

Lesson Plan

Unit: Keepsakes

Nature Inspired Mandela Mobiles**Art Educator:** Cynthia Cousineau**Location:** Saint Margaret's Day Centre

Population: Seniors aged 60 or more who suffer from memory loss such as Alzheimer's and dementia. Many also experience disabilities that limit their mobility or cognitive abilities.

Session: Every Wednesday from 11am to noon. Sessions are exactly one hour in duration. This lesson includes two sessions. This lesson should take a total of 2 and half hours, which includes the time for preparation and cleanup.

Figure A. "Finished Mandela Mobile" by Cynthia Cousineau

MEQ Competencies**Competency #1:** "Creates Personal Images"

-Participants will create their own original Mandela mobile.

-Participants organize their visual arts production, by choosing the stencils they wish to use and how they will trace and paint them.

Competency #2: "Creates Media Images"

-Participants will create two-dimensional drawings, paint them and turn them into mobiles.

Competency #3: “Appreciates Works of Art”

- Participants will learn about the spiritual side of Mandalas and appreciate how they are used to keep a meditative mind focused.
- They will also appreciate the works of their peers as well as their own by discussing these works at the end of the activity

Rationale

This lesson is intended for seniors aged 65 or above who suffer from memory degeneration or loss of mobility. These participants require encouragement through the art making procedure as well as art lessons in which the materials are easy to manipulate. The lesson needs to stimulate their interest and keep them focused whilst not being so challenging as for them to lose interest.

For this particular population art plays an important role in their emotional well-being. The main goal of Saint-Margaret’s Day Centre is to provide seniors with an environment where they can socialize with one another and express their ideas freely. Art making promotes a friendly and safe environment for these seniors to communicate more easily with others.

This lesson is part of a keepsake unit, in which the participants can bring home their artworks. This project allows participants to sit together and socialize while making their Mandala mobiles. It also allows them to observe and learn how patterns can be incorporated into objects. Overall these participants will create colorful Mandala pattern mobiles which will brighten their rooms.

Objectives**Learning Objectives:**

- Participants will learn about patterns by exploring and discussing the topic of Mandalas.
- Participants will learn about how the word Mandala means circle, and how the circle represents the universe in Hinduism and Buddhism.
- They will learn how Mandalas can be used in various spiritual traditions as a way of maintaining focus and helping in meditation.

- Participants will learn about geometric patterns.

Art-Making objectives:

- Participants will learn about tracing techniques.
- Participants will learn how to incorporate different patterns and color combinations in a circle.
- Participants will learn how to incorporate three-dimensional objects to their two-dimensional mandala to create a mobile.
- Participants will pick appropriate color combinations and paint them to their mandala.

Art appreciation objectives:

- Participants will gain a better understanding of the meaning of Mandalas in Buddhist and Hindu spirituality.
- Participants will learn how to appreciate patterns and color usage in works of art that feature Mandala's.
- Participants will learn about the meditative qualities that creating Mandal's offers.

Social and community objectives:

- Participants will socialize and share their ideas with each other while maintaining a friendly environment.

Materials (All provided by the art educator)

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Beads | • Scissors | • Mylar or Acetate paper |
| • Buttons | • Tracing Paper | • Black Bristol board |
| • Plastic straws cut in pieces | • Mandala Stencils | • Hole puncher |
| • Shells | • Paint (acrylic) | • Ink pens or black sharpie |
| • Any small object with holes in them | • Small Paint brushes | • Glue Gun |
| • String | • Glue gun & glue sticks | • Scotch Tape |

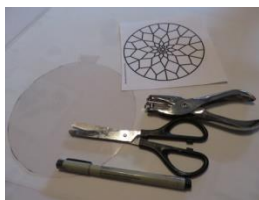


Figure B. "Required Materials for project" by Cynthia Cousineau

Equipment & Support Materials

- Books about Mandalas & Patterns
- Prototype Mandalas
- iPod and stereo
- Meditative Music

Art Making

-Participants will be making mandalas which they will then turn into mobiles which they can bring home and use as decorations to hang on trees or in their homes.

-Students will work invaluable but sit together in tables in groups of four.

-Participants will use stencils to create their Mandalas but they are allowed to use their imagination to create their own mandala should they not wish to use a stencil. Mainly this activity involves drawing and painting using a combination of observation of the stencils and imagination.

Activity Processes

Motivation Procedure (5 minutes):

-The art educator will motivate participants about Mandalas by showing books with images of Mandalas. These books will be displayed on the tables as soon as participants arrive.

-Prototypes of the Mandala mobiles will also be shown to the participants to give them an idea of what is expected. This is done once all participants have arrived.

-There is no specific works of art that will be referred to, however the art educator will show the participants multiples images of Mandalas from books to use as inspiration.

Questions to initiate discussion:

- What is a Mandela?
- Regarding Mandalas what does a circle represent?
- Have you ever seen a Mandela?
- What kinds of images could you put in a Mandela?
- What does the word Mandala mean?
- What cultures did the Mandala originate from?
- What do you notice about Mandalas that makes it interesting?
- What kinds of patterns could you use in a mandala?

Media Exploration Procedure (5 minutes)

Note: Participants attention span is very limited so the motivation needs to be short and straight to the point.

-The art educator will show the participants different examples of the steps required for this project. Prototypes for each step will be provided. These steps will cover:

- 1) Picking and tracing a Mandala stencil
- 2) Painting the Mandala
- 3) Adding the pattern cord and string to turn the mandala into a mobile decoration. Note: this step will mostly be done by the art educator, due to the limited mobility of participants.

Art Making Procedure (45mins)

Step 1: Designing a pattern string

Note: To be done in one session

- Attach a button to the end of the string
- Add small colorful objects to string forming a pattern combination of color, size or variety of objects.

- Close the other end of the string with a big knot or tie another button to it to stop objects from falling out of the string.
- On one end of the string leave a piece of string about 10 cm long, which will later be used to hand the mobile.
- If time allows, participants can make more pattern strings.



Figure C. “Close-up of pattern strings” by Cynthia Cousineau



Figure D. “Examples of pattern strings” by Cynthia Cousineau

Step 2: Picking two Mandela Stencils

- The art educator will place multiple mandala stencils on the table, and participants will pick 2 which they will recreate.

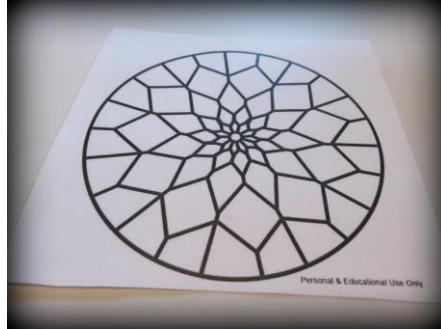


Figure E. “Mandala Stencil” by Cynthia Cousineau

Step 3: Tracing & cutting out a Circle

(Note: For this particular population, this step will be completed by the art educator)

- Trace a perfect circle that is slightly larger than the circle in the stencil. Include a little knob to the circle while will later be used to attach the mandala to the mobile.
- Use the base of a circular object to create a perfect circle.

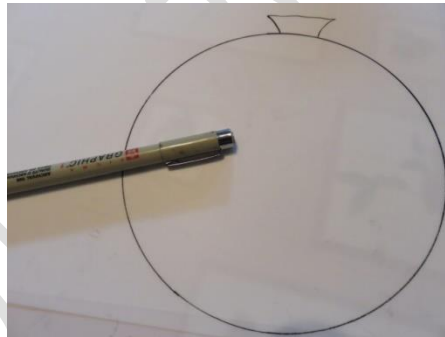


Figure F. “Tracing a circle” by Cynthia Cousineau

Step 4: Tracing the Image in the Circle

- Place the mylar or acetate paper on top of the stencil.
- Tape it to the table to ensure it won’t move while tracing.
- Using an ink pen or black sharpie, carefully trace the stencil onto the transparent paper.

Note: Begin from left to right to avoid smudging the lines.

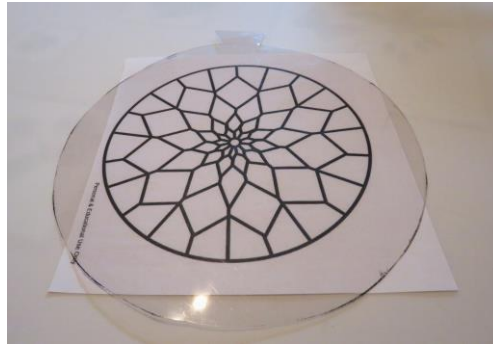


Figure G. “Placing the circle on top of the stencil” by Cynthia Cousineau

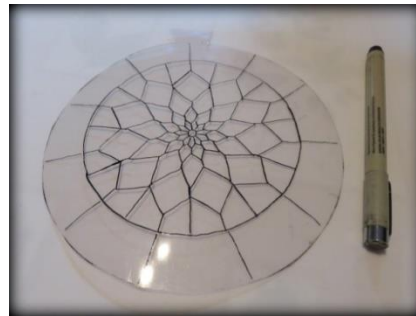


Figure H: Tracing the stencil of the circle by Cynthia Cousineau

Step 5: Punch a hole on the knob of the Mandala

(Note: Due to limited mobility of participants, the art educator will carry out this task)



Figure I. “Punching a hole in the acetate circle” by Cynthia Cousineau

Step 6: Painting the Mandala

-Using acrylic paint and small paint brushes, paint the inside of the Mandala using 2-3 colors.



Figure J. “Painted Mandalas” by Cynthia Cousineau

Step 7: Framing the Mandala

- Trace two circles on the black Bristol board. Ensure that they are approximately the same size as the mandala.
- Cut out these circles
- Trace an even smaller circle inside the circle and cut it out with an exacto knife. Leave a 3-4 cm distance between both circles, which will become the frame.
- Using glue or tape, attach the black Bristol frame to both sides of the mandala.



Figure K. “Making the frame for the Mandala” by Cynthia Cousineau

Step 8: Attaching the Mandala’s to form a mobile

-Using string attach the pattern cord made in step 1 to the Mandala.

-Use tape to cover the frame, to give it a shiny appearance.

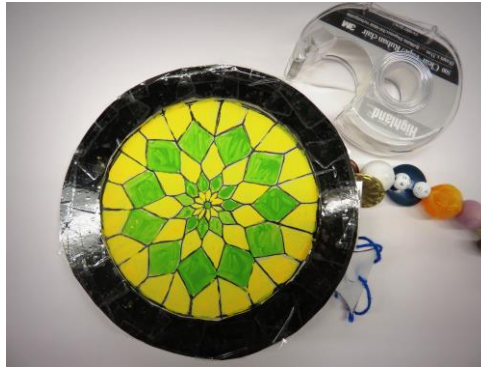


Figure L. “Finished Mandala with taped frame” by Cynthia Cousineau

Step 9: Displaying the Mandala Mobile in the classroom

-Once the mobile is completed, the participant will give it to the art educator to display in the classroom for all students to see.

-The Mandala will be given to the participants to take home in the following class.

Final Response to Art making (5 mins)

Once artworks are finished they will be displayed on a table so that all participants could see their finished work and those of their classmates.

Questions to initiate discussion:

- Did you enjoy the activity?
- What step of the activity did you most enjoy?
- What step did you find most difficult?
- What did you most enjoy about Mandalas?
- Would you like to do this activity again?
- How did you add pattern to your Mandala?
- What did you pick those specific colors for your Mandala?
- Which of your classmates Mandalas do you like the most and why?

Clean up: Note: this is done by the art educator due to the limited cognitive and mobility capacities of the participants. A few minutes will be given to participants to wash their hands if necessary.

Closure: (2 minutes)

Before leaving the class, participants will be informed that they could bring home their mandala mobile in the following class. They will be reminded of the significance of the Mandala, and of what it means. The art educator will briefly mention what the project is for the next session, and how it will be a keepsake that the participants can bring home with them.

References

Images:

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