

## Creating Mandalas

*These activities explore creativity and stimulate conversation. It will encourage the handling of plant material and increase physical activity of participants, especially hand-eye co-ordination and small muscle control. See below for adaptive features.*

This is a great activity for the autumn/winter months. Part of the activity can be the walk to collect material from hedgerows, woodlands and gardens. This part of the activity would take one to two hours and each participant needs a carrier bag of different seed heads and berries. Secateurs or scissors are used to cut berries from bushes.

- Materials and equipment:
- Plant material
- Paper plates
- Glue spots
- Toothpicks/tweezers
- Scissors



Berries, leaves, seeds

A 'Mandala' has its origins in Buddhism and is a symbol of the universe: an enclosing circle brings harmony and the arrangement of objects inside is in regular patterns. I like to think of it as a kaleidoscope of colour with repeating patterns.

Making the patterns is very therapeutic and relaxing and will exercise observational powers and dexterity.

Leaves and flowers perhaps suit those with lower dexterity; seeds require more patience but using tweezers or toothpicks to help manoeuvre seeds will enable most participants to enjoy either. Around one hour should be allowed for this activity. Glue will help stabilise seeds – start in the centre and work outwards.



A seed mandala

Some examples of finished mandalas :

