

# Journeys

Learning Objective:

To investigate the use of symbols in Aboriginal art.



What is a  
symbol?

Definition:

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The Australian Aborigines used many different symbols in their art.

The indigenous Australians lived in Australia long before white Europeans came to settle there. The Aborigines lived in tribes and lived off the land.

Nature was very important to them as it was through nature that they were able to survive. Art was very important to the indigenous Australians too. They used art to tell their stories. These artistic stories were passed down through generations. Art was also a way of communicating with the spirit world.

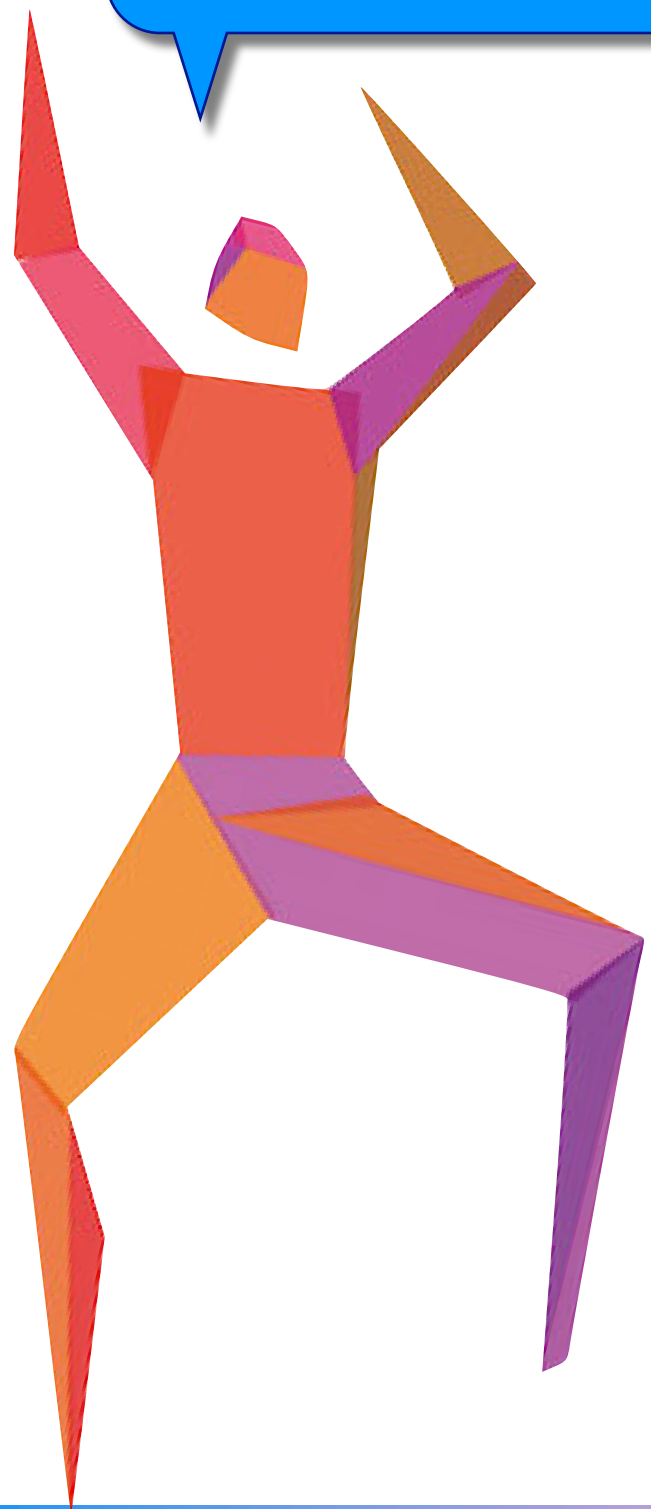


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The Aborigines created artwork in lots of different ways. They painted symbols and patterns on leaves, tree bark, rocks, tools and their bodies. They also created sand paintings and sculptures.



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Most Aboriginal paintings are created using dots. This is because they didn't have paintbrushes so had to use their fingers, sticks and twigs instead.



What symbols can you see in this painting?

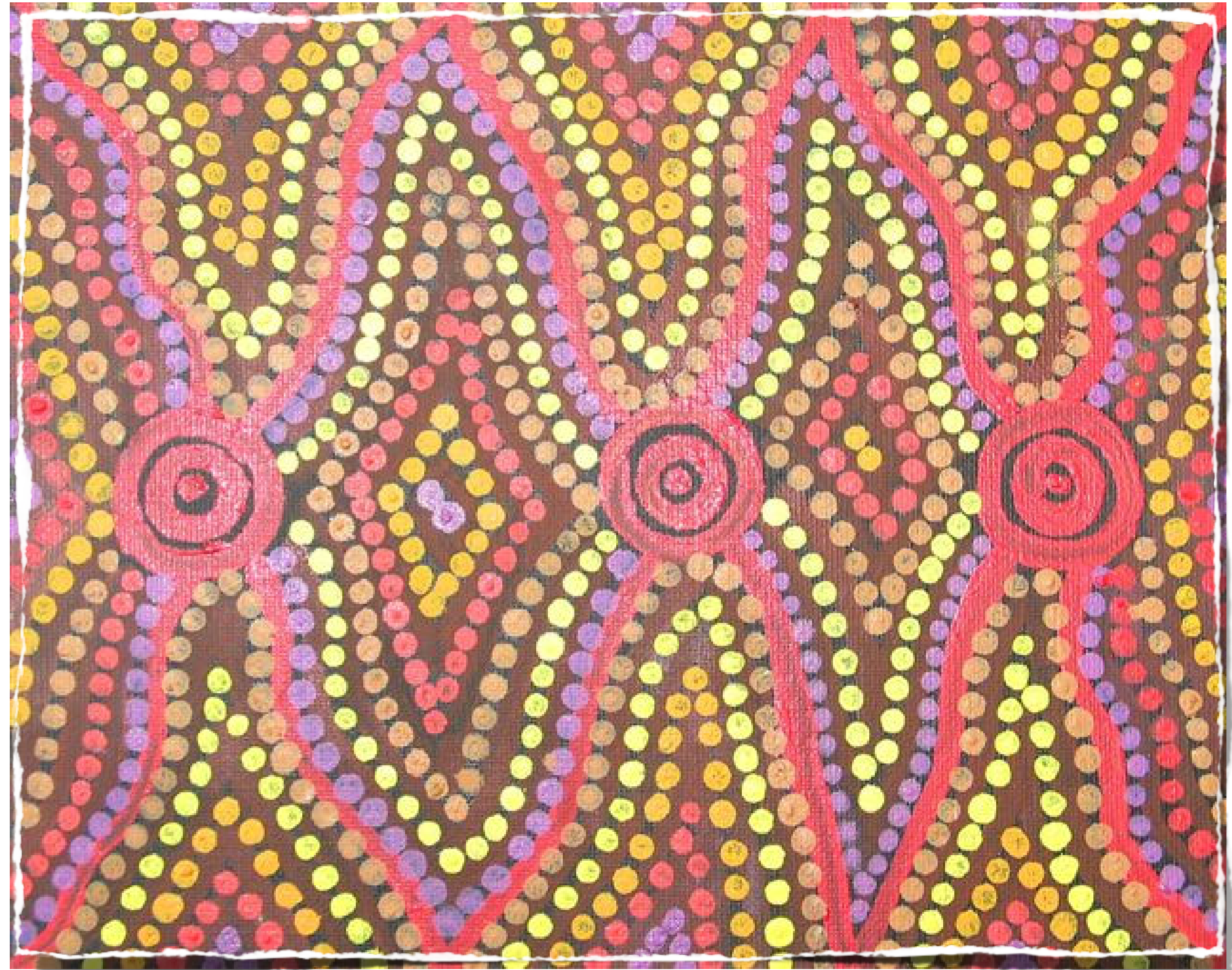
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There are still lots of Aborigines today who produce beautiful artwork. Some Australians who didn't descend from the indigenous Australians also like to create Aboriginal art too.



Let's have a look at some contemporary aboriginal art.



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What kinds  
of symbols/  
shapes have  
been used?

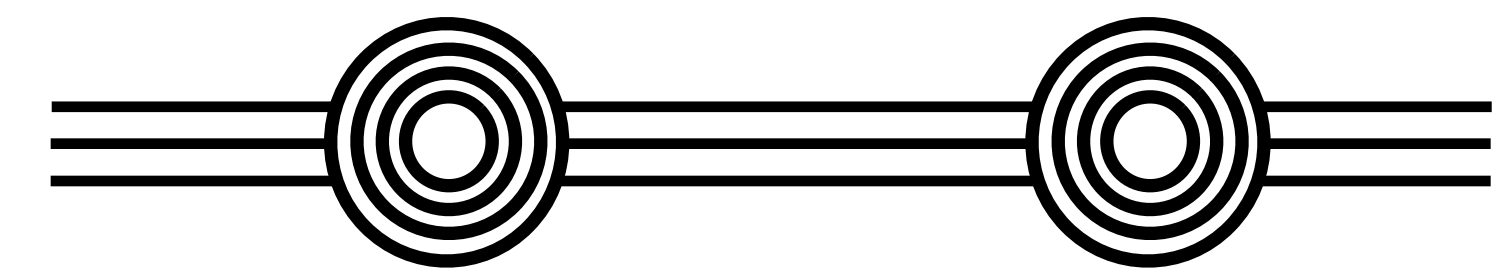
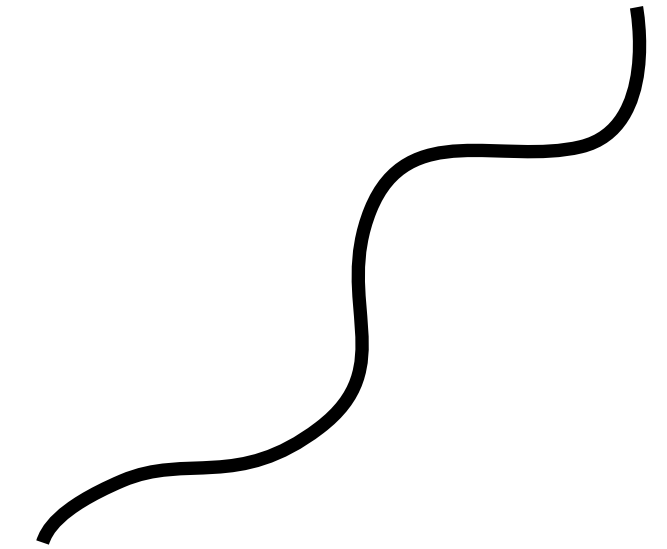
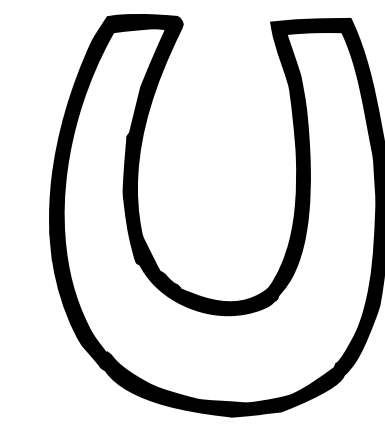
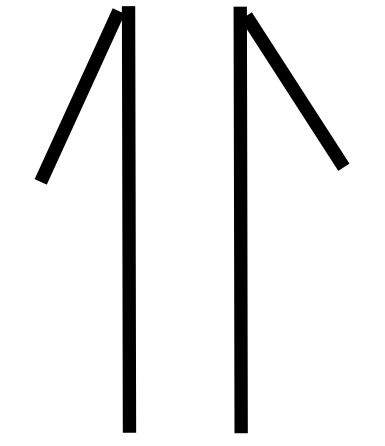
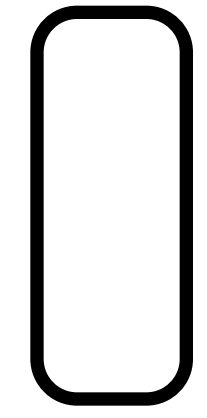
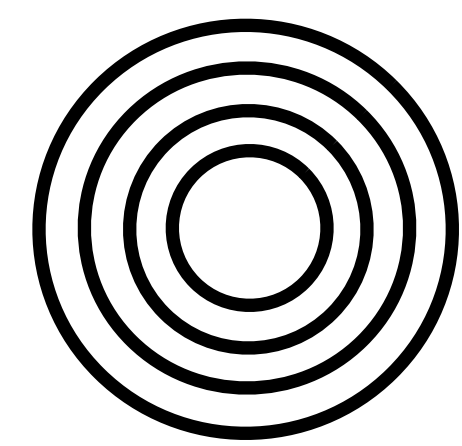
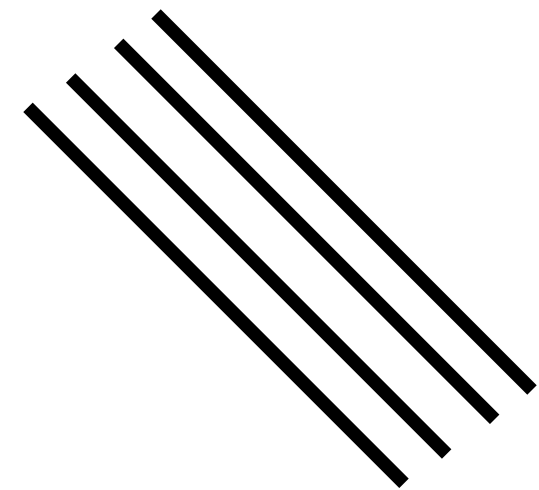
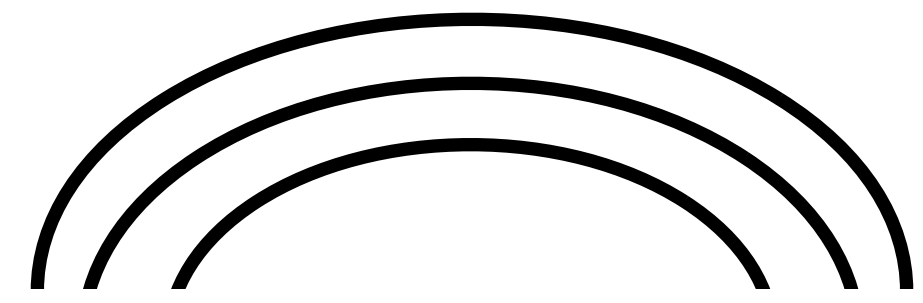
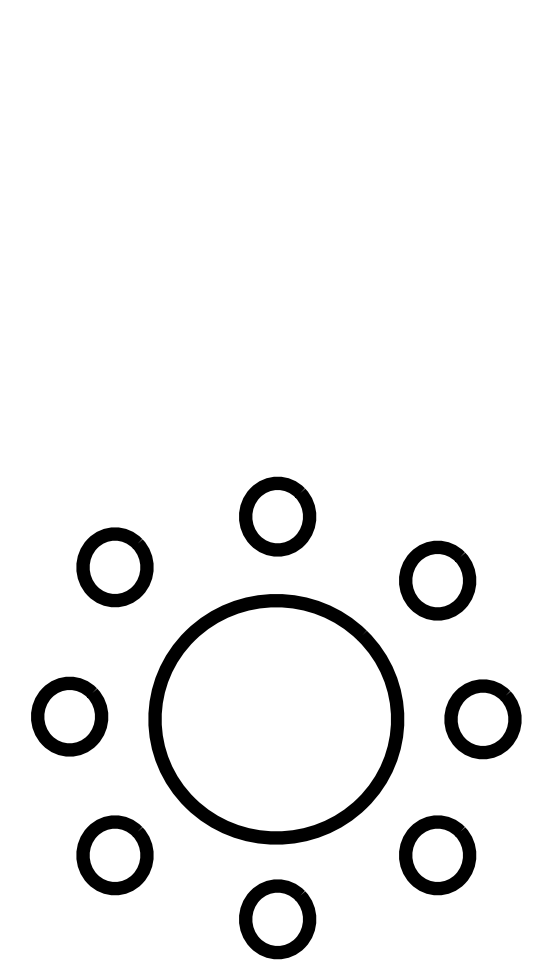


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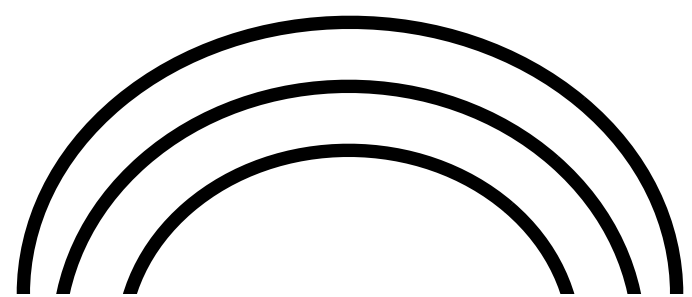
Here are some typical symbols  
Aborigines used in  
their artwork. What  
do you think they  
represent?



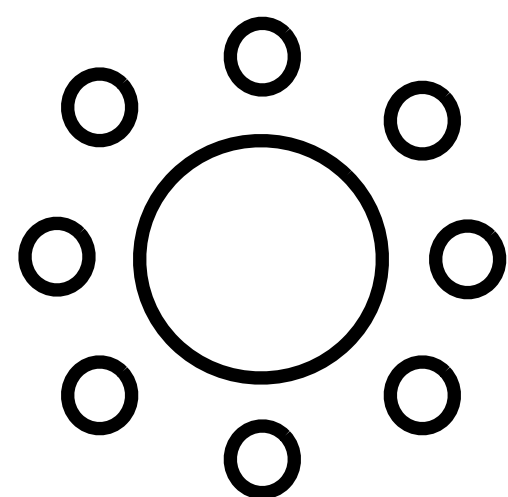
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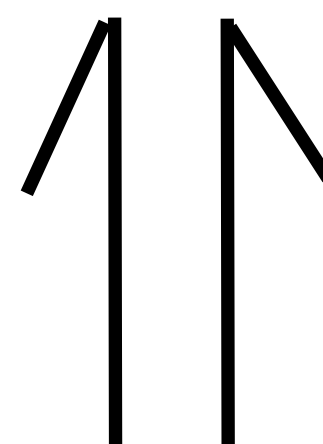




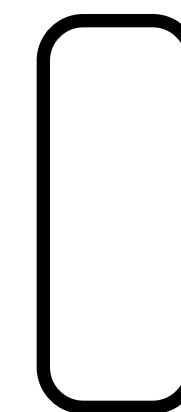
Rainbow or cloud



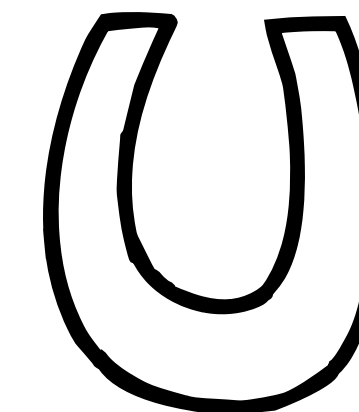
Sun or star



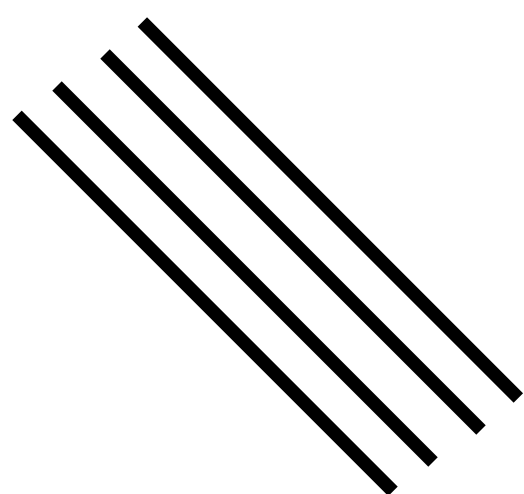
Kangaroo prints



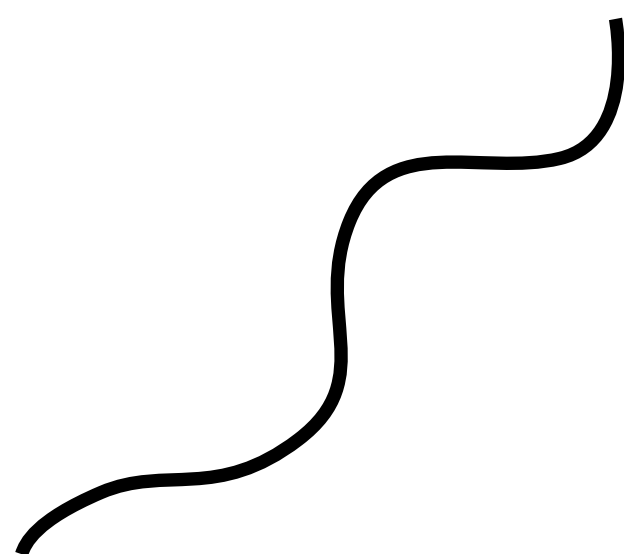
Man



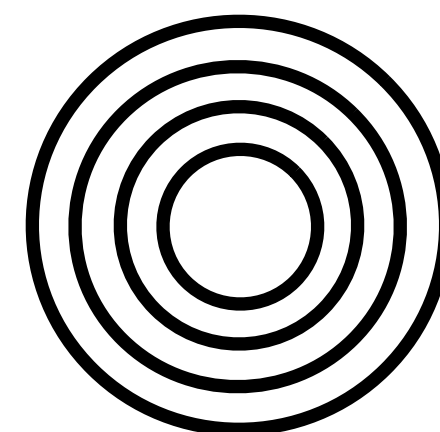
Woman



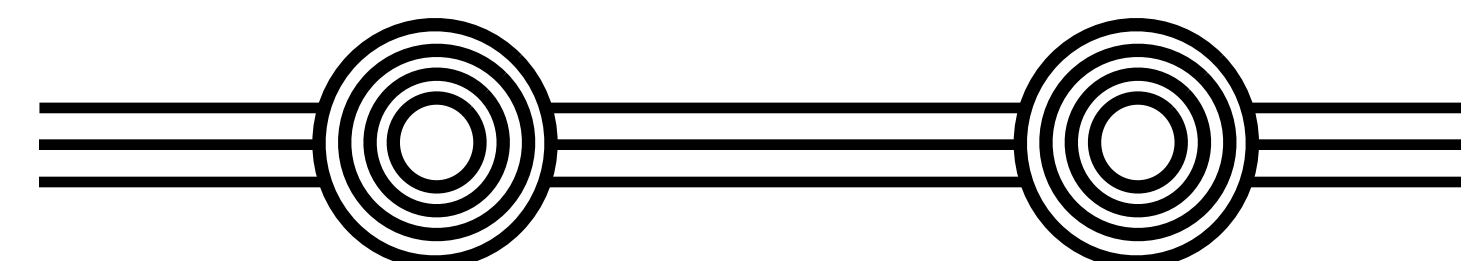
Rain



Snake, water or  
smoke



Waterhole or  
campfire



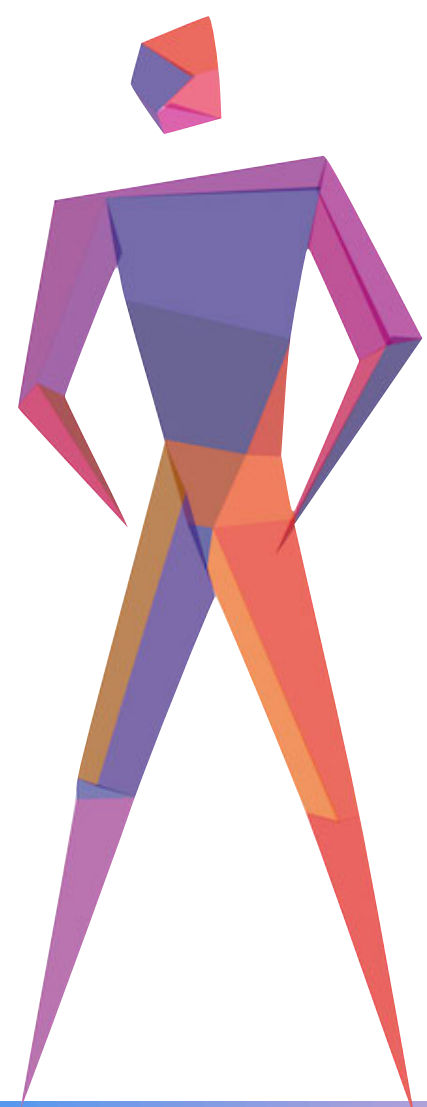
Travelling route with resting stops

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We could use symbols  
for the things we see  
around us everyday.  
Can you think of  
symbols for these  
objects?



car



tree



bird



house



lamp-post

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