

# POWER Mandalas for Peace

AllGrades

**Objectives:** Students create mini-mandalas. The teacher uses these to create a [collective mandala](#). Collaboration with visiting artist Judy Stone Nunneley, and the creation of a collaborative artists' book entitled "Making Peace" – a year-long book project that explores the meaning of personal mandalas and our connection to the circle of life.

**Standards:**

**Rational:**

**TIME:** 3 class periods

**MATERIALS:** 4" x4" pieces of heavy drawing paper, crayons, watercolors, portfolio pastels,

**RESOURCES:** <http://www.mandalaproject.org>, [Mandala:Journey to the Center](#) by Bailey Cunningham, visuals

**VOCABULARY:** [Mandala](#), unity, center, radial, inner, outer, peace, realism, symbolic, abstract  
Review Sadako story and "Birds of Peace"

## PROCEDURES:

**Step 1** Class begins with a general presentation of the mandala, which includes examples from science/nature, history and art. The presentation utilizes several mediums, from slides to food demonstrations, which give visual examples of the mandala pattern. Students are invited to be active participants in all aspects of the presentations. As sliced fruits revealing the mandala pattern are passed around for observation (and consumption!), facilitators engage students in dialogues that connect the mandala pattern seen at the micro (atomic structure) level to the same structure observed at galactic levels. This segment of the workshop is the core from which all other topical studies develop. Discussion will center on how the circle is the "building block" of everything in the universe, and on how different cultures make visual pictures of how they see the universe – how mandalas are "maps" of connections.

**Step 2** As a warm-up exercise, students will brainstorm images, sensations colors and impressions as directed by the teacher. There are two categories: 1) where do you come from, when were you born, describe the season of your birth and 2) name a place in nature where you felt special, where you felt a strong connection to a peaceful place in nature. Describe that experience with objects present, feelings, colors and other sensations.

**Step 3** The main theme of the project is presented. Depending on the topic, a variety of mediums are used to teach the lesson. Following the presentation is a discussion to generate ideas for symbols to be used in the creation of personal mandalas. Worksheets are used either in-class or as homework to help students gather content for the creation of their mandalas. Following presentation of basic art concepts and techniques, students brainstorm ideas for creating mandalas. They then create their own. The students will receive the 4" paper square and templates to help them construct the basic design.

**Mandalas:** draw a mandala with a circle in the center, and 3 rings around it – the 3 rings can be any size that you like.

Two categories (from step 2)

Category 1(Center ring or rings?): season of birth – What does the season look like? (objects, colors, symbols. Pick 3 things (from list) to select for possible use

in the center circle, for ex. Leaf, wind, tree. This represents you, in the center of your community, your family, your world.

Category 2(Outer Ring or rings?): Connection to peaceful place in nature, -- What do you see? (colors, sensations, objects – For ex. Rocks, water, cool, wet, blue sky, pine needles, rose petals) Pick 3 things from you list – and fill up each outer ring with one of the 3 things on your short list. We are making a visual picture of what we think and feel about our special place in nature. You can make your picture be a symbol, or it can be realistic, or it could be an abstract design or pattern.

Each student will make two mandalas. One will be for the “Making Peace” book, and one will be for the “quilt.”

**Step 4** The concept of unique "whole" parts coming together to create a larger whole is expressed in the creation of a collective mandala “quilt” and the community artists’ book. Completed mandalas can be submitted to [The Mandala Project](#) for inclusion in the [project gallery](#). Students thereby experience the educational and creative lessons contained in the workshop itself, as well as becoming part of a larger experience involving the collective expressions of other people: whole parts becoming part of a larger whole. We are part of the circle of life.

Each mandala will be assembled into the book “Making Peace” which will be a collaborative community artists’ book, comprised of personal mandalas by students, teachers, and members of the larger community.

**Step 5** The mandala quilt will be on display at the Global Educators Fall conference in Eau Claire, WI. The mandala book “Making Peace” will be part of Judy Stone Nunneley’s exhibition *The Definition of Life* at the Trisolini Gallery, Ohio University, Athens, OH, Jan. 2006

**TIPS:** each artist will sign their mandala on the back, with the name of their school, the city name, and the date.

**EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT :** Students will be journaling and evaluating their process throughout the project.

**Background:**

**Mandalas: The Squaring of the Circle (why is it referred to as the squaring of the circle?)**

•Mandalas are design forms that have been used for thousands of years in cultures all over the world. Mandalas can be created in a variety of forms and for different purposes. Mandalas are images that can serve as an aid to creativity, to personal growth and understanding, and to contemplation. Many cultures and traditions create mandalas as part of a religious ritual, such as the sand paintings of the Navajo in Southwestern United States, who create mandalas as part of a healing ritual. The Tibetans also create sand paintings, such as the one at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, which focuses on peace. Many cultures create mandalas from symbolic color and forms, and images that have historical reference and meaning. Mandalas are used as an intuitive tool, to tell stories about myths, and as a vehicle for image and color exploration.

# POWER Mandalas for Peace

# AllGrades

Mandalas are fascinating to explore as a design form, for the study of color relationships, image development, and for what teacher and color theorist Johannes Itten called the relationship between the "subjective predicament" [intuition] and "knowledge and awareness of objective principles" [of the science of color theory].



•"A mandala is a symbolic diagram, usually round or oval with radial symmetry, but sometimes square or triangular. Oriental mandalas, especially in India, can become enormously complex. They are often viewed as maps of the cosmos and are intended for contemplation. Other mandalas may be simple, personal expressions of feeling or awareness. The graphic material included in a mandala may be anything at all, from recognizable human,

animal or vegetable forms to highly abstract designs. The circular mandalas frequently refer to the cyclic view of life, nature, fate, or time." (Barbara Walker)

Judy Stone Nunneley

PS.

From the day we arrive on the planet  
And blinking, step into the sun\_  
There's more to see than can ever be seen\_  
More to do than can ever be done\_  
There's far too much to take in here\_  
More to find than can ever be found\_  
But the sun rolling high\_Through the sapphire sky\_Keeps great and  
small on the endless round\_\_  
It's the Circle of Life\_  
And it moves us all\_Through despair and hope\_  
Through faith and love\_Till we find our place\_  
On the path unwinding\_In the Circle\_The Circle of Life\_\_  
It's the Circle of Life\_  
And it moves us all\_Through despair and hope\_  
Through faith and love\_Till we find our place\_On the path unwinding\_  
In the Circle\_  
The Circle of Life\_\_

Circle of Life \_Music by Elton John, lyrics by Tim Rice\_Performed by Carmen Twillie