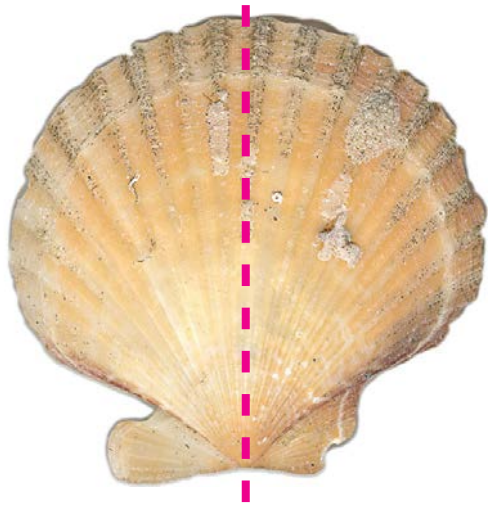


What is symmetry?

Symmetry is when there are certain types of repetition in a design that form a pattern. The word symmetry also mean “beautiful” or “harmonious”. There are several different types of symmetry which we can observe in nature, in art, and in our built environment.



Reflection

This can be imagined as a mirror – when something has an “axis of symmetry” that means it is the same on both sides, but reflected.

Glide

This is a type of rhythmic repetition along a line. You often see this type of symmetry in wallpaper or in the way leaves attach to the stem of a plant.



Rotation

If you turn a design around a central point like a wheel so that it looks the same in all directions, it has rotational symmetry. Flowers can be excellent examples of rotational symmetry.



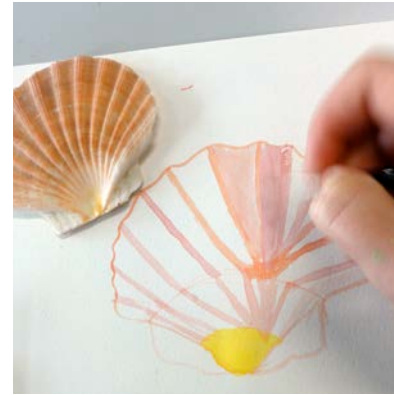
Artists and architects can combine multiple types of symmetry to create beautiful designs. We can see both reflection and glide symmetry in the facade of Dumfries House.



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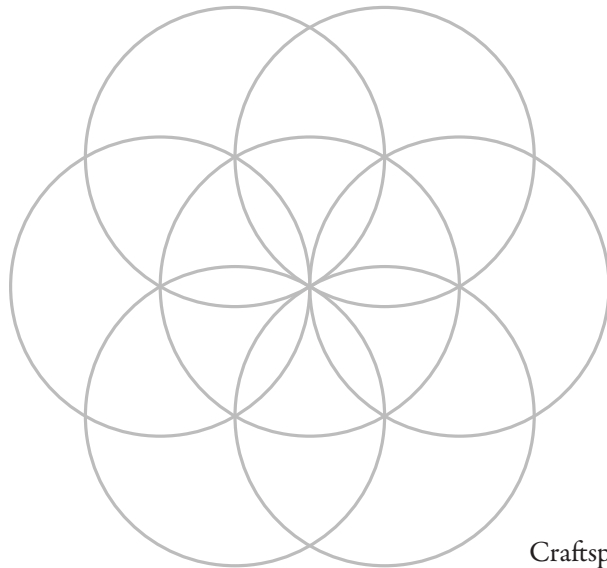
Be inspired by nature – create your own designs with symmetry!

Share your discoveries and designs with us using **#DHEducation**



Take a sketchbook or camera outside with you. How many examples of symmetry can you discover?

If you have compasses at home, you can practise drawing this geometric flower as demonstrated in the video. It is made of seven circles, all exactly the same size.



Decorate the compass drawing with paints or pens and make your own six-petalled flower.

Craftspeople all around the world enjoy working with this motif. Here are some different interpretations from Egypt (stone), Romania (wood), Ecuador (metal), and China (ceramic).

