Mind Mapping

Tools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mind Manager</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mindjet.com/eu/">http://www.mindjet.com/eu/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual Mind</td>
<td><a href="http://www.visual-mind.com/">http://www.visual-mind.com/</a></td>
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From:  http://www.peterussell.com/mindmaps/mindmap.html
Mind maps were developed in the late 60s by Tony Buzan as a way of helping students make notes that used only key words and images. They are much quicker to make, and because of their visual quality much easier to remember and review. The non-linear nature of mind maps makes it easy to link and cross-reference different elements of the map.


Mindmapping is one of the simplest, yet most powerful, tools a person can have in her creativity toolbox. It is a non-linear way of organizing information and a technique that allows you to capture the natural flow of your ideas. Here’s a five minute workshop on how to use this flexible tool. Try it the next time you need to write a memo, prepare a meeting agenda or are trying to get a bird’s eye view of a complex project.

Step 1:
Center First. Our linear, left-brain education system has taught us to start in the upper left-hand corner of a page. However, our mind focuses on the center ... so mindmapping begins with a word or image that symbolizes what you want to think about placed in the middle of the page.

Step 2:
Lighten Up! Let go of the idea of finding a cure for cancer, ending hunger, solving the problem or writing a report that your boss will love. Mindmapping is simply a brain dumping process that helps stimulate new ideas and connections. Start with an open, playful attitude ... you can always get serious later.

Step 3:
Free Associate. As ideas emerge, print one or two word descriptions of the ideas on lines branching from the central focus. Allow the ideas to expand outward into branches and sub-branches. Put down all ideas without judgment or evaluation.
Step 4:
Think Fast. Your brain works best in 5-7 minute bursts so capture that explosion of ideas as rapidly as possible. Key words, symbols and images provide a mental short-hand to help you record ideas as quickly as possible.

Step 5:
Break Boundaries. Break through the "8 1/2 x 11 mentality" that says you have to write on white, letter-size paper with black ink or pencil. Use ledger paper or easel paper or cover an entire wall with butcher paper ... the bigger the paper, the more ideas you'll have. Use wild colors, fat colored markers, crayons, or skinny felt tipped pens. You haven't lived until you've mindmapped a business report with hot pink and day-glo orange crayons.

Step 6:
Judge Not. Put everything down that comes to mind even if it is completely unrelated. If you're brainstorming ideas for a report on the status of carrots in Texas and you suddenly remember you need to pick-up your cleaning, put down "cleaning." Otherwise your mind will get stuck like a record in that "cleaning" groove and you'll never generate those great ideas.

Step 7:
Keep Moving. Keep your hand moving. If ideas slow down, draw empty lines, and watch your brain automatically find ideas to put on them. Or change colors to reenergize your mind. Stand up and mindmap on an easel pad to generate even more energy.
Step 8:
Allow Organization. Sometimes you see relationships and connections immediately and you can add sub-
branches to a main idea. Sometimes you don't, so you just connect the ideas to the central focus. Organization can always come later; the first requirement is to get the ideas out of your head and onto the paper.

From: http://www.nova-mind.com/AboutMM/

What is a Mind Map?
A Mind Map is a powerful graphic technique which provides a universal key to unlock your brain's potential. It harnesses the full range of cortical skills - word, image, number, logic, rhythm, color and spatial awareness - in a single, uniquely powerful manner. In so doing, it gives you the freedom to roam the infinite expanses of your brain. Mind Maps can be applied to every aspect of life where improved learning and clearer thinking will enhance your performance.

Originated in 1970 by Tony Buzan, Mind Maps are now used by millions of people around the world - from the very young to the very old - whenever they wish to use their brains more effectively. Similar to a road map, a Mind Map will:

- Give you an overview of a large subject/area.
- Enable you to plan routes/make choices and let you know where you are going and where you have been.
- Gather and hold large amounts of data.
- Encourage problem solving by seeing new creative pathways.
- Enable you to be extremely efficient.
- Be enjoyable to look at, read, muse over and remember.
- Attract and hold the eye/brain.

The Mind Mapping Advantage

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<th>Uses</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
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<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Reduce those 'tons of work'. Feel good about study, revision and exams. Have confidence in your learning abilities.</td>
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Overviewing | See the whole picture, the global view, at once. Understand the links and connections.
Concentrating | Focus on the task for better results. Using all your cortical skills attracts your attention.
Memorizing | Easy recall. 'See' the information in your mind's eye.
Organizing | Be on top of all the details for parties, holidays, projects, or any other subject.
Presenting | Speeches are clear, relaxed and alive. You can be at your best.
Communicating | In all forms with clarity and conciseness.
Planning | Orchestrate all details and aspects - from beginning to end - on one piece of paper.
Meetings | From planning to agenda, to chairing, to taking the minutes... the jobs are completed with speed and efficiency.
Training | From preparation to presentation, they make the job easier and much faster.
Thinking | Having a method to analyse thoughts - almost a 'way-station' for them.
Negotiation | All the issues, your position and manoeuvrability on one sheet.
Brain Blooming | The new brain-storming in which more thoughts are generated and appropriately assessed.

The Laws of Mind Mapping

- Start in the centre with an image of the topic, using at least three colors.
- Use images, symbols, codes and dimension throughout.
- Select key words and print, using upper or lower case letters.
- Each word/image must be alone and sitting on its own line.
- The lines must be connected, starting from the central image. The center lines are thicker, organic and flowing, becoming thinner as they radiate out.
- Make the lines the same length as the word/image.
- Use colors - your own code - throughout.
- Develop your own style of Mind Mapping.
- Use emphasis and show associations.
- Keep the Mind Map clear by using Radiant hierarchy, numerical order or outlines to embrace your branches.


Introduction

Mind maps are tools which help you think and learn. This module describes how to do a mind map and most of the sections are organised into areas of university study where students have found mind maps useful.

Often you will find a mind map in a section and you will be able to click on various parts of it to discover just how the mind map will help you. Other sections in the module contain actual samples of student mind maps.

How to do a Mind Map

Mind mapping (or concept mapping) involves writing down a central idea and thinking up new and related ideas which radiate out from the centre. By focussing on key ideas written down in your own words, and then looking for branches out and connections between the ideas, you are mapping knowledge in a manner which will help you understand and remember new information.

Look for relationships

Use lines, colours, arrows, branches or some other way of showing connections between the ideas generated on your mind map. These relationships may be important in you understanding new information or in constructing a structured essay plan. By personalising the map with your own symbols and designs you will be constructing visual and meaningful relationships between ideas which will assist in your recall and understanding.

Draw quickly on unlined paper without pausing, judging or editing

All of these things promote linear thinking and the idea of mind mapping is to think creatively and in a non-linear manner. There will be plenty of time for modifying the information later on but at this stage it is important to get every possibility into the mind map. Sometimes it is one of those obscure possibilities that may become the key to your knowledge of a topic.
Write down key ideas

Some students find that using capital letters encourages them to get down only the key points. Capitals are also easier to read in a diagram. You may, however, wish to write down some explanatory notes in lower case. Some students do this when they revisit the mind map at a later date while others write in such things as assessment criteria in this way.

Put main idea in the centre

Most students find it useful to turn their page on the side and do a mind map in "landscape" style. With the main idea or topic in the middle of the page this gives the maximum space for other ideas to radiate out from the centre.

Leave lots of space

Some of the most useful mind maps are those which are added to over a period of time. After the initial drawing of the mind map you may wish to highlight things, add information or add questions for the duration of a subject right up until exam time. For this reason it is a good idea to leave lots of space.

Essay Preparation

Mind maps can help you in the early stages of your essay by summarising your research and providing you with a picture of all aspects of the question. You can then move from your non-linear mind map to a more structured essay plan.

Housekeeping

It is often useful to put down on the mind map various "housekeeping" details such as:

• assessment criteria and weighting
• due date
• timeline
• any other requirements

Prior knowledge

You should always put down on your mind map all that you already know about the essay question. This knowledge may have come from personal experience, lectures, readings or other sources. You may be surprised as to how this part of the mind map branches out in lots of directions!

Possible topics to be covered

Most essays will involve the possibility of tackling a number of topics within the question. Put all of these possible topics down. You may not have the time or length of essay to tackle all of them but getting them down and looking for connections, relevance and priorities is a good start.

Areas to research

The areas to research will be suggested by the possible topics and from here your mind map may lead you on to various sources of information you will need to pursue. Often you will have to choose carefully which areas will be the most productive and relevant to research.

Alternative approaches

One of the powerful things about mind mapping is that it is a tool which encourages creative thinking and often creative solutions to problems. Always look at alternative ways of approaching essay questions and always be prepared to be a critical researcher and writer who is prepared to go outside the normal boundaries!

Summarising Readings

Mind mapping can help you understand and remember the important issues in your readings.

We suggest you follow 5 steps in creating mind maps which summarise your readings.

1. Skim

Firstly, read the abstract, introduction, conclusion, key headings or chapter headings. When skimming through the text observe any diagrams, pictures or graphs. This gives you an overview of what you are about to read, puts it in context and may already give you some clues as to where the most relevant parts are located.

2. Read
Read the article in one sitting (or chunk it into sections/chapters if it is a whole book) and go over any parts you are not quite sure of.

3. Mind Map

It is important to do the mind map from memory at this stage so don't consult the article or any other source of information.

4. Study

The mind map you have just done is very valuable as it will show both areas you have understood and also areas you are not sure of. Study your mind map to discover the gaps in your knowledge and refer back to the source material to fill in any of these gaps.

5. Personalise

Using different colours or symbols, add your own comments and questions to the mind map. Questions relating to relationships, implications, alternative approaches, usefulness, clarity, personal experience could all be considered at this stage. It is in this personalising stage where your mind map really starts to help you with your learning. The trick now is to address all those questions you have raised and to keep returning to your mind map with the answers!

Sample Lecture Mind Map

This mind map was produced from standard lecture notes so that a student could clarify the key points of the lecture. The mind map was produced in the first review after the lecture and was added to throughout the semester. It was then used for exam preparation.