

Nature Mandalas

Mandalas are ancient symbols that are important to many cultures around the world. Mandalas are complex, beautiful forms that represent abstract concepts and relationships. They are also beautiful to look at! This activity will challenge you to look at natural materials as an art form and to create patterns using the things you find in nature.

Location: In your backyard or a local park

Materials: Found natural materials, preferably non-living plants

Duration: 15-30 minutes

Age Range: Grade 1 and up

Activity:

- 1) To begin, collect natural materials like sticks, stones, and fallen leaves. Try to avoid taking anything that is alive!
- 2) Arrange your materials in a circle formation and create patterns or designs. You can get as creative as you would like! There are many variations the mandalas can take, limited only by the materials and your imagination.

Here are some examples of nature mandalas:



Consider symmetry: Many mandalas express radial symmetry, or a pattern that radiates out from a centre point. Other mandalas are bilateral: each side is a reflection of the other side.

For Teachers: See below for links to the Ontario Visual Arts Curriculum

Grade	Element/Principle
Grade 1, 2 3	Line, Colour, Value
Grade 4, 5	Line, Value
Grade 6, 7, 8	Line, Space