Meaningful Mandalas
By Teaching Artist Steve Brouse / Grades 3 through 5

The word *mandala* means circle in another language called Sanskrit. Making mandalas are rituals for people known as Buddhist monks. Below you can see monks making a mandala in which a straw is used for the tool that will apply the colored sand that they are made of. It is a lengthy process and kind of sad as it seems their ritual calls for them to be swept away when finished. They are known to inspire one’s spiritual journey that allows healing and for enlightenment to come.
Some of the materials you will need are:

Four Sheets of Copy Paper (taped together to make one large paper), Tape/Glue, Pencil, Scissors, Ruler, Markers. Some Recycled Materials such as straws, popsicle sticks, bottlecaps, beans and colored pieces of magazine scraps. Most importantly, find something big and round to trace.
Step One: Fold and measure half the width of the circle. Use a ruler to line up from the fold that distance. Know that it is important that half of the circle needs to be traced from the fold.

Step Two: Carefully use your scissors to cut the half circle from the fold. It is important that you keep the paper folded as you complete this step.

Step Three: Your circle should be complete. Keep in mind if a mistake was made all you need is tape to fix it.
Step Four: Start with the center and work your way out. Try using the folds to make guides or lines to work from.

Step Five: Continue to glue down different materials to create texture, pattern and movement within your art.

Step Six: Watch your mandala grow as you think of more items and materials to use around the house.

Step Seven: Once you’ve filled all the empty spaces it is time to say to yourself, “What was my experience like?”
More Ideas Using A Variety of Stones, Fruit, Rocks and Pasta!

Steve Brouse is a Teaching Artist with Center for Creative Education in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Submit a photo of your finished work to Center for Creative Education via email, info@cceflorida.org, with your first name, age, and city or town in which you live, for a chance to have your work showcased on our website or social media pages!

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