Mind/Concept Mapping

What is it?

A mind or concept map is a graphic representation of material—ideas, tasks, words—organized in a pattern around a central topic or idea. The process and resulting maps provide users with a visual representation of the relationships between ideas and perhaps a different understanding of a larger concept. Mind mapping software looks like many graphic design editors with a canvas on which to create the map and a variety of tool options in sidebars. Color and shape choices are common tools that can be used to highlight map organization.

What does it look like in practice?

In the classroom, mind mapping can be used by students for taking class notes, outlining research projects, and presenting research results. The ease with which map elements and relationship lines can be moved to indicate relationships allows for changes in understanding and meaning to be quickly represented. Instructors can use maps to present complex concepts and even as visual guides to assignments or to course organization. Anything that can be put into outline form can be expressed in a map, and some mapping software can turn your maps into traditional outlines.

How does such a tool fit into my course?

- Students can create a research proposal in the form of a map, with branches for each section and elaborated explanations

- Groups can use the map concept to design a presentation, such as a Prezi, that benefits from showing relationships

- Instructors can use unfilled maps as review devices where students fill in the missing pieces

- See examples on page two of other map uses

Further Reading

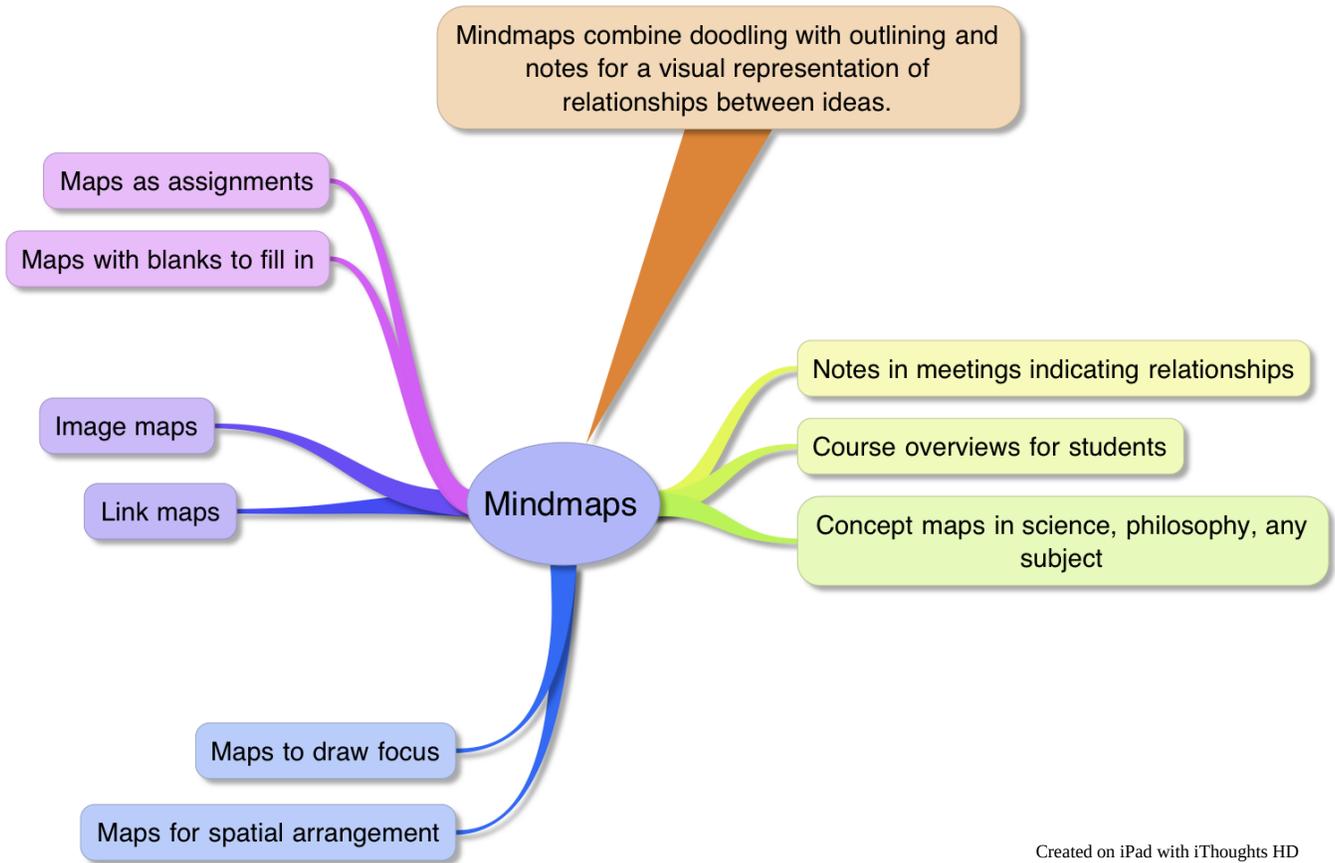Mapping Tools: http://ictlogy.net/wiki/index.php?title=Data_Visualization#Mind_Mapping.2FDrawing

Mind Map Library of Maps for Education: http://www.biggerplate.com/education-mindmaps

More Educational Examples: http://www.mind-mapping.co.uk/mind-maps-examples/education.htm

Study Guides and Strategies: Mind/Concept Mapping: http://www.studygs.net/mapping/

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Both images can be seen and enlarged in this blog post:
http://mostlytechnology.wordpress.com/2011/06/28/do-you-map-your-ideas/ The first map illustrates how maps can be used to organize information visually. The image itself lists a collection of uses for maps.

Created on iPad with iThoughts HD

The second map, created on Xmind, accompanies a reading assignment on paragraph patterns and how to choose one for a specific purpose. The map also illustrates how students could take notes in outline form.

Created with XMind

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