

Toolbox for students

Tool 8: Mind maps

A mind map helps you to organise your thoughts. This is what the term literally means. Mind maps can be useful in many different situations when you have to think about a specific topic: gathering ideas, preparing for a presentation, planning a project, etc.

Look at the mind map below:

- What are the main categories? What are the subcategories?
- Would you have added more terms? If so, which ones?

Instructions for creating a mind map

- Write the name of your topic in the middle of your piece of paper and draw a circle around it. Be sure to use paper that is large enough.
- Draw a few thick lines radiating out from the circle. On each line, write the name of one sub-topic related to the main topic in the middle.
- From the thick lines, you can draw additional, thinner lines that represent subcategories or questions related to the sub-topic written on the thick line.
- Try to find as many different terms as you can and place them in the correct categories. You can use different font sizes, symbols and colours.

Compare your mind map with those of your classmates

- What do you notice?
- In what ways are your mind maps similar?
- In what ways are they different?
- What are the most important terms?
- Does the organisation of the subcategories make sense?
- Is anything important missing?
- What would you do differently next time?