Crop Circles

This weekend in the Travel section of our newspaper, Wiltshire, England was written up as a destination that would be interesting to visit.

Wiltshire County in the United Kingdom is a destination you could visit to see the ancient sight of Stonehenge\(^1\) (~3000 BC) or crop circles. What’s a crop circle? Glad you asked.

Crop circles are often immense designs that are created or appear in fields of grain that are flattened into a pattern. Some of these creations are admittedly man-made by artists and some have no admitted source of creation. There are many theories about their creation ranging from alien activity to extreme weather.

Crop circles have been found in many countries but 90% of the 10,000 crop circles that have been reported internationally have been in the countryside of England. Here are a few.

- **A 780 ft (240 m) crop circle in the form of a double (six-sided) triskelion composed of 409 circles. Milk Hill, England, 200**
- **Milk Hill, England, 200**
- **Woodborough Hill Crop Circle Formation Wiltshire, UK August 2000**
- **Milk Hill, England, 200**
- **Chilbolton, Wiltshire Crop Circle, 2008**
- **Windmill Hill Crop Circle 25th of May, 2009**
- **On 29 July 1996, Windmill Hill near Avebury, UK**
Let’s try to draw one.

Use a compass and ruler and draw with a pencil that you can thoroughly erase. It helps to have a great eraser. We’ll try the design above on the right.

Draw a circle and divide it into eighths with four lines that pass across and through it’s center at right and 45 degree angles.

[Diagram of a circle divided into eighths with lines passing through the center]

Connect every other circle and line intersection point to create two squares.

[Diagram of two squares connected by circles]

Open your compass to give the radius of our next circles the distance from one of the square’s vertex to the next square’s vertex. Construct 8 circles each centered at one of the square’s vertices.
Create a circle with the center at the center of the 4 lines and a radius large enough to reach the outer point on each of your small 8 circles.

Decide which regions in these various lines that you wish to emphasize. Draw more lines or circles if you like. You can choose to shade them with highlighter or marker or retrace some of your lines with ink. To finish your construction, erase your pencil lines.

This is mine.

Now choose a different image of a crop circle and try to devise instructions for your classmates on how to create it.

Source:  http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crop_circle
         http://users.sch.gr/dkastani/abouten.html

¹photo of Stonehenge;