Mind Mapping –How to

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| 1. Take a blank piece of paper A4 or larger. | Blank paper allows you freedom to express the full range of your thinking skills, whereas pre-drawn lines restrict the nature of the flow of your thoughts. |
| 1. Use the paper in landscape orientation. | Words and images have more space in the direction we write, so they don’t bump into the margins quickly. |
| 1. Start in the centre. | Thoughts start at the centre of our mental world. The Mind Map page will reflect this! |
| 1. Make a central image that represents the topic about which you are writing/thinking.  * Use at least three colours. * Keep the height and width of the central image to approx. 2” or 5cm – Allow the image to create its own shape (do not use a frame). | A picture is worth a thousand words. It is fun and results in better recall:   * Colours stimulate the imagination as well as capturing and holding attention. * This size gives plenty of space for the rest of your Mind Map, while making it large enough to be the clear focus of the topic. |
| 1. The main themes around the central image are like the chapter headings of a book:    * Print this word in CAPITALS or draw an image.    * The central lines are thick, curved and organic i.e. like your arm joining your body, or the branch of a tree to the trunk.    * Make sure they connect directly to the central image. | The main themes, connected to the central image on the main branches, allow their relative importance to be seen.   * Printing words allows the brain to photograph the image which is easier to read and recall. * Word length equals line length. An extra bit of line disconnects thoughts, the longer the length the harder it is for the brain to recall. * Curved lines are easier to remember, more pleasant to draw and less boring to look at. Thicker central lines show relative importance. * Connected to the image because the brain works by association not separated, disconnected lines. |
| 1. Start to add a second level of thought. These words or images are linked to the main branch that triggered them.   *Remember:*   * Connecting lines are thinner. * Words are still printed but in lower case. | Your initial words and images stimulate associations. Attach whatever word or image is triggered. Allow the random movement of your thought; you do not have to ‘finish’ one branch before moving on:   * Connected lines create relationships and a structure. They also demonstrate the level of importance, as from a branch to a twig. * The size and style of the letters provide additional data about the importance and meaning of the word/image. |
| 1. Add a third or fourth level as thoughts come to you:    * Use images as much as you can, instead of, or in addition to the words.    * Allow your thoughts to come freely, meaning you ‘jump about’ the Mind Map as the links and associations occur to you. | Your brain is like a multi-handed thought-ball catcher.  The Mind Map allows you to catch and keep whatever ‘thought-ball’ is thrown by your brain. |
| 1. Make each Mind Map a little more:    * BEAUTIFUL    * ARTISTIC    * COLOURFUL    * IMAGINATIVE    * DIMENTIONAL | Your eyes and brain will be attracted to your Mind Map;   * It will be easier to remember. * It will be more attractive to you (and to others as well). |
| 1. Have fun!   Add a little humour, exaggeration or absurdity whenever you can. | Your brain will get the maximum use and enjoyment from this process and will therefore learn faster, recall more effectively and think more clearly. |

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| **Revision Alert!**  How could you use this tool to help you revise?  Work with a partner to note any particular subjects or topics that would suit this strategy. |  |