

# Session Guide: Drawing Mandalas

## Session Outline

### Description

Mandalas are a type of drawing based around a number of concentric circles where each ring created by the circles is filled in with a regular pattern of shapes. Drawing and painting mandalas is often used as a form of meditation, inward reflection or relaxation exercise. This session will guide learners on how to draw their own mandalas using basic equipment.

### Session Objectives

The objectives of this session are to:

- Learn how to draw mandalas.
- Develop mechanisms to relax, calm oneself or carry out inward reflections.
- Investigate the construction of interesting geometric patterns.

### Expected Outcomes

By the end of the session learners will have:

- Know what mandalas are and be able to create their own mandalas.
- Be aware that mandalas drawing and colouring mandalas can be used as a mechanism to relax, calm oneself or carry out inward reflection.

### Areas involved

- Creative Arts
  - Draw and paint pictures
- Life skills
  - Self-aware
  - Daily Living Skills
- Mathematics and Financial literacy
  - Geometry shapes



## Activity: Introducing Mandalas

### Objectives

- To know what mandalas are.
- To be aware that mandalas can be used as mechanisms to relax, calm oneself or carry out inward reflections.

### Expected Outcomes

Learners will have understood what mandalas are and the basic concept on how to construct them.

### Teaching Instructions

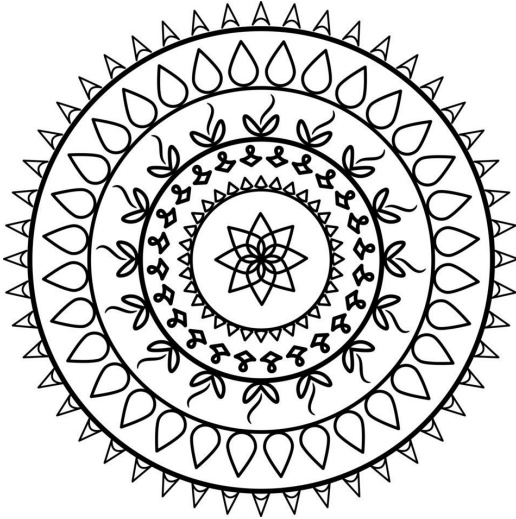
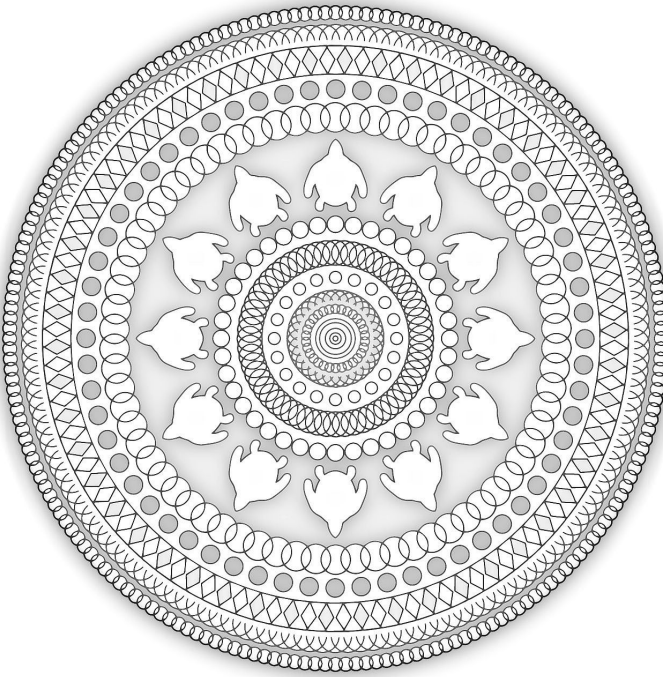
Explain what mandalas are (a type of drawing based around a number of concentric circles where each ring created by the circles is filled in with a regular pattern of shapes). Explain how drawing and colouring mandalas can help learners to relax, calm themselves when stressed or carry out inward reflections. You could also mention historical or religious contexts (if desired, there is plenty of information [here](#)). If possible you can show the example of mandalas included below.

### Suggested Guidelines

If you'd like more information about mandalas and more step by step guides on how to draw mandalas you can have a look at the following websites:

1. [Art is Fun](#)
2. [WikiHow](#)
3. [EnvatoTuts](#)





## Activity: Starting the Drawing

### Objectives

To understand the concentric nature of mandalas.

### Expected Outcomes

To start drawing a mandala by constructing concentric circles.

### Student Instructions

Follow the following steps to draw the basic guiding constructions for your mandala. Make sure you draw everything in this activity lightly as is it simply a guide which you may choose to erase later on.

Using a pencil (if available) draw a point as close as possible to the centre of a blank page. Draw four circles of different sizes with this point as the centre (concentric circles). If you have a pair of compasses you can use them. If you don't, you can use a ruler to draw several (6 to 10) points all at the same distance from the centre, spread out around the centre and use them as a guide to draw your circles freehand.

The circles could all be the same distance apart from each other (e.g. with radius 1.5 cm, 3 cm, 4.5 cm and 6 cm respectively) or you can mix the distances from circle to circle to get a less regular result (e.g. with radius of 2 cm, 3 cm, 5.5 cm and 6.5 cm respectively)

Divide the circles into 8 equal pieces with straight lines going through the centre. The easiest way to do this reasonably accurately if you don't have a protractor is to draw a first horizontal line, splitting the circles in half. Then draw a vertical line (perpendicular to the horizontal one) to split the circles into 4 pieces. Then try to draw two diagonals splitting each quarter of the circles in half, making your 8 pieces.

You now have the basic structure around which you can draw your mandala.



## Activity: Drawing the Mandala

### Objectives

To develop spatial awareness.

To understand how the basic structure can be used to construct regular patterns of shapes.

### Expected Outcomes

Learners will have drawn their mandalas.

### Student Instructions

The basic structure already constructed is formed of one internal circle and three 'rings' (the space between two consecutive circles).

Starting from the inner ring, choose a simple shape such as an oval, a triangle, a star, an arrow, or anything else you can imagine. You will have to draw it in a regular pattern inside the ring. Think about how many times you would like to draw your shape in the ring and how many should fit in each eighth of the ring (divided by the straight lines). Draw a point in the position where you will draw each shape as a guide.

Once you have located the position of each shape, you can draw them with pencil first to make sure you can erase and correct them if you make a mistake. Try to keep the shapes simple so that you can keep them as similar to each other as possible and make sure that you have a regular pattern, with the same number of shapes in each eighth of the ring. The shapes could be at the centre of the ring, closer to the top or closer to the bottom but you should try to be consistent in the positioning within the ring. When you are satisfied with your shapes, you can draw them over with a pen.

Repeat this process for the other rings. If you feel confident you could try to combine two shapes in the same ring, one at the top and one at the bottom, or even try drawing more complicated shapes. You could also have shapes that overlap with each other. The best mandalas have a variety of shapes and each shape appears a different number of times.

Once you completed the rings, move on to the circle. You have two options. You can choose another simple shape, and draw it several times with its centre at the centre of the circle, rotated and overlapping with each other. Alternatively, you can draw a simple shape in the same way as before on the outer part of the circle and keep the middle blank.



Once you have completed your mandala, you can decide whether you want the initial circles or not. If you want to keep them, draw them over with a pen. Making sure that the ink from the pen is fully dry, erase the initial construction lines you drew earlier on.

## Activity: Colouring the Mandala

### Objectives

To learn how to colour mandalas as an introspective or relaxation exercise.

### Expected Outcomes

Learners will have coloured the mandalas in silence while thinking about themselves and being aware of how they feel while doing so.

### Student Instructions

Colour your mandala with as many colours as you'd like. While you do so, remain in silence and try to think about how you feel at that point in time, concentrate on your breathing and reflect on what you can do to feel better and help others feel better at the same time.

To colour the mandala, select a region or shape you will want of a given colour and use it to colour all the same regions or shapes regularly. You may want to alternate colours within a ring. If you don't have colours available you can do it in one single colour, leaving regions without colour, and filling other regions with small dots or lines.

## Activity: Sharing the Experience

### Objectives

To be able to reflect on their feelings and voice them within their group.

### Expected Outcomes

Learners will have discussed how it felt to colour their mandala and whether it had an effect on their mood, whether good or bad, and why.



## Teaching Instructions

Lead a reflection with the learners asking them whether the silent colouring of their mandala made an impact on their mood. Do they feel any different now? If so, how? Why do they think this might be?

## Suggested Guidelines

- No answer is an incorrect answer. It is extremely important to allow learners to voice how the experience felt without passing judgement.
- After a learner shares their experience, other learners could suggest whether they felt similar things or their experience was completely different.

