

TURE: Mobile App and Responsive Website

Cory Ehrenberg

Project overview



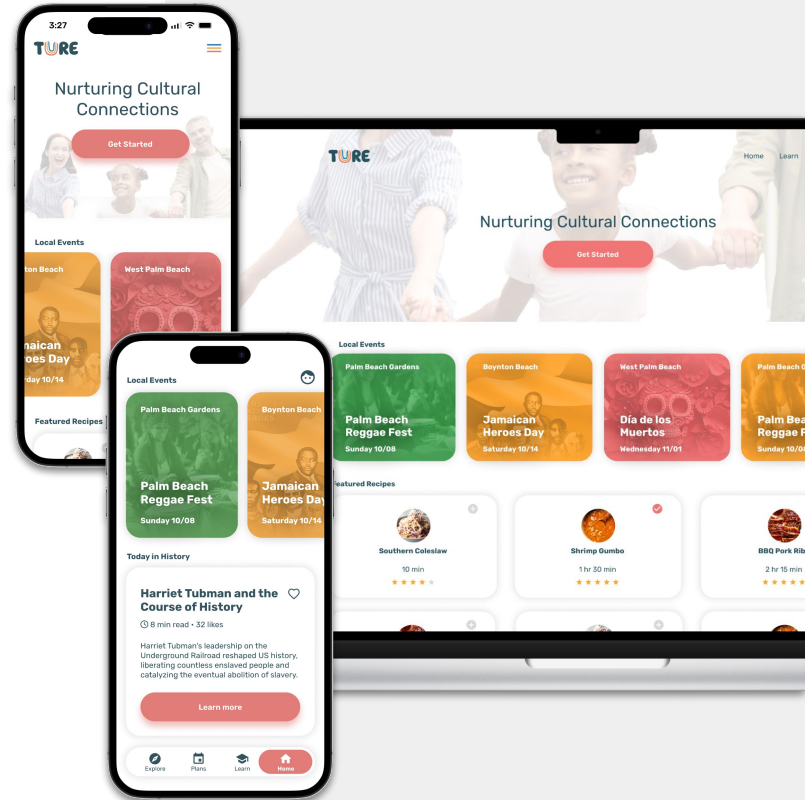
The product:

TURE is a South Florida-based network focused on improving the development of adopted and foster children. The network needs a tool that helps people learn about and experience specific cultures. TURE's target users include families of adopted children and foster parents who want to give their children of differing backgrounds a connection to their natural heritage and culture.



Project duration:

September 2023 to November 2023



Project overview



The problem:

There are 4.5 Million children in the United States are adopted, and over 400,000 children in the U.S. are in foster care. TURE has identified a lack of general knowledge of different cultures and limited resources to learn about other cultures for parents.



The goal:

Design an app that will improve education on different cultures and help parents find resources to implement those cultures into their children's lives.

Project overview



My role:

UX designer leading the app and responsive website design from conception to delivery



Responsibilities:

Conducting interviews, paper and digital wireframing, low and high-fidelity prototyping, conducting usability studies, accounting for accessibility, iterating on designs, determining information architecture, and responsive design.

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- Competitive audit
- Ideation

User research: summary



I developed interview questions based on my experience as a foster parent and an adoptive parent, which was then used to conduct user interviews. Most interview participants reported feeling disconnected from their children's heritage, and they didn't know how to find resources to incorporate those cultures into their everyday lives. The feedback received through research made it very clear that users would be open and willing to participate in cultural traditions and practices of their children if there were a reliable source of information.



“I study culture for a living, but parenting an adopted child from a different culture is a whole new challenge.”

Goals

- Create a culturally enriched home environment.
- Sense of identity and belonging in her child.
- Connect with other parents for shared experiences.

Frustrations

- Wants to be an expert in her child's culture.
- Balancing a demanding career with parenthood.
- Navigating the complexities of identity & belonging.

Persona: Aisha

Age | 40

Education | Ph.D. in Anthropology

Hometown | New York, NY

Occupation | College Professor

Aisha, an anthropologist, and her partner adopted a child from India. While her academic background provides valuable insights, she often feels the pressure to be a cultural expert and is looking for practical ways to incorporate Indian traditions into their family life. She desires to create a meaningful cultural experience for her child.



Problem Statement: Aisha

Aisha is a college professor with an adopted child from a different culture who needs a way to find and incorporate cultural traditions in their home because there is no easy place to find valuable information on how to incorporate culture into family life.





Persona: Carlos

Age | 50

Education | GED

Hometown | Albuquerque, NM

Occupation | Auto Shop Owner

“My job keeps me busy, but I want to ensure that my adopted child understands and values their Native American heritage.”

Goals

- Introduce their child to Native American customs.
- Find time with their child to explore their heritage.
- Connect with the local Native American community.

Frustrations

- Limited free time due to running a small business.
- Finding culturally relevant resources for their child.
- Their child feeling disconnected from their roots.

Carlos, a hardworking business owner, adopted a child from the Navajo Nation. He faces time constraints due to running his auto repair shop but is determined to pass on his child's Native American heritage. He often wishes there was a way to seamlessly integrate cultural learning into their daily lives and connect with other adoptive parents facing similar time challenges.



Problem Statement: Carlos

Carlos is a **small business owner and adoptive parent** who needs a **convenient solution to introduce their child to Native American customs** because **they face time constraints due to running their auto repair shop.**





Persona: Sarah

Age | 35

Education | Bachelor's in Social Work

Hometown | San Diego, CA

Occupation | School Counselor

“I want to make sure my child grows up with a strong connection to their heritage.”

Goals

- Celebrate cultural holidays and traditions from their child's background.
- Connect with local cultural communities.
- Encourage their child to learn their native language.

Frustrations

- Limited knowledge of their child's cultural heritage.
- Difficulty finding resources or events to expose their child to their culture.
- Cultural gaps.

Sarah and her husband adopted two little girls from American foster care, whose roots trace back to Jamaica. Sarah finds it challenging to find age-appropriate resources and events to help her children learn about their Jamaican heritage. She often wishes there was an easy way to connect with other families who adopted from foster care with similar backgrounds.

Problem Statement: Sarah

Sarah is an elementary school counselor and an adoptive parent, who needs a way to learn about and celebrate cultural traditions because they find it challenging to find age-appropriate resources and events.





“I want to give my foster children a strong sense of their roots, even if it means learning alongside them.”

Goals

- Explore their children's diverse cultural heritages.
- Find local cultural events to attend.
- Sense of pride and belonging in their children.

Frustrations

- Limited financial resources for cultural activities.
- Lack of educational background.
- Finding it difficult to connect with their children's diverse cultures due to limited exposure.

Persona: David

Age | 42

Education | High School Diploma

Hometown | Memphis, TN

Occupation | Factory Worker

David and his partner are foster parents who have two children, one of African American descent and the other of Chinese heritage. Despite their limited education and resources, David is determined to expose both children to their respective cultural heritages. He often feels overwhelmed and wishes there was a simple, affordable way to learn about African American and Chinese traditions, and to connect with other foster parents who face similar challenges.



Problem Statement: David

David is a factory worker and foster parent who needs a way to explore and appreciate their children's diverse cultural heritages because there is no clear way to connect to the network of new people from differing communities.



Competitive audit

An audit of a few competitor's products provided direction on gaps and opportunities to address with the TURE app.

Click to view the full [competitive audit](#)

Competitive audit							
Goal: Compare the user experience and features of each website or app.							
General information							
Competitor type (direct or indirect)	Location(s)	Product offering	Price (\$ - \$\$\$)	Website (URL)	Business size (small, medium, large)	Target audience	Unique value proposition
AdoptUSkids	Direct	Linthicum Heights, MD	Free	https://adoptuskids.org/	Large	Middle Class U.S. Adults wanting to adopt	Network to educate families and spread awareness about the need for foster and adoptive families
Child Welfare Information Gateway	Direct	Washington, DC	Free	https://www.childwelfare.gov/	Large	Foster parents in the US	Government resources for professionals to gain education and to protect children in child welfare system
Florida DCF	Indirect	Tallahassee, FL	-	https://www.myflfamilies.com/	Large	Florida Parents biological, adoptive, or foster	Government agency with direct power to place children in safer care
Planned Parenthood	Indirect	New York, NY / Global	\$	https://www.plannedparenthood.org/	Large	Lower income Americans, usually women and LGBTQ+ people	Provide the high-quality inclusive and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care services

First Impressions				UX (note: needs work, okay, good, or outstanding)	
Desktop website experience		App or mobile website experience		Features	Accessibility
Good + Clear Branding + Looks Professional - Feels dense and overwhelming	Okay + Adaptive, so it WORKS on any device - Not responsive, so it isn't OPTIMIZED for every device	Outstanding + Quiz to determine needs + Easy to use and understand FAQs	Good + Versions for multiple different languages + High contrast + A lot of written content and no useful photo/video description	Outstanding + Easy to find informational materials + No clear hierarchy, too many competing elements	Okay + Easy to find menu + Obvious where to go next
Good + Clear Branding + Appealing Imagery - Seems amateurish	Outstanding + Fully Responsive + Menu drops to bottom for easy reaching + Key information present	Outstanding + Quick "Sign Up" + Popular menu and additional item menu	Outstanding + Very good contrast + Multiple Languages + mobile menu is optimized for limited movement	Needs work - No clear secondary language options - Must have email to do anything	Needs work + Easy to find Menu - Still can't find helpful information - Unclear sign-up
Good + Visually appealing + Engaging animations - Chat box always covering content	Outstanding + Fully Responsive + Menu is easy to read	Needs work - Can't view all features - Have to give email to be contacted to sign up	Needs work + High contrast for screen reader + No clear secondary language options	Good + Easy to find pricing + Obvious flow - Lacking hierarchy	Good + Easy to find pricing + Obvious flow - Lacking hierarchy
Outstanding + Clear Branding + Looks Professional + Clean Design	Outstanding + Fully Responsive + Menu is easy to read + Key information present	Outstanding + Easy contact features + Compare services	Needs work + 12 Languages and "Global" + Features page has descriptive images - Not great contrast in some sections		

Navigation	Visual design		Content	
	Brand identity	Tone	Descriptiveness	Descriptiveness
Okay + Easy to navigate to different pages - Dense overwhelming homepage - Lots of Call to Action buttons	Outstanding + Consistent and clear colors, fonts, and style - Strong brand identity	Friendly and indirect Somewhat whimsical	Needs work + All information is present - Too much competing information - Too descriptive	
Okay + Important Menu items are easy - More obscure menu items hard to find	Needs work + Consistent imagery - Brand identity is lacking - Too many different type, line, and color styles	Friendly and indirect	Outstanding + Short and to the point + Explains what's needed, elaborates later	
Okay + Sticky menu makes it easy to navigate - Not clear where to go next	Good + Consistent and clear colors, fonts, and style + Strong brand identity - Varying styles of imagery	Somewhat friendly and direct	Okay + All features seem to be present - Not enough description	
Outstanding + Easy Navigation - Menu is sticky, but hides when scrolling	Good + Nice Imagery + Descriptive constant iconography - Inconsistent color and font styles	Friendly and direct	Outstanding + All information is present + Short and to the point + Explains what steps to take	



Ideation

I did a quick ideation exercise to come up with ideas for how to address gaps identified in the competitive audit. My focus was specifically on **access to cultural events and information on cultural traditions.**



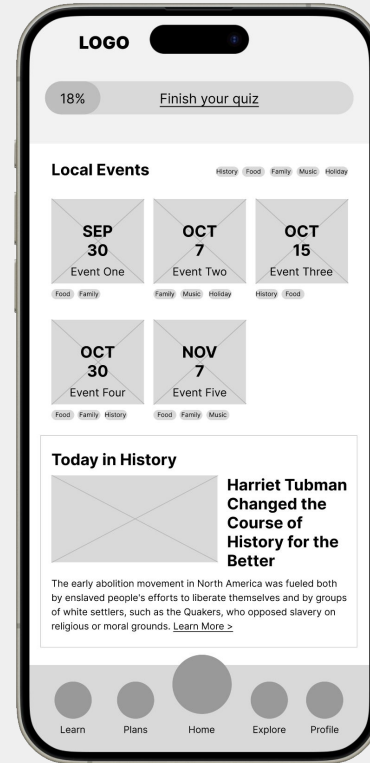
Starting the design

- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies

Digital wireframes

After ideating and drafting some paper wireframes, I created the initial designs for the TURE app. These designs focused on delivering our user personalized access to events, recipes and education.

Different sections provide quick access to important content, right on the home screen



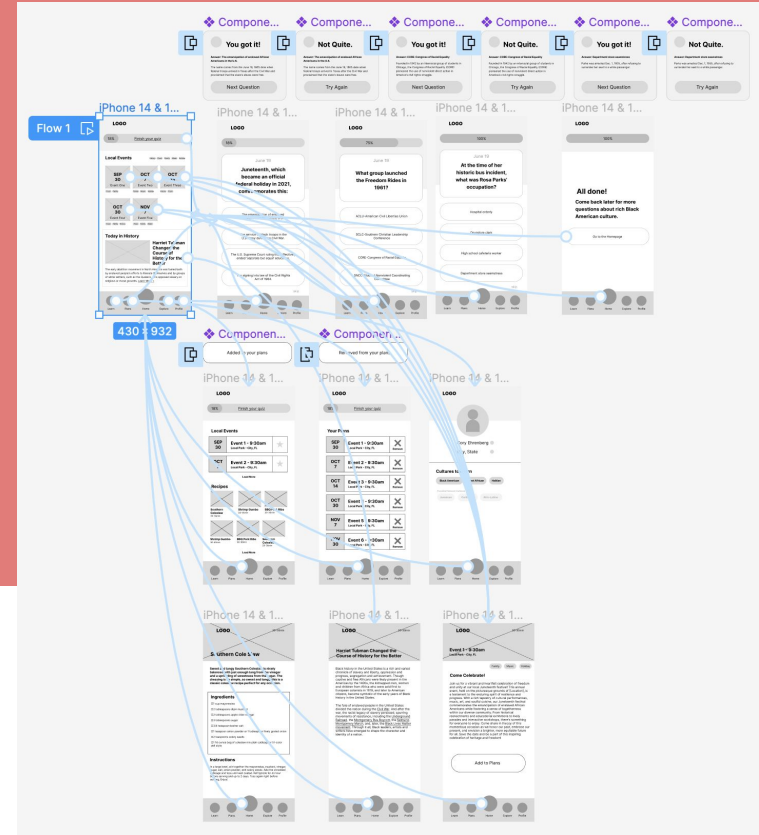
Check your status on educational materials

Easy access to app features from global navigation

Low-fidelity prototype

To prepare for usability testing, I created a low-fidelity prototype that connected the user flow of finding a local event and adding it to a calendar.

View [TURE's low-fidelity prototype](#)



Usability study: parameters



Study type:

Unmoderated usability study



Participants:

5 participants



Location:

United States, remote



Length:

15-20 minutes

Usability study: findings

These were the main findings uncovered by the usability study:

1

Events

People want easy access to events and traditions for specific heritages.

2

Recipes

People had interest in trying new foods that would connect to different cultures.

3

Education

People want to learn about their children's heritage without interfering with their parenting

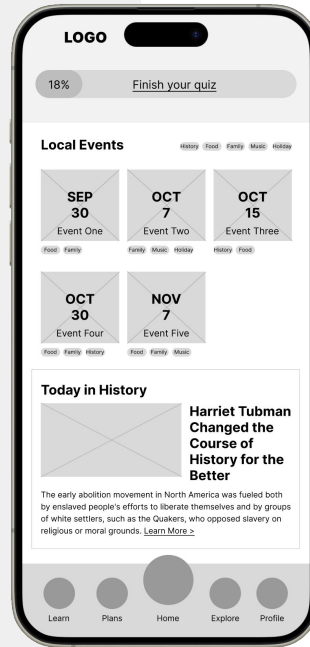
Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

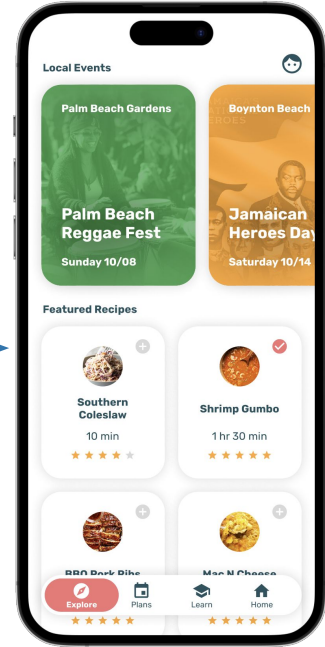
Mockups

Based on the insights from the usability studies, design changes made included making the event card horizontally scrollable to allow for easier access to other information without hiding it.

Before usability study



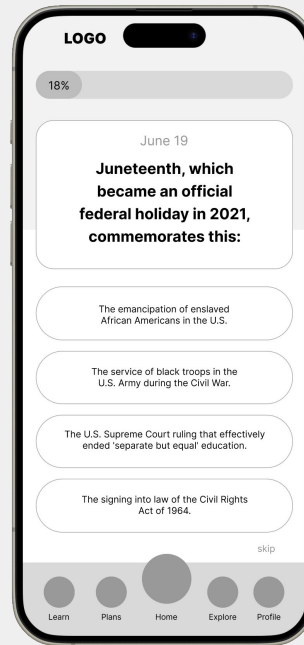
After usability study



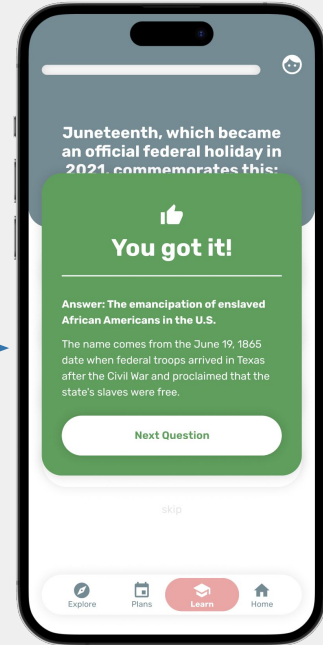
Mockups

Additionally, I applied flow changes like clear conformations from one educational topic to another.

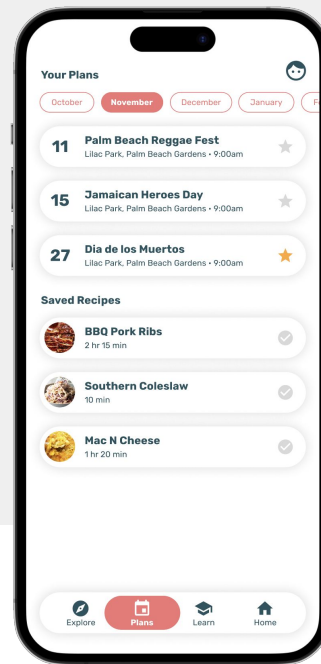
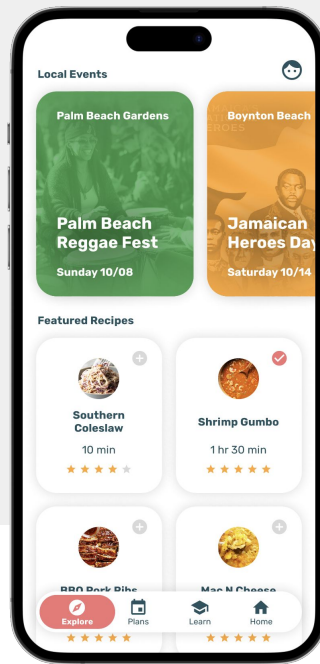
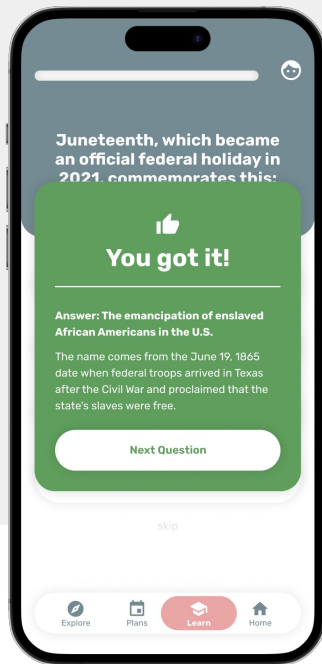
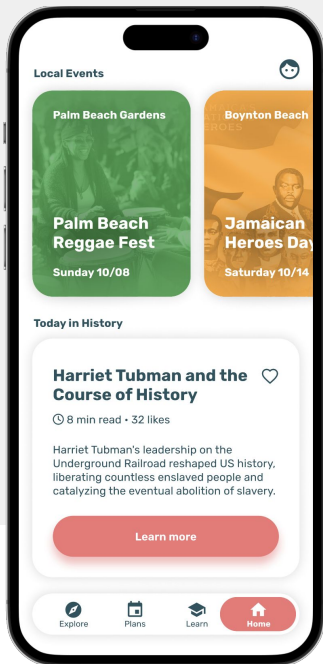
Before usability study



After usability study



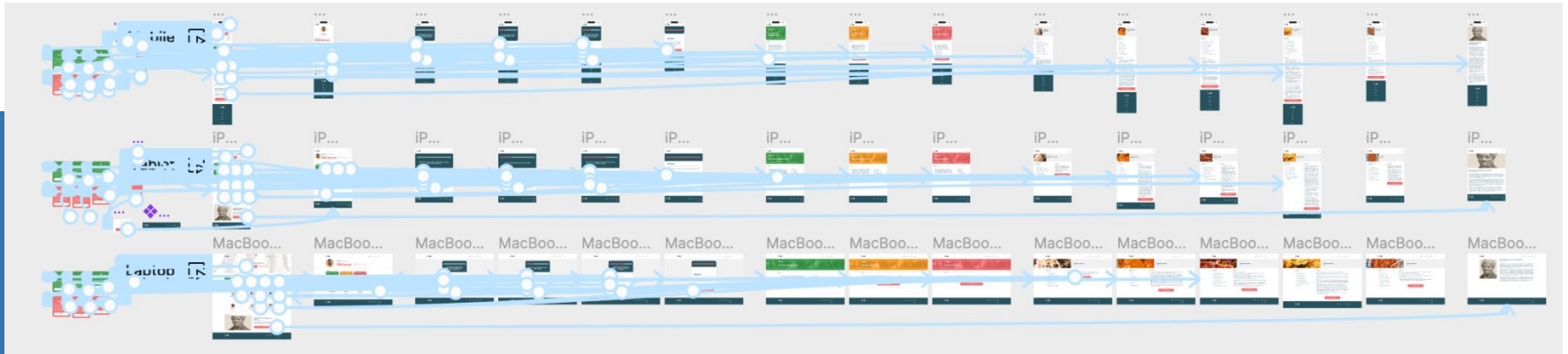
Mockups



High-fidelity prototype

The high-fidelity prototype had a slightly different user flow as the low-fidelity prototype, and include design changes made after the usability study.

View the [TURE high-fidelity prototype](#)



Accessibility considerations

1

Clear interactive responses to user actions, specifically in the educational materials.

2

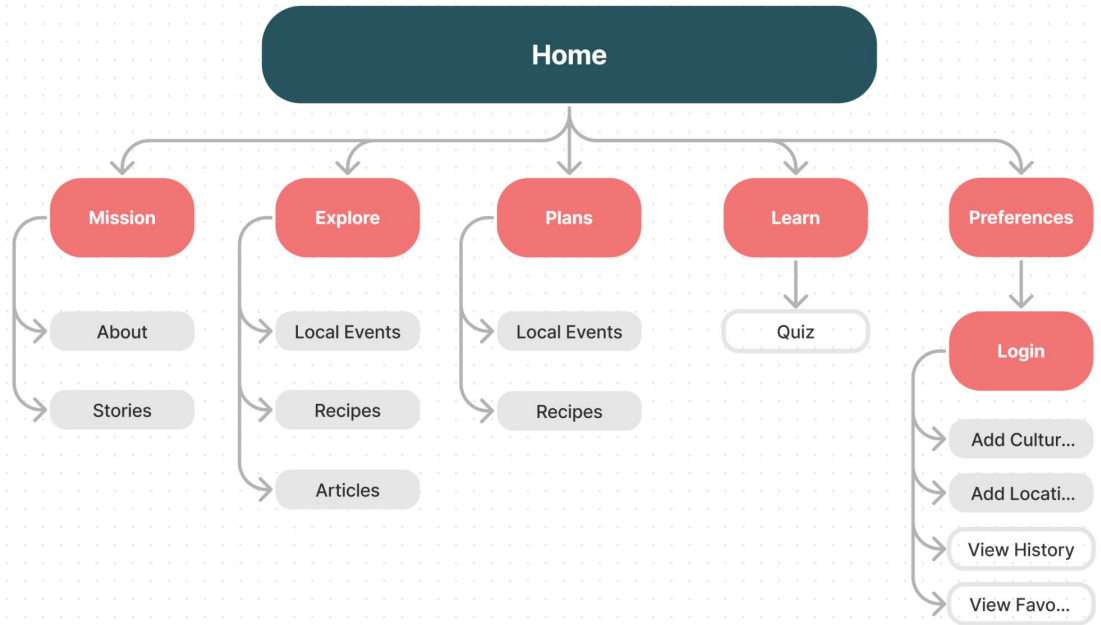
Clear iconography on the app navigation to allow pages to be quickly identifiable.

Responsive Design

- Information architecture
- Responsive design

Sitemap

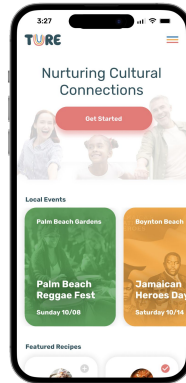
With the app designs completed, I started work on designing the responsive website. I used TURE sitemap to guide the organizational structure of each screen's design to ensure a cohesive and consistent experience across devices.



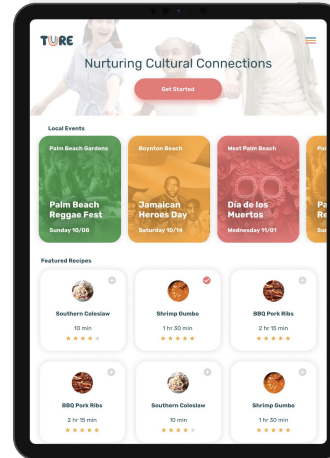
Responsive designs

The designs for screen size variation included mobile, tablet, and desktop. I optimized the designs to fit specific user needs of each device and screen size.

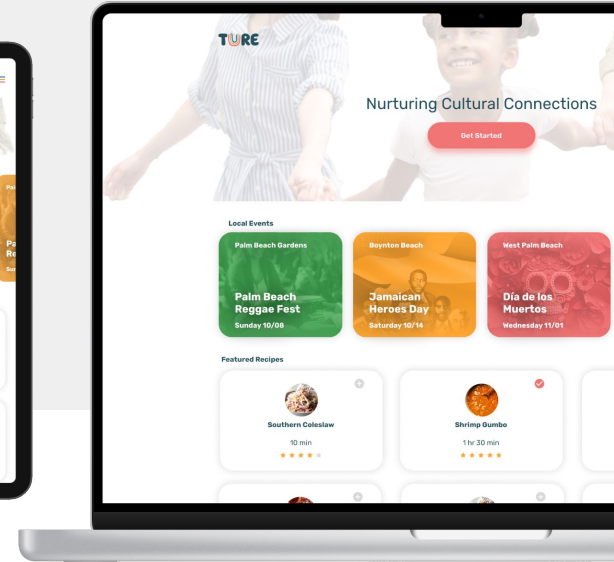
Mobile



Tablet



Desktop



Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways



Impact:

Users shared that the app made them feel like they can really implement new traditions into their family life without too much extra work. One quote from peer feedback was that “the quiz was a fun way to actually learn about things I thought I knew, but clearly didn’t.”



What I learned:

I found out that when I had a big problem to solve, I could figure it out by carefully following each step of my plan and making sure it was helpful for the people who needed it.

Next steps

1

Conduct research on how successful the app is in reaching the goal to connecting people to different cultures.

2

Add more educational resources for users to learn about their children's cultures.

3

Expand the network to non-foster and non-adoptive parents to encourage local involvement.

Let's connect!



Thank you for your time reviewing my work on the TURE app! If you'd like to see more or would like to get in touch, my contact information is provided below.

Dribbble: <https://dribbble.com/thecoryjohn>

Website: <https://coryjohnisme.com/>