

## \* MANDALAS \*

There are many symbols we all recognize in society. A peace sign is a common symbol almost anyone can identify: a picture with a line through it means an end to whatever, like a no smoking sign or a no parking sign. These types of symbols surround us everyday. Go for a walk. There will be symbols all around you: a stop sign, markings on a pavement, a direction sign, signs in a public park, posted at school, or near a public building.

Symbols are a sort of shorthand. They tell us something without making us read or think about a lot of information. How do you think people you meet perceive you? Artistic? Athletic? Studious? What do we wear that is symbolic of how we feel about ourselves? Some of us might wear jewelry that expresses who we are. Some people use tattoos as a symbol of who they are. What would a different kind of tattoo say? What does a man's tattoo say versus a woman's tattoo? Hairstyles, using makeup, not using makeup, these are all visible symbols of ourselves.

Just as your hairstyle and jewelry can be symbols of yourself, a Mandala is a symbol as well. A Mandala is an artistic way for you to show how you would describe yourself in symbol. For example if you were a writer you might trace your hand several times while rotating the Mandala and then collage pictures of books, hands pens and papers on top of your hand tracings.

Take some time and try to come up with words that you would use to describe yourself, and write them down.

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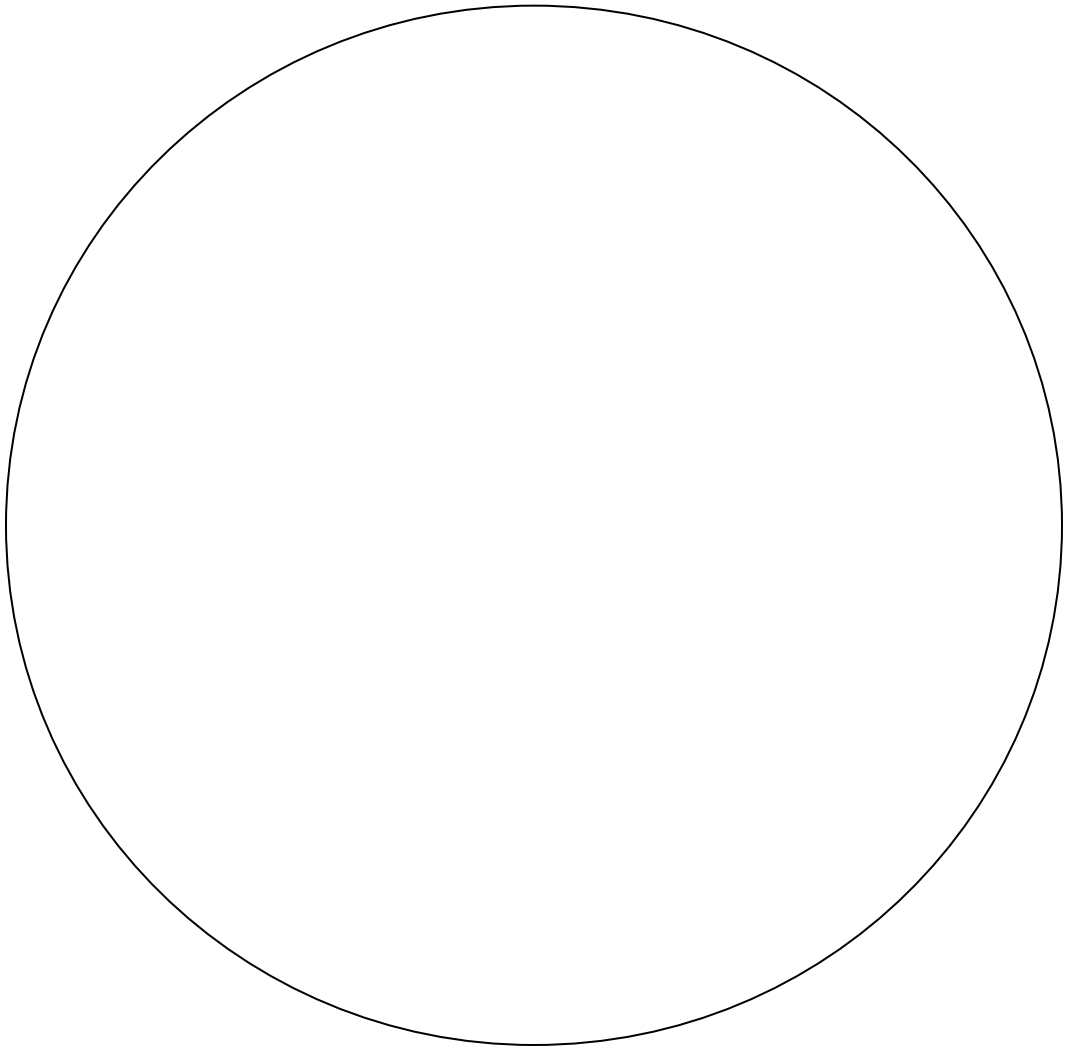
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Now that you have come up with words to describe yourself think of how you could turn those words into symbols and create a Mandala that captures a description of yourself.

Once you have decided what symbols would best fit the words you used to describe yourself it is time to make a Mandala. You can use a variety of materials when creating it: markers, crayons,

stickers, magazine cutouts, glitter, ribbon, the sky is the limit! Once you have created your Mandala on the following page, briefly describe why it is the best symbol of you.



How is this Mandala a symbol of yourself?

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