



Class by Jen White

Cluster Queen

Lesson 02 Part 1: Circular Cluster

Why These Five Elements?

Each of the elements provided comes from my personal stash. The element set is not specific to any particular designer or kit.



- **Style.** Because my goal was to create a circular cluster, I searched for a couple elements that would help form the base (or anchor) of the design. The circular string and coffee stain stamp are perfect for that.
- **Variety.** Texture variety will help make any cluster beautiful. Imagine picking up and feeling each of the elements provided. They are all totally different in your (virtual) hand, aren't they? These five elements range from no feeling at all (stamp) to a thick and prickly object (pinecone). Even after you put these elements in a cluster, your eye will still be able to enjoy the difference in textures.
- **Note:** Clustering with uncommon elements (like a pinecone) can feel like a daunting task. But that's part of the beauty of this class. We're going to learn how to cluster with just about anything from a typical scrapbooker's stash of elements.
- **Color.** I love color, but it doesn't take much color to make a cluster spiffy. The red and white twine is just enough color to keep the set from being utterly boring.

Step One: Create a Cluster

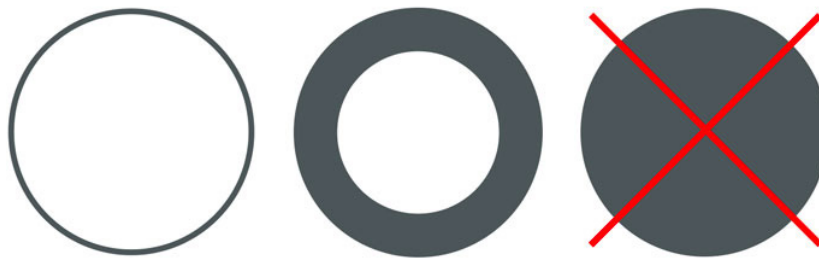
- Create a circular cluster using the five elements provided.

What is a cluster?

- A cluster is a group of elements positioned close together.

What is a circular cluster?

- Picture a bicycle inner tube or a wreath. That's the shape your cluster should take.
- A circular cluster has two parts, the circle itself and an area of interest ON the circle.
- If using the Shape Starter Method, you would start with an empty circle, not a filled in circle.



Key Concept

A circular cluster, even though it has a definite shape, should still have edges that are uneven, both on the inside and the outside.

Determine the Focus

Remember, a circular cluster has two parts—the circle itself and an area of interest ON the circle. The focal point of your cluster will be among the area of interest.

- Of the five elements provided, only one would qualify as a focal element. Which element do you think it is?
- If using the Top Down Method, you would start with the focal element.
- If using the Bottoms Up Method, place the focal element last.
- If using the Shape Starter Method, experiment with the focal element by placing it at different positions along the circular path.

Tips, Tricks, and Inspiration

Having trouble getting started? Cannot seem to think outside the box? Here's a little help from a friend.

- The inside of a circular cluster should be relatively empty.
- Keep gravity in mind.
- Two or three elements will make up the circle part of the cluster.
- Offset the circular elements so they are not exactly lined up with each other.
- Two or three elements will make up the area of interest on the circle.
- Try flipping or rotating an element for interesting looks and combinations.
- Always resize elements as you add them to your cluster. The more variety of size, the better your cluster will look.
- Supporting elements usually look best when they are peeking out from under the main (focal) element.
- Vary the horizontal centers of each of the elements so they don't look piled on top of each other.
- If you don't especially care for the provided elements, think of how you might arrange them for a friend.



Is your confidence growing?

Each lesson of Cluster Queen should feel like a new experience. You should feel stretched and challenged. And, you should also feel your imagination cogs turning a little easier (even a tiny bit) with each lesson.

If you are not feeling even the tiniest bit more confident, that means you need to spend more time in this Step One and Step Two.

Do This—Chart Your Confidence. Make a physical note about your confidence level at the start of this lesson. Where are you on the scale? Any different than last lesson?

Additional Challenges

You will find some lessons easier than others. If you feel like you breezed through Step One, here are some prompts and ideas to get you thinking like a Cluster Queen and challenge you to take it to the next level.

- Create several different circular cluster designs using the same five elements. Here are some ideas:
 - Try placing the area of interest at a different position along the circle. How does that change things?
 - Try creating a fuller cluster by duplicating elements.
 - See how many tiny clusters you can make by using only two or three of the provided elements.
 - Which of your circular clusters do you like the best?
 - Which do you like least? Do you know why you don't like it?
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ATTENTION: Please do not post your results of Step One or Step Two on the class Facebook Group. Doing so may sideline the creative process for your fellow classmates.

If you're mega excited to share your result of Step One, I'd love to see it. You can email it to me or send it via the Help Desk.

CAUTION: Don't rush to Step Two; take time to experiment and find your own solution