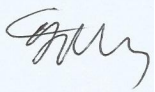




A GUIDE TO MIND-MAPPING HANDBOOK



REVISION NUMBER	PREPARED BY RD	REVIEWED BY SATL	APPROVED BY SED	DATE
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4				26/10/18

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What is Mind-Mapping?

Mind-Mapping is a non-linear, graphic way of organising information and note-taking. It allows you to focus on the relationship between ideas. Mind-Mapping is primarily a useful tool for learning anything regardless of subject-matter. It is a powerful tool for creative thinking, which means all our Radiant Thinking (wherein ideas are inserted into the map radially around the center node, without the implicit prioritisation that comes from hierarchy or sequential arrangements, and wherein grouping and organising is reserved for later stages) ideas can be structured onto a Mind Map. The application of Mind-Mapping include brainstorming ideas for college assignment or other assignment; summarising a lecture, article or book chapter; revising for exams; preparing for presentation; planning club activity; and solving problem.

Our brains are divided into two halves, each of which has a different way of working. We use the left side of our brain for thinking about things like words, numbers and lists. We use the right side of our brain when we are using our creative imagination, when we are daydreaming, when we are seeing colours, and when we are involved in rhythmical activity. So when you are dancing to your favourite songs by Siti Nurhaliza, your right side is in action. Currently you are mainly using your left brain when you are reading this handbook. However, most of the time when you are doing assignment or revision in the normal way, you are really only using half of your brain (or left side). What a waste, because you could be making use of the right half too, to excel at your work, to help you do your revision and help you pass exams with flying colours. Because Mind Maps use colour and picture, they help you to use both sides of your brains and make it easier for you to think, learn, plan, organise, remember and take control. They allow you to organize facts and thoughts in such a way that your brain's natural way of working is engaged right from the start.

Ingredients for Mind-Mapping

Because Mind Maps are so easy to do and so natural, the ingredient for your “Mind Map Recipe” are very few:

1. Blank unlined paper (good, A4 or A3 in size)
 - a) Blank paper lets you have total freedom for writing and drawing, so helps to use both sides of your brain. Paper with lines and margins are not always brain-friendly and does not help in making your thought flow.
2. Colored felt-tip pens (both fine and medium liner), pencils and highlighter
 - a) Colours tickles the right hemisphere of your brain and helps you greatly with your imagination and memory.

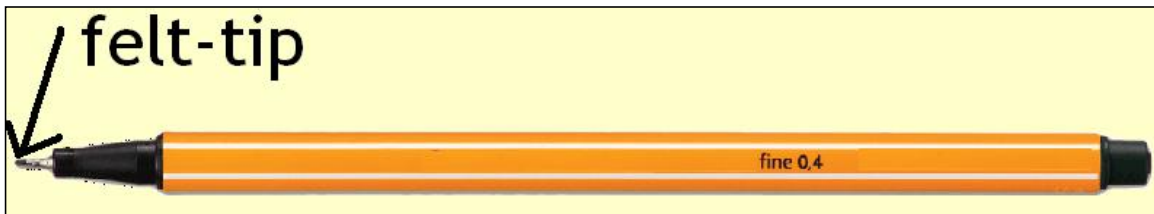


Figure 1: Sample of felt-tip pen

- b) According to research, people are 80% more likely to remember what they read if it is in colour (Mukerjea, 1996).
3. Your brain
 - a) All of us have one.
4. Your imagination
 - a) It was Einstein who said: “imagination is more important than knowledge.”

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For comparison between Mind Map and map of Kuching City, please refer to Figure 3.

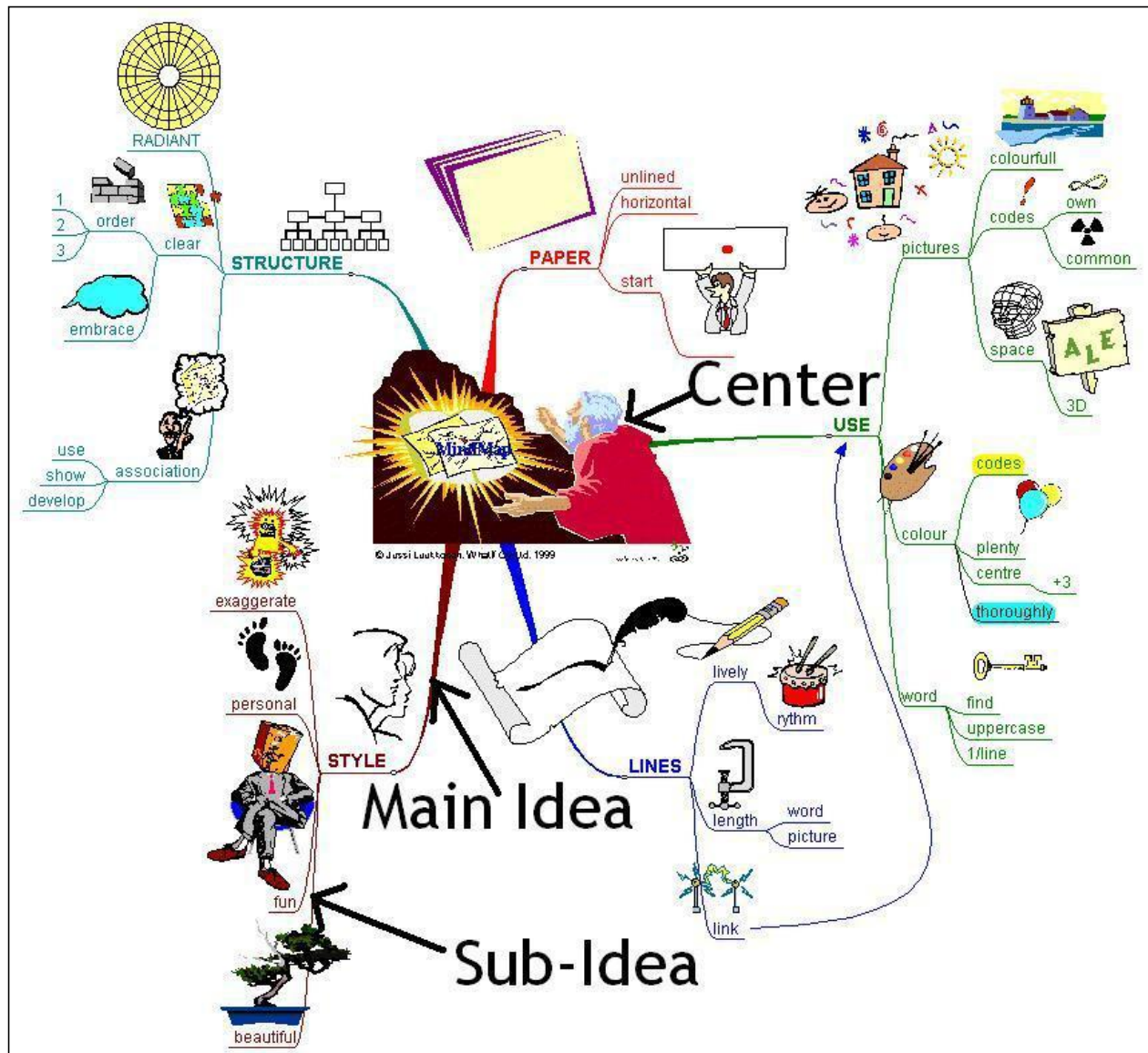


Figure 3: Mind Map

Principles of Mind-Mapping:

1. Take a blank piece of paper, A4 or larger.
 - a) Blank paper allows 360° of freedom to express the full range of your cortical skills, whereas pre-drawn lines restrict the natural flow of your thoughts.
2. Begin at the Center of the blank page in portrait format (turned sideways).
 - a) Words and images have more space to spread out, so they don't get too cramped.
 - b) Thoughts start in the center of our minds. Ideas then radiate out, like the sun.
3. Draw in the center of the page with an image or picture (approximately 1.5 to 2 inches high and wide for A4 paper, and roughly 2.5 to 3 inches high and wide for A3 paper).
 - a) A picture is worth a thousand words and helps you use your imagination.
 - b) A central image is more interesting, keeps you focused, helps you concentrate, improves your memory, and the whole exercise is simply great fun.
 - c) Use at least three to four colours in this image because it is also much easier and more fun to pay attention to stuff when it is in colour. If possible, add humour because it adds to the fun and helps you learn faster.
 - d) Do not surround the central image with a box or frame, let it remain free.
4. Connect your main branches (thoughts) to the central image.
 - a) Make the main branches thick, curved and organic. Curved lines look beautiful, graceful, flowing and less boring.

- b) Allow your hand to travel across the paper, rather than rotating the paper itself, as it makes your writings upside down and hard to read. Keep your branches as close to horizontal as possible so that your Mind Map will be much easier to read.
 - c) Connect the main branches directly to the central image because the brain works by association, not by separated, disconnected bits and pieces.
 - d) Print the main themes in capital letters. Joined-up writing do not help us to read and remember fast.
 - e) Place each main theme on a line (main branch) of the same length. Longer or shorter lines interrupt and break the flow of thoughts, whereas the same length makes the connection easier to remember.
 - f) Use only one word per line. Single key words give your Mind Map more power and flexibility. Each single word or image has millions of possible association, generating its own special array of associations and connections. Phrases or sentences tend to dampen this triggering effect.
 - g) The branches should be bold, bright and colourful. You may find it helpful to use different shades of the colour used for the main branches. Colour helps to separate out different ideas and keeps your mind stimulated.
5. Connect second, third, and fourth level branches (thoughts) to the first, second, and third levels, etc.
- a) Your brain works by association and connecting sub-branches help you understand and remember a lot more easily.
 - b) Branch thinner lines off the end of each first order branch to show levels of importance, as from a branch to a twig. The most important information is closest to the center, the less important, farther away.
 - c) Words or sub-ideas should again be printed, but may be lower case if you want to show that they are less important. Variation in sizes is the best way of indicating the relative importance of items in a hierarchy.

6. Use images throughout your Mind Map as much as you can, instead of, or in addition to, words. Mix them with words if you wish.
 - a) Each image, like the central image, is also worth a thousand words. So if you have only 10 images in your Mind Map. It's already the equal of 10,000 words of notes!
 - b) Images create a stimulating balance between your visual and linguistic cortical skills, and improving your visual perception.
 - c) The image or word should always sit on a branch of the same length and should follow the curvature of the branch.
7. Use emphasis to improve memory and creativity.
 - a) Use dimension in images and words. You can use three dimension for your written words.
 - b) Use different colour felt-tip pens. It make important points stand out, so you can remember better.
 - c) Use arrows when you want to make connections within and across the branch pattern. Arrows automatically guide your eye to connect one part of a Mind Map with another.
 - d) Use codes to enable you to make instant connections between parts of your Mind Map. These codes can take the form of ticks and crosses, circles, triangles and underlinings. Codes representing people, projects, elements or processes can also save a lot of time.
 - e) Enclose branches with outlines in colours, so that they hug the shape of the branches. The outlines (like clouds) will create unique shapes and help to trigger the memory of the information contained in the branches.
8. If you are preparing a speech or essay, you can apply numerical order into your Mind Maps using clock-wise order.

Congratulations! You have just mastered the secret of mind-mapping. Please refer to Figure 4 for a sample of Mind Map.

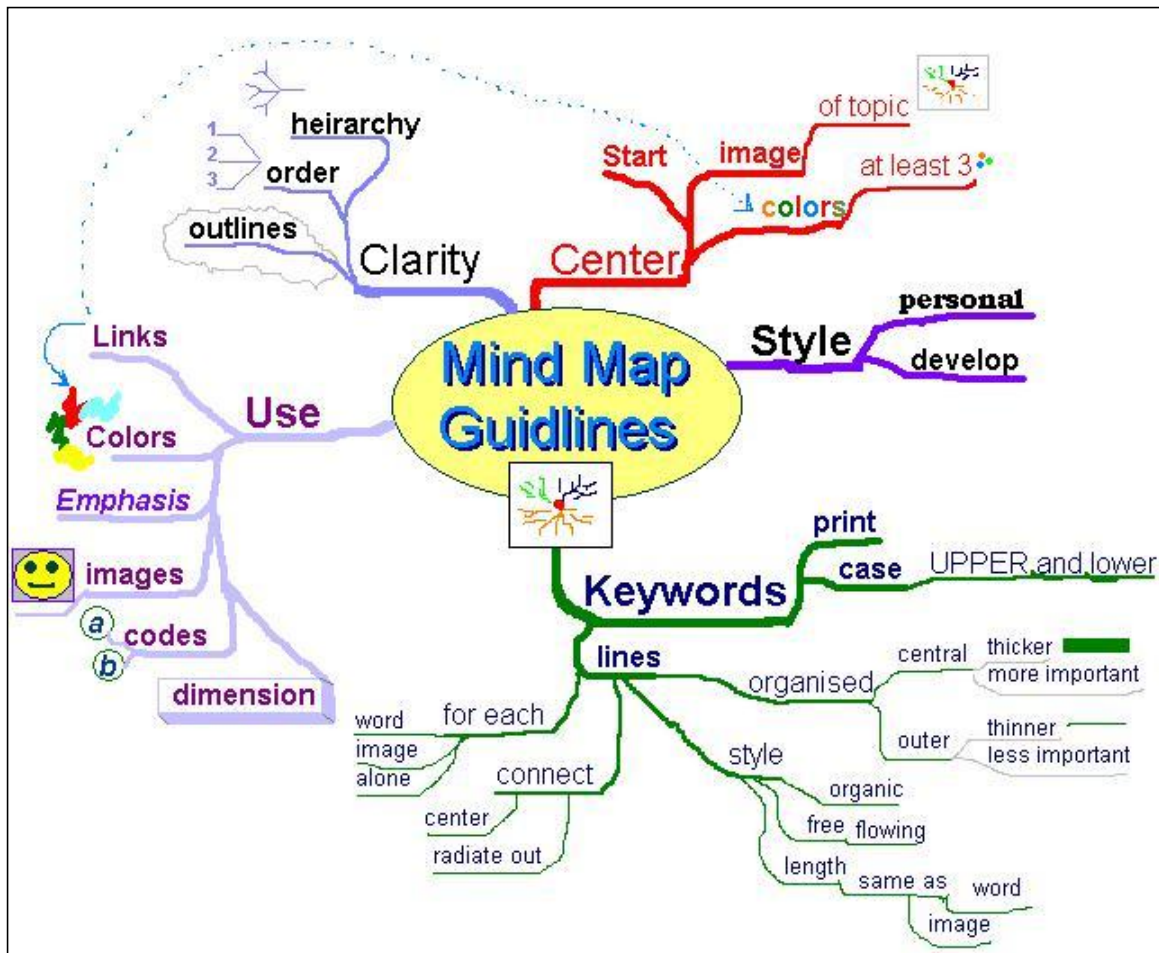


Figure 4: Sample Mind Map

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