



Stress Management: Mandalas

Materials:

- Worksheet
- Colored pencils
- Relaxing music (optional)

Brainstorm

Ask students: *What healthy ways do you use to relax when you're stressed out?*

Discuss

*Those are some great healthy strategies we can use when we're stressed. Many people feel instances of stress. Sometimes, people feel **stress** when they are worried, frustrated, or overwhelmed. Sometimes stress can be a positive thing - such as making the game-winning point or being part of a drama performance. Sometimes stress can be negative, but manageable, like wanting to go out on a Saturday night with friends but your parents won't let you, or preparing for a big test. What are some examples of stress that you've been dealing with lately?*

Dive in!

*Detail: Too much stress can be bad for you and it can cause physical and emotional problems. Fortunately, there are healthy strategies you can use to help you manage stress. It's important to note that the stress concept is as varied as instances of many other emotion concepts. So something that works for you might not work for your friend, or something that works for another person might not be best for you. We talked about some of those strategies earlier in class. Does anyone use doodling or drawing as a way to relax? Today, we're going to use a mandala to help us de-stress. A **mandala** is a patterned symbol which you can decorate to help you calm down and de-stress. Sometimes, people use mandalas as a way to meditate. The beauty of the mandala is in the simplicity of the shapes and the freedom you have to customize it however you want. Perhaps you'll use certain colors that signify something to you, or that make you feel calm and relaxed. Or, you may choose to add more shapes or patterns. The choice is all yours!*

Activity

Distribute Worksheet 15 to students and provide them with enough time to decorate their mandalas. If you're able, play soothing music while students work. When they're done, call on



High School

student volunteers to share their finished product and have students respond verbally to the reflect questions.

Reflect

Did you find the process of decorating your mandala relaxing and calming? Do you think this is a strategy you might use again in the future?

Extend and Enrich

Everyone has different ways of relaxing when they're stressed. Challenge your students to find their favorite healthy ways to de-stress and share them with the class. Possible examples include: Yoga, creating zentangles, practicing mindfulness, meditation, and exercising.

Optional Home Connection → Have students pick a relaxing strategy and practice using it at home as a way to de-stress. Ask volunteers to report back on which strategies worked best and whether or not the strategies helped them feel less stress.

Professional Development

Take 5 minutes and reflect on your favorite healthy ways to de-stress. What works best for you? Are there any unhealthy strategies that you'd like to replace?

For Further Study:

- Learn how to make a zentangle: <https://zentangle.com/pages/learn>
- Yoga for Teens by Teens: <https://wanderlust.com/yoga-for-teens/>
- Free Headspace access for teachers to build mindfulness practices: <https://www.headspace.com/educators>