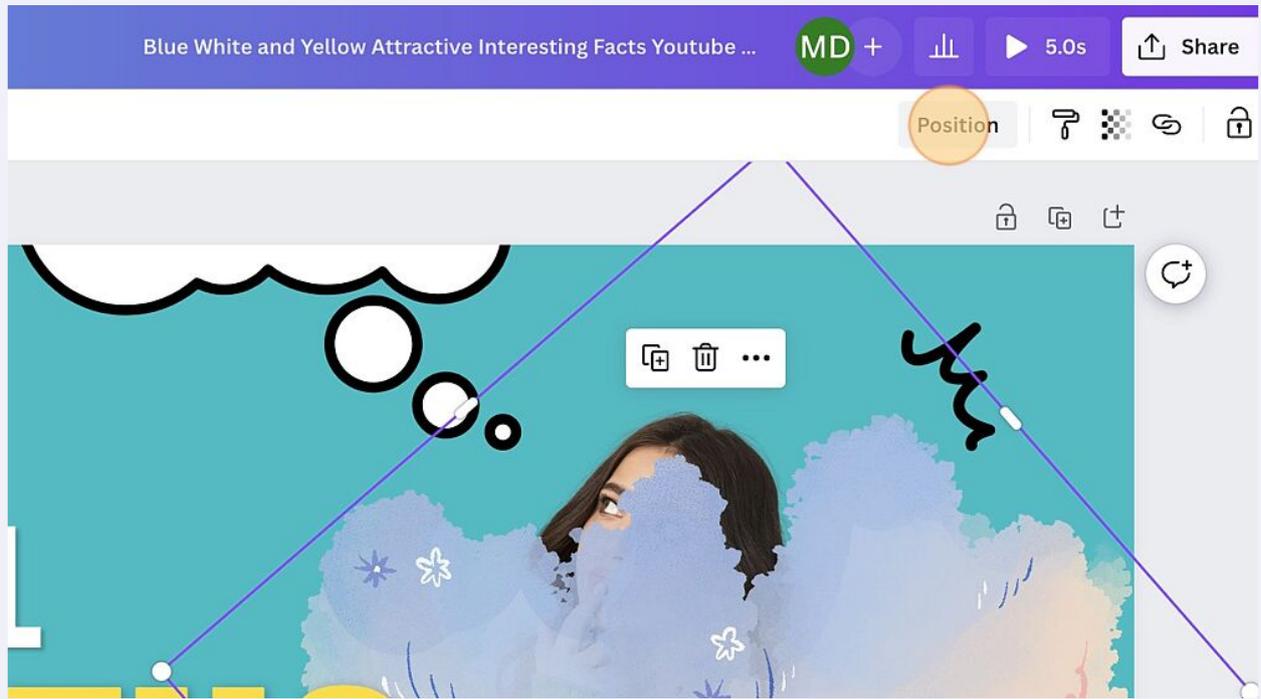
37 Re-size, re-position, or rotate as desired
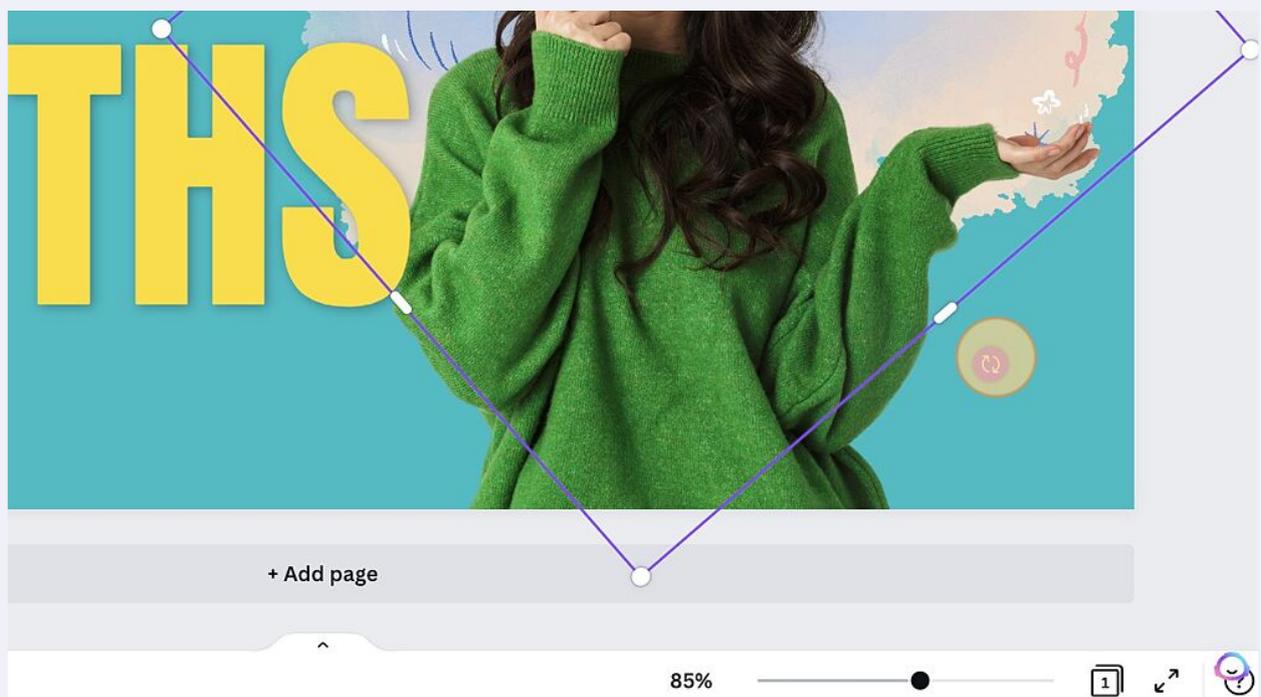
38 When you are happy with your design, you can download it by clicking the Top Left Menu File > Download
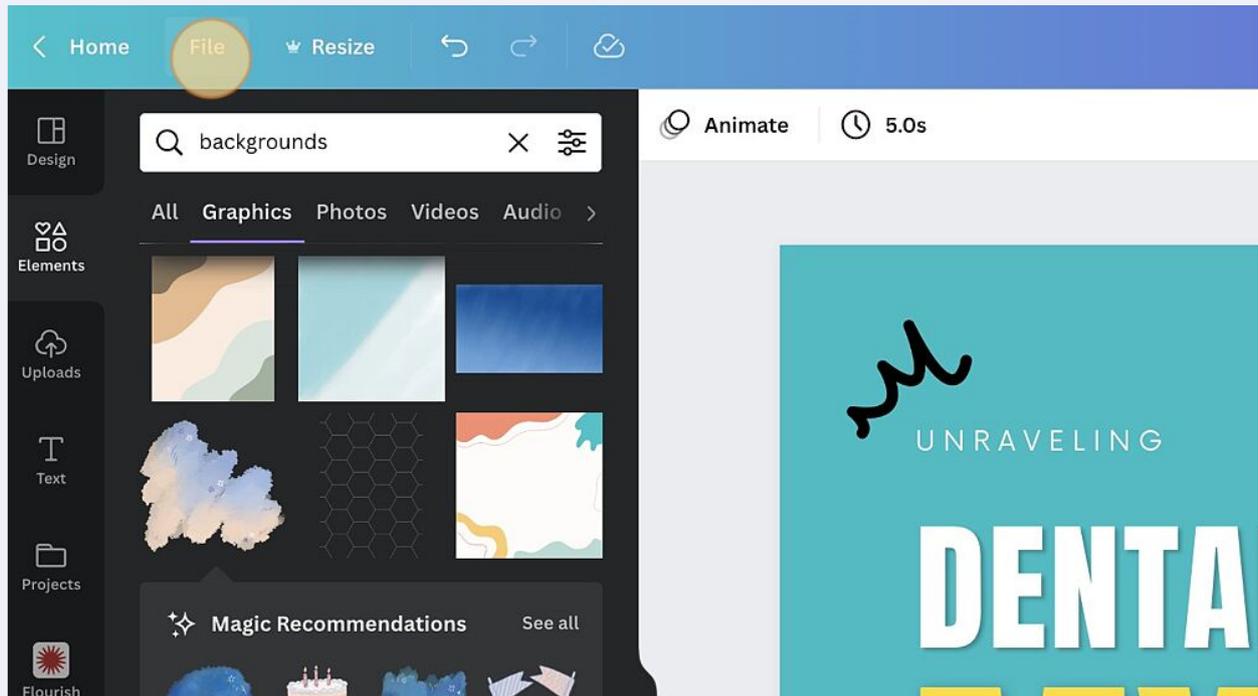
39 Click "Download"
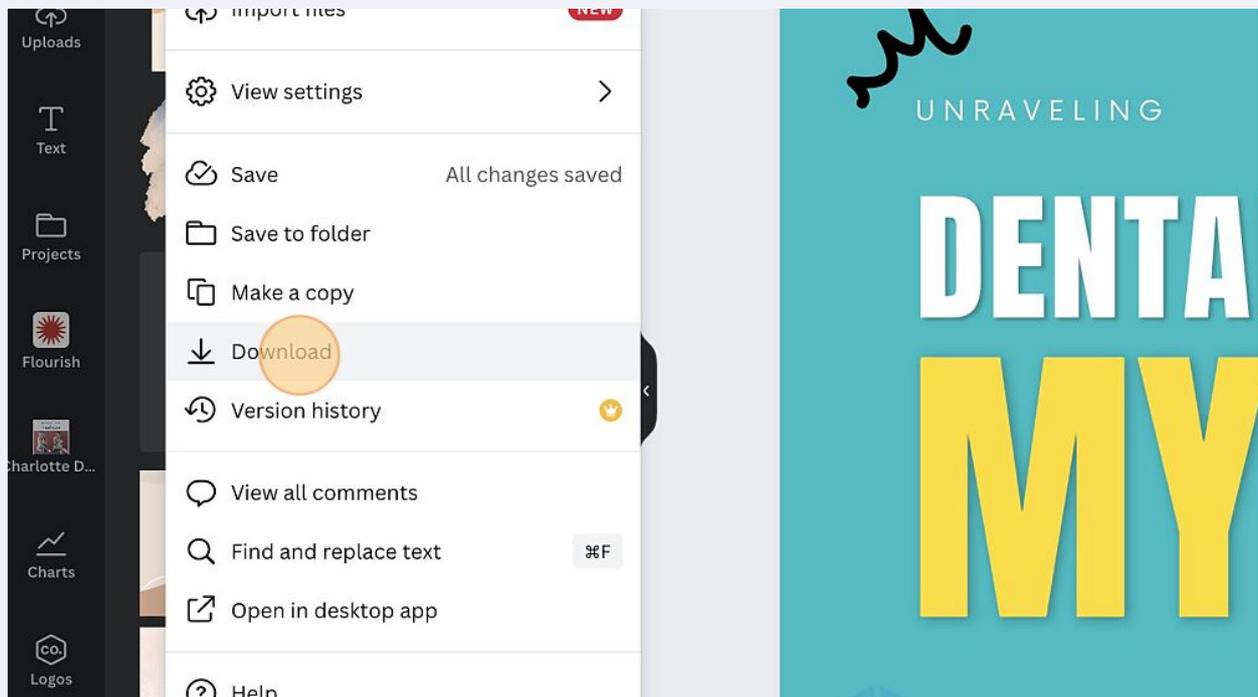
40 You will then presented with options to download as a PDF, PNG, GIF, or MP4 in various resolutions and file sizes.
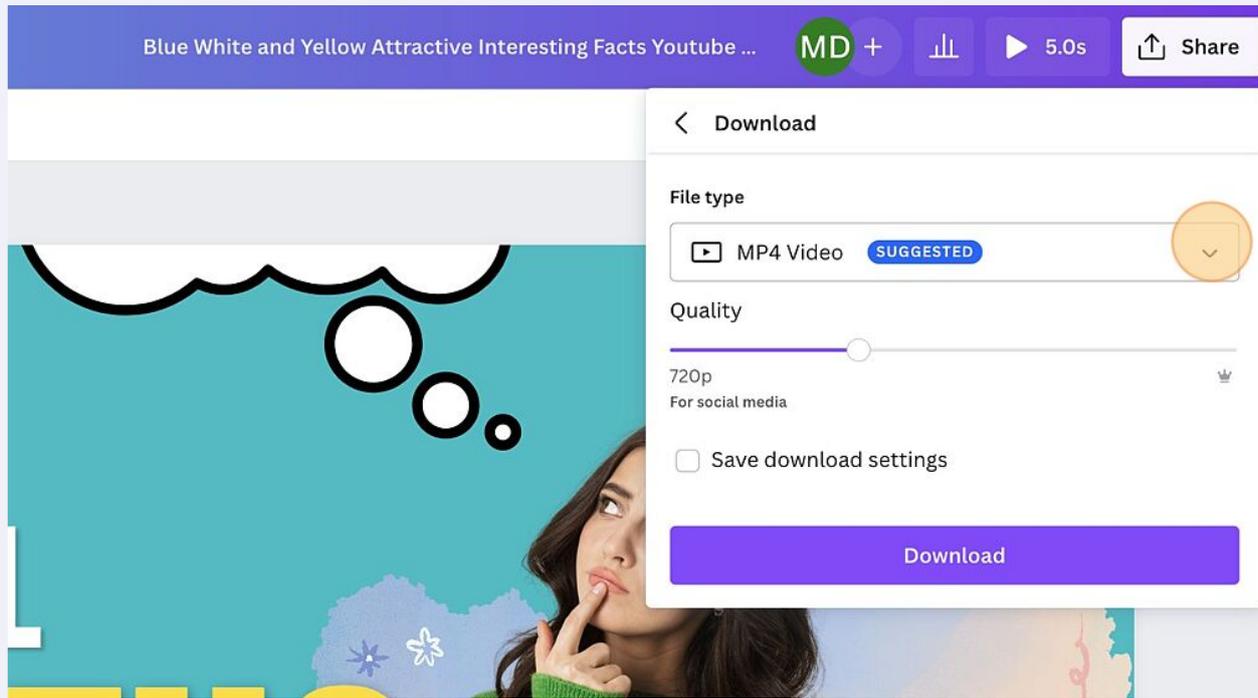
41 For most YouTube thumbnails, a PNG static image file works well. Click "PNG Best for complex images, illustrations". If you have included text or element animations, you may want to go with GIF. And if your canvas includes videos, sound, or music, then you can go with MP4. If your file is a document, then go with PDF.
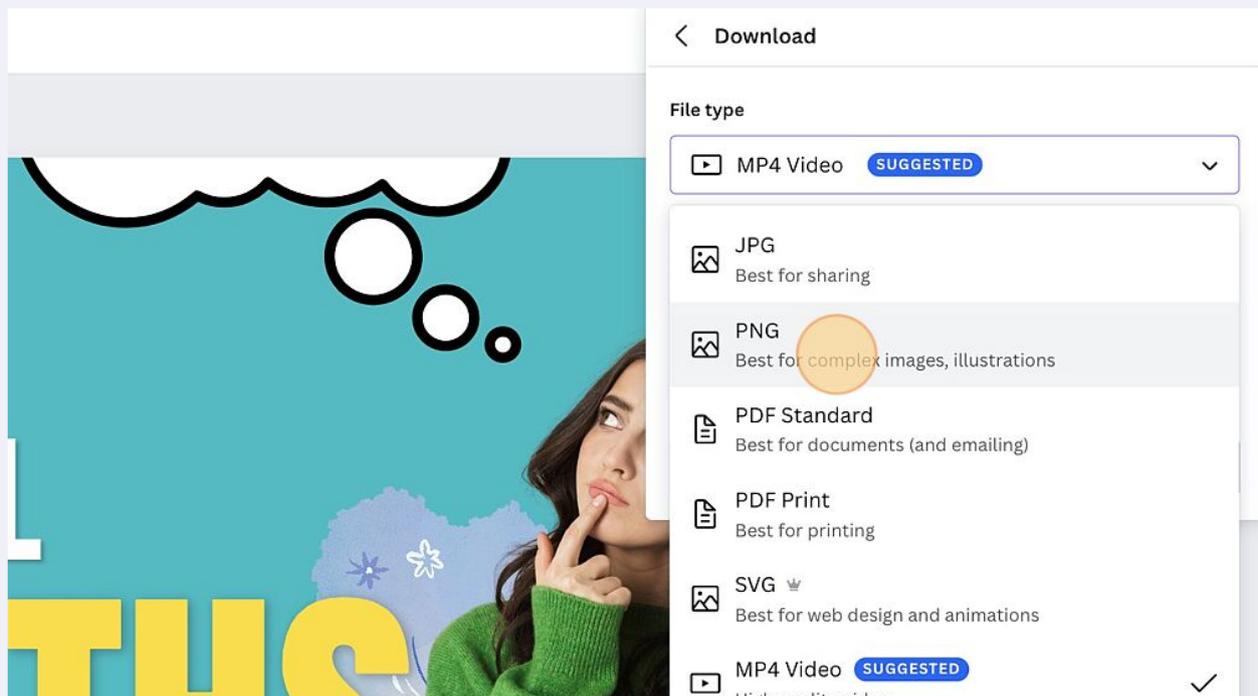
42   Click "Download" and you can now use the file anywhere you want!