

Activity: Module 5 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 3-5 individuals, simulating the high-stakes situation of *The College Board's* Task 1 project. Each group will be provided a large sheet of blank butcher paper on which to begin to think “out loud” as a group in brainstorming potential research topics and subtopics related to Module 5 stimulus materials. Students may also choose to use (or be provided) markers or pens of various colors.

What To Do

As a small group, students will ‘map’ their collective thinking. Their map should begin with reflecting on the provided stimulus materials for this module, 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.

The goal of the exercise is to explore potential topics and research questions inspired by the readings. Students may use their discussion questions as generated earlier in the module as a starting place, and look for areas of agreement, consensus, and shared interest within their group. They should then start to focus on one or two of their generated topics, forming narrow questions, and exploring various lenses applied to the topic to form relevant sub-topics and questions. Ultimately, groups should look for areas of inquiry and lines of reasoning that can be ascribed to each group member uniquely. Individual lenses, as applied, should also generate potential varying perspectives, research key terms, and potential areas for students to begin to seek credible sources.

Post-map Discussion*

This mind-mapping activity should set the stage for discussions leading to the group formal proposals and annotated bibliographies. See the next section of Module 5 for specific details.

**Mapping activities in small groups take place in a physical class and may factor into the grading criteria as part of a participation grade. Teachers should determine the grading criteria.*