



Crafty Mind-Mapping

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Mind mapping is an effective means to take notes and brainstorm topics. A mind map involves writing down a central theme and thinking of new and related ideas which radiate out from the centre. By focusing on key ideas written down in your own words and looking for connections between them, you can map knowledge in a way that will help you to better understand and retain information.

Mind maps are a great way of organising your thoughts, especially if you are a visual learner.

Just like a road map helps you on a journey, a mind map can help you get from the start to the finish of a project in an organised efficient manner without getting lost along the way.

Mind mapping is a way to represent ideas and concepts in a picture form. By focusing on key ideas and looking for links between them, you can 'map' knowledge that will help you better understand, retain and organise information. They are often used just to 'brainstorm' a topic but they can become a powerful tool to help organise assignments and plan projects.

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What is mind mapping?

Mind mapping was developed as an effective method for generating ideas by association. In order to create a mind map, you usually start in the middle of the page with the central theme/main idea and from that point you work outward in all directions to create a growing diagram composed of keywords, phrases, concepts, facts and figures.

It can be used for assignments and projects especially in the initial stages, where it is an ideal strategy to use for your 'thinking'. Mind mapping can be used for generating, visualising, organising, note-taking, problem-solving, decision-making, revising and clarifying your thoughts and ideas. Mind mapping is great for getting you started on a project when you haven't got all the pieces in place, yet!. Essentially, a mind map is used to 'brainstorm' an idea, giving it form and structure.

How do I use mind mapping?

You can use mind mapping for the following:

- taking notes in a lecture and listening for the most important points or keywords
- showing links and relationships between the main ideas in your project
- brainstorming all the things you already know about a question
- planning the early stages of an project by visualising all the aspects from all angles
- organising your ideas and information by making it accessible on a single page
- stimulating creative thinking and creative solutions to problems
- reviewing learning in preparation for further development

What are the benefits of using mind mapping?

To achieve higher levels of concentration and creativity, together with greater organisation and more concise communication, mind mapping might be an effective strategy for you to consider.

The benefits of mind mapping are many and varied. In summary they include:

- § giving you an overview of a large subject/broad topic and allowing you to represent it in a more concise fashion
- § encouraging you to see the bigger picture and creative pathways
- § enabling you to plan/make choices about the selection of resource material you have for an assignment and where you are going to place it
- § providing you with a more attractive and enjoyable format for your eye/brain to look at, muse over and remember.

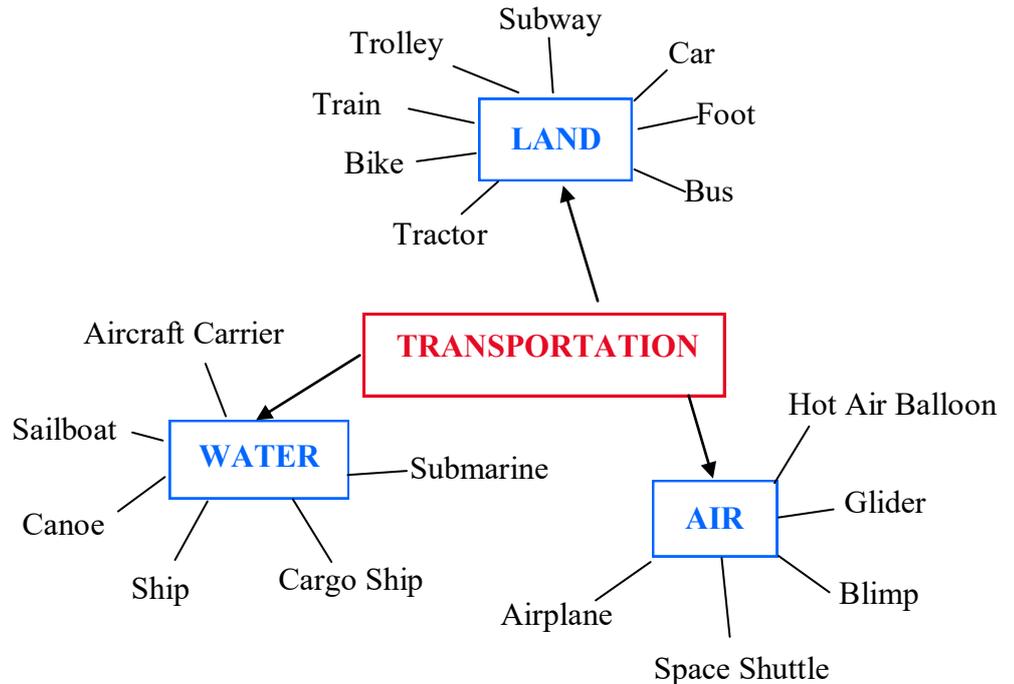
Mind mapping helps you to:

- * brainstorm ideas to help get you started on your assignment
- * organise information that you can see at a glance
- * see the big picture, or overview, of your assignment, project, or essay
- * decide what information and resource material you will include in your assignment and where you will put it.

What does a mind map look like?

Making a mind map is only limited by your own creative genius. However, there are two common templates that are often used. The first is a thought bubble template that is more circular thinking and suits people who process thoughts a little randomly, perfect for the creative type. It involves placing a central theme in a bubble near the centre of a page (in our example, we've used Types of Transportation) and then placing new and related ideas or information radiating out from it. Information that links to those ideas can then be added in more bubbles (squares, lines, or whatever)

An example of a Mind-Map
(Bubble Style)



How To Create A Bubble Style Mind Map

The important thing to remember is that you don't have to be an artist to create your own mind map. Everyone can draw bubbles or boxes and connect them with lines or arrows.

Step One

Place the title of the main theme in the centre of the page. This is our 'Central Theme'.

Step Two

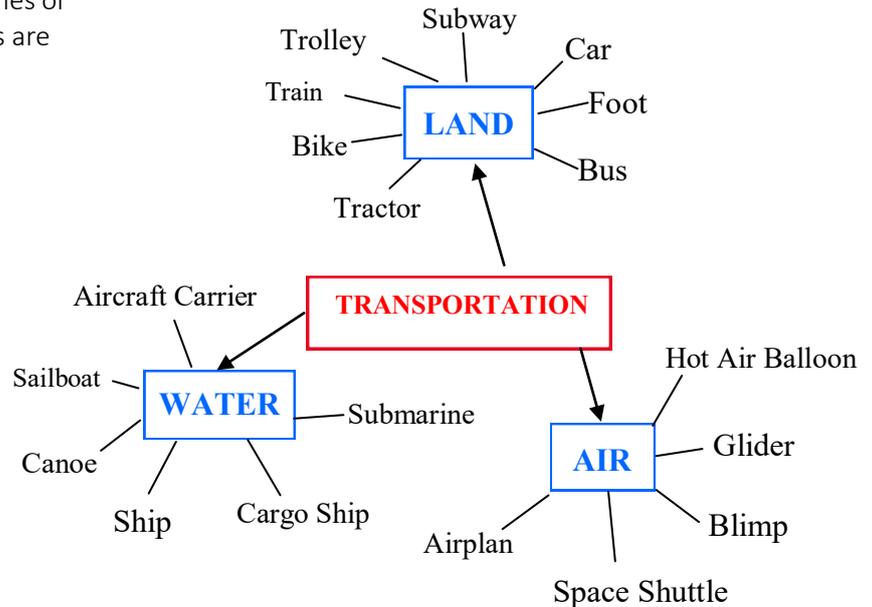
Add main branches to the central theme by using lines or arrows that connect to other 'bubbles'. The bubbles are typically boxes, but could easily be other shapes. Branches connecting bubbles, can be simple lines, or sometimes arrows.

Each bubble should only contain one key-word or idea that stems from the central theme.

Step Three

Next, add more details by drawing smaller (sub) branches from your keywords.

This forms the basis for what you want to write about for each idea.



Another type of mind-mapping is an outline template which is a more traditional form of organising ideas and suits people who are more linear in their thinking.

TRANSPORTATION (main idea)

An example of a Mind-Map (Outline Style)

LAND Car
Subway
Foot
Bus
Trolley
Tractor
Bike
Train

AIR Airplane
Space Shuttle
Glider
Blimp
Hot Air Balloon

WATER Ship
Sailboat
Canoe
Aircraft Carrier
Cargo Ship
Sailboat
Submarine

Conclusion:

Tips on being a better mind-mapper

1. Place the central theme/main idea or controlling point in the centre of your page. You may find it easier to place your page on the side, in landscape orientation, which is easier for mapping purposes.
2. Use lines, arrows, speech bubbles, branches and different colours as ways of showing the connection between the central theme/main idea and your ideas which stem from that focus.
3. Avoid creating an artistic masterpiece. You should draw quickly without major pauses or editing.

Chances are, your first idea was fine and you placed that idea in the direction or on the branch you thought made the most sense. It is important in the initial stages of mind mapping to consider every possibility, even those you may not use.

4. Choose different colours to symbolise different things e.g. you may choose blue for something you **must** incorporate in your project, black for other good ideas, and red for the things you need to research etc. Your method is entirely up to you, but try to remain consistent so that you can better reflect on your mind map at a later stage.
5. Leave some space on your page. The reason for this is that you can continue to add to your diagram over a period of time. If A4 sized paper feels too small, you may like to use A3.