

Mandala



Essential Question: How do artists use a mandala design to diagram the self and its place in the universe?

Duration:

One or two twenty-minute sessions.

Materials:

- Drawing paper
- Pencil
- Colored pencils
- Markers

Art History/Inspiration:

A mandala, a Sanskrit word meaning “circle”, is a visual representation of the universe that is used in many Asian traditions to diagram the internal and external elements of being. Although we start with an Asian tradition, the mandala-like design appears in many cultures and has implications for all peoples, as with the Aztec Sun Stone above.

Lesson:

Make a mandala design that diagrams who you are and how you fit into this big universe. In the center of your paper, draw a circle around which you will draw five more concentric circles until you reach the edge of your paper. In the center circle, draw an image that represents yourself—this can be a realistic portrait of yourself, a cartoon, or a symbol. The second circle or ring will contain a design that reflects the people closest to you who offer healthy support and encouragement. The third ring will contain a design that depicts what you love to do. The fourth ring will contain the elements of your neighborhood, describing your immediate surroundings. The fifth ring will contain imagery that reflects your future.

