Activity: Course Theme Mind-mapping

# Purpose

Mind-mapping is a technique used across academic and professional spheres. It is a highly effective tool for creative, organic, stream-of-consciousness thinking in a traceable and physical way. Generally, mind-mapping begins with a concept, topic, or question to be explored. Students then build connections to other ideas, concepts, questions, etc., as they come to them. The goal of such an exercise is simply exploration and brainstorming.

# In the Classroom: Set-up

This activity may be completed in student-generated or teacher-generated groups of around four individuals. Each group will be provided a large sheet of butcher paper with the name of one of the three reading selections for Module 1 written on it. Students may also choose to use (or be provided) markers or pens of various colors.

# What To Do

Students—together as a small group—will ‘map’ their collective thinking. Their map should begin with reflecting on the general prompt below—but students should also feel comfortable following their own tangents as they arise. Maps can include statements, questions, concepts or phrases, quotations from the work(s), images or symbols, and so on; there are few limits. Students may choose to map with arrows to connect ideas or may choose some form of organic color-coding. However, students should avoid overthinking the organization—this is not a presentation poster; thus, aesthetics should not play into the process as doing so will take away focus from the content.

General Prompt: What does it mean to be a ‘worker’ in America? How has the conception changed over this country’s history? How is our belief about ‘work’ tied into the concept of ‘self,’ self-worth, and success?

# Post-map Discussion

Toward the end of the activity, the small group should collaborate to write a more logically cohesive and selective summary of their thinking, focusing on important or novel areas of their group exploration on the topic. Groups will then share these summaries with the class, stopping for discussion with the whole class after all small groups assigned the specific text have reported on it.

# Post-map Reflection\*

After all groups have shared their findings, students should then—individually—reflect on the overall overlaps in the themes and concepts presented across all three texts. Students should return to the general prompt with evidence from the discussion and the texts, highlighting areas of agreement or disagreement. Students should also reflect explicitly on how workers in the field of their career-technical pathway define self-worth and success in the workplace.

\*Mapping activities in small groups take place in a physical class and may factor into the grading criteria as part of a participation grade. However, all class activities are expected to be reflected in the post-map reflection submitted to the assignment post here in Canvas. Teachers should determine the grading criteria --this can be participation-based, informal, or teachers may choose to grade the reflection on formal writing technique, grammar, organization, and logic.