Welcome to Porto CLIL Lesson!

During St'ART Project you have already studied cities as well as their cultural and traditional aspects.

Today you are going to learn about the particularities of our city.
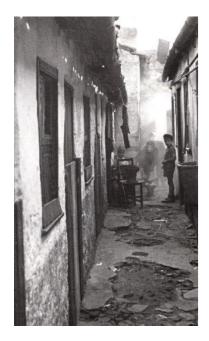
A. Before going further we invite you to take some minutes and, together with your class, brainstorm the words "urban island" (What do you think an urban island is? What are its characteristics? When did it appear and why?)

B. Now watch an excerpt of the video attached (from minute 1.22 to 1:42). It will give you some visual hints of what an "ilha" is. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v64DSFSBkTk&t=55s)

LET'S ST'ART

Read the following text and check if your predictions concerning the "Ilhas" were correct.

THE "ILHAS" (ISLANDS)

Typical of Oporto the "Ilhas", as they are known, are the main form of workers' housing associated with industrialization in the second half of the century XIX. The physical and constructive solution of the "ilhas" is strongly linked to the city's characteristics and are therefore very different from worker neighborhoods that have emerged in other European cities, and even in other Portuguese cities.

The city of Oporto grew within the Gothic walls into narrow streets that lead to several health problems. In the second half of the XVIII century, estimating the continued population growth of the city, it started extending outside the walls, creating wider streets, larger lots and larger squares. But the city did not have the expected growth in the first decades of the XIX century. There was even a certain population decline because of political factors such as the French invasion (1807-1813) and the Civil War (1832-1834). It is only during the second half of the century XIX, with the growth of the industry and with the decline of agriculture in the northern fields of Portugal, that you start to see a substantial increase in population. Between 1864 and 1900 the

population of Porto doubled. The mass construction of "Ilhas" occurred in that time, emphasizing the social differentiation of spaces and thus the transformation of the urban space.

UNIQUE ARCHITECTURE OF PORTO – THE "ILHAS"

With some influence of the British, who already had working-class neighborhoods whose homes had only one front, the so-called back to back houses, the builders created a unique architecture for Porto – the "Ilhas" and knew how to take advantage of the business opportunity by combining the strong demand for cheap accommodation (aimed at industrial workers) with the spatial characteristics of the city.

The typical Porto building was approximately 5.5 m wide and 30,0m long. The owners of these lots, who were often also the owners of the factories, built their houses in the first 30m. They then opened a gateway on the ground floor level of their homes to the street behind it and the remaining 70m were divided into several houses, all served by this same very narrow pedestrian street.

 (Watch an excerpt of the video attached - from minute 1.48 to 2:50)

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v64DSFSBkTk&t=55s)

Each house (from 9mto 16m each – inhabited by families of up to 10 members) consisted of a small living room, a tiny bedroom and kitchen with no water supply nor sanitary conditions. Sanitary facilities were usually common to all homes and were located at the back of the street. The houses had a door and a window open to the living room. The other spaces were unhealthy and without natural ventilation. Whole families lived in these houses without the minimal conditions of habitability and commonly kept their animals inside the house.

This semi-private area of "Ilhas" generated a climate of mutual care among its inhabitants. In fact the "Ilhas" always functioned as a place of urban integration for newcomers. The fact that the houses had such small areas made people use semi-public spaces as an extension of their private space, since the constructions were of very poor quality (no isolation and lack of privacy). Also the fact that the toilets were outside and common to the various houses reinforced this lack of intimacy of families.

With the threat of epidemics (cholera and bubonic plague) rulers started feeling concerned with health issues. This led to the emergence of revolutionary ideas and a strong mobilization for strikes and protests. In the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the XX century, in part to solve the health and social problems of the "ilhas" there were plans to move the most disadvantaged populations to the most peripheral areas of the city, leaving the valuable city center for the bourgeoisie. However these intents had no great consequence and this "hidden city" that lurked inside the blocks has persisted until today, especially in the Bonfim parishes and Campanhã, where the industrialization process was more intense and where, even today , lies part of the poorest population of Porto. Nowadays the Municipality is starting to reveal a true interest in the recovery of this unique architecture of Oporto – the "Ilhas", thus valuing them as identity heritage of the city of Oporto.

1) What are "ilhas"?
Main form of workers' housing associated with industrialization in the second half of the century XIX.

2) When and why did "ilhas" appear?

In the second half of the century XIX, due to industrialization, the workers needed houses after the growth of the population.

3) What are their most common characteristics?

Normally inhabited by up to 10 members of a single family, the measures of ilhas rarely surpassed the 16 meters. Ilhas consisted of a living room, a bedroom, and a kitchen that lacked water supply and sanitary conditions. Sanitary facilities were common to all homes and they are placed at the back of the street. Ilhas had a window and a door leading into the living room. The other rooms, on the other hand, lacked natural ventilation and were unhealthy. Animals were usually kept inside the house.

4) Do the "Ilhas" still exist?

Yes, they do, they were technically made illegal in 1900, but even with the new law, they were still built after the change took place.

5) What do you expect to see in an "ilha" in Porto? Can you describe how do you imagine one?

If I were to visit Oporto, I would expect to see a small interior, reminiscent of cheap apartments located in Bilbao, which also appeared during an industrialization process. Even though I don't expect ilhas to

have changed much, I do expect to see most of the problems of the past solved, like the lack of water and intimacy, as well as meeting the sanitary conditions needed to live there properly. Even if i expect to see old ilhas still standing, It wouldn't be surprising if modern ilhas were made, keeping the small interiors and room planning, but with modernized interior and furniture.

6) What kind of intervention do you think can be done in order to rehabilitate the "ilhas"?

In order to improve the living conditions of ilhas without losing the historical value they hold, the ilhas should be improved without changing the way the rooms and the space is organized, problems like ventilation, hygiene, and sanitary conditions should be the first tackled, using the technologies that have been developed throughout the years.

St'ART Creating

Based on what you have learnt about "ilhas" in pairs or groups of three you are going to create your own representation of an "ilha" in modern times. You should use manual techniques **of manipulating pictures: drawings and colourings, picture collage, use cut-outs from magazines and newspapers, natural elements (rocks, sand...) anything is possible. You have also learnt that "ilhas" were originally created to house factory workers. Now think about your "Ilha" and write a description of the profile of the inhabitant of your "ilha".**

Suggested Materials:

- scissors
- glue
- paint, markers, crayons
- fabrics
- coloured paper
- natural elements (sand, sticks, leaves, rocks …)
- needles
- string
- wool / cotton string
- …

Present your work to the class. Talk about your inspiration to create your "ilha". The students who are going to take part in the mobility to Porto should bring their work to present to their peers.

Most Important of all: HAVE FUN!
Good Work!