



MANDALAS



Mandala is a Sanskrit word which means “circle” or “wheel”. It consists of a group of geometrical shapes that represent the most important characteristics of the universe. They have been used as a symbol of meditation, protection and healing.

Although they are originally from India, mandalas have spread to all cultures and different religions.

As the Buddhist monks travelled the Silk Road, an ancient network of trade routes that connected the East and West, they brought Buddhism to other lands. They carried mandalas with them and brought the practice of painting these spiritual compositions to other parts of Asia, appearing in regions such as Tibet, China, and Japan by the 4th century.



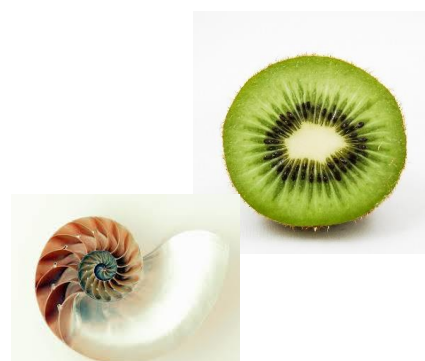
Mandalas have also been found in dream catchers as a means to protect the individual sleeping.

Similar patterns can also be found in nature, including flowers, the spiral of snails and shells, spider webs, human eyes, a kiwi cut in half, etc.

The basic shape of a mandala is a circle, a symbol representing no beginning and no ending.

The meaning of the different shapes:

- **Circle:** unity, protection and infinity
- **Triangle:** triangles and other three-part symbols may present such concepts as past, present, and future or spirit, mind, and body.
- **Rectangle:** stability, intellectual performance.
- **Square:** nature, balance, firm foundations.
- **Heart:** sun, love, happiness and joy.
- **Star:** freedom, hope
- **Butterfly:** transformation



➤ Answer the following questions:

1. What is the meaning of the word *Mandala*? _____
2. What do mandalas represent? _____
3. What have they been used for? _____
4. Where are they from? _____
5. Which is the first religion related to Mandalas? _____
6. What is the basic geometrical shape of a mandala and what is its meaning?

7. What is your favorite shape considering its different meanings?
