

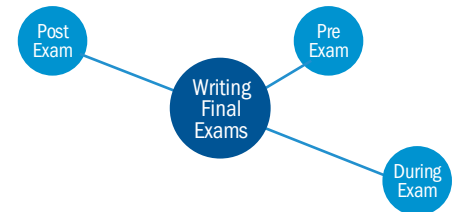
# Concept Maps: A Powerful Approach to Note-Taking

A concept map or mind map is a diagram used to represent words and ideas linked to and arranged around a central key word or idea. Concept mapping can help you learn more efficiently by improving the way you record information and enhancing your innovative problem solving.

Adopt this style of note taking and organize your study notes to think creatively, make new, unexpected connections, and visually represent information..

## Benefits of concept mapping

Identify and understand the structure of a subject  
See how pieces of information fit together  
Recall and remember information  
Make associations and generate new ideas



## Trustworthy tips

**Use single words or simple phrases.** You're more likely to remember key words than a paragraph or sentence and it keeps the page uncluttered.

**Use colors to separate different ideas.** Colours help to keep the Concept Map organized. Colors also activate right cortical activity in the brain, which is linked with imagination, and capture and maintain attention.

**Use symbols and images to make a word memorable.** You can either draw your pictures by hand or use one you have found online.

**Use cross-linkages to show you how one part of a subject affects another.** Make a line between parts of the map to show additional relationships among the subheadings.

**Be creative.** This document provides the basics with which to start.

## Relevant resources

There are both online and computer programs to create Concept Maps as an alternative to drawing them by hand. A few free applications available online include the following:

**Coggle.it**

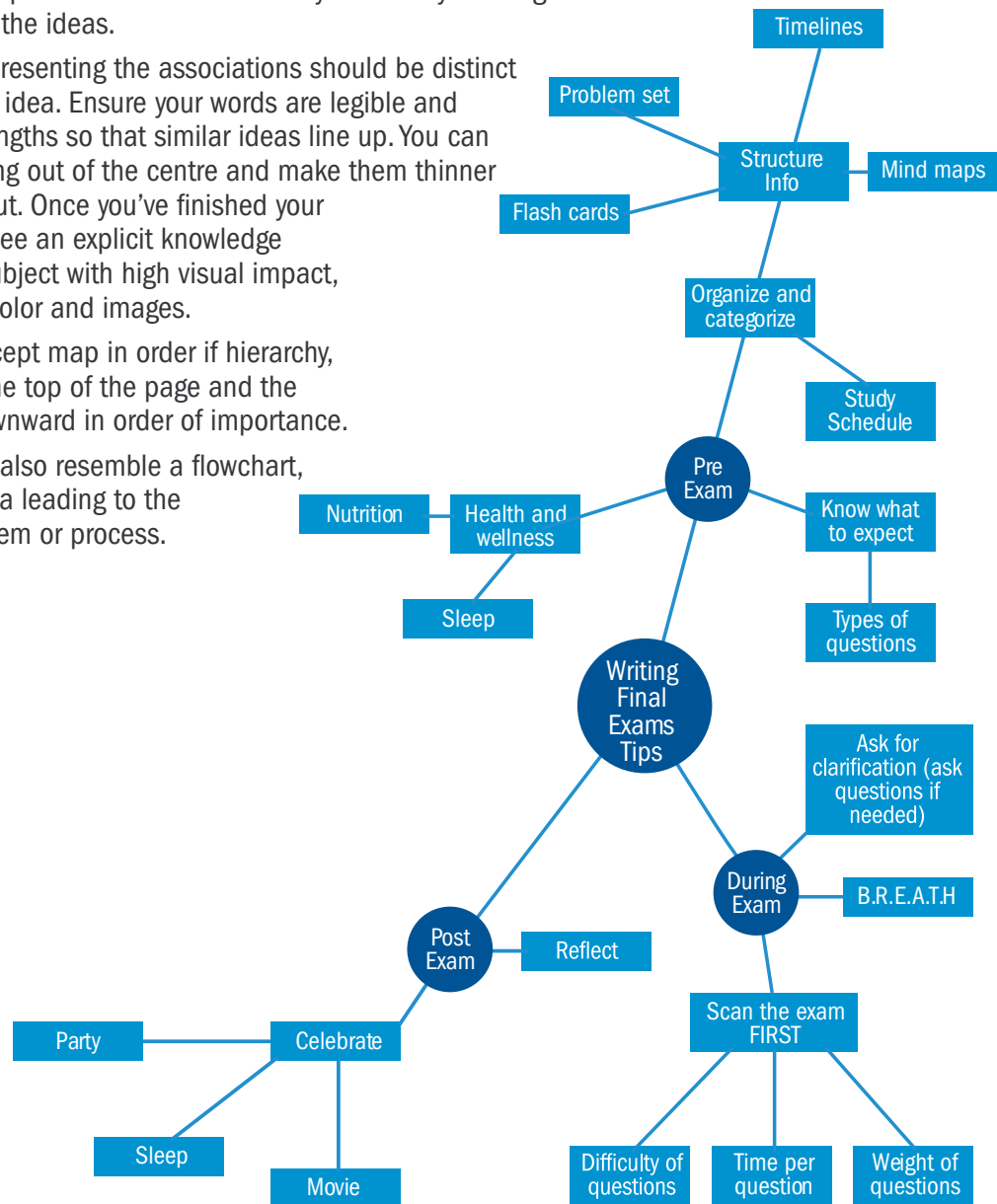
**Bubbl.us**

**XMind.net**

**Turn to the next page to see a detailed instruction on how to create an effective concept map**

## Concept mapping made manageable

1. To create a basic concept map, write your main concept in the centre of the page and draw a circle around it. If you wish, draw an image that represents the topic.
2. Draw lines branching out from the circle, which connect the concept to any relating ideas. Identify a key word or image to label these lines.
3. When you come across more detailed information about that topic or uncover another level of information, continue to draw lines off of the major subdivision or subheading lines.
4. Connect ideas in the map that are not hierarchically related by drawing lines or cross linkages between the ideas.
5. The words and lines representing the associations should be distinct and connect a previous idea. Ensure your words are legible and make lines the same lengths so that similar ideas line up. You can also thicken lines coming out of the centre and make them thinner as you project further out. Once you've finished your Concept Map, you will see an explicit knowledge representation of the subject with high visual impact, especially when using color and images.
6. You may draw your concept map in order of hierarchy, with the main idea at the top of the page and the branches extending downward in order of importance.
7. Your Concept Map may also resemble a flowchart, organized with each idea leading to the next to represent a system or process.



## Make Connections and Clarify Your Thoughts!

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