

# Concept Mapping

## Intent:

This activity is designed to help students do two things: 1) plan a rough outline of their paper and 2) see the conversation of their sources. I typically deliver this assignment before their first draft is due and after they've finished their annotated bibliographies so they have the chance to play around with some ideas before writing. This activity is also helpful because students can use the technology I've taught in this assignment for one of their remediations in Project 3.

## Assignment given to class:

One of the things that I see a lot of young college students struggle with is synthesizing the various texts they read for their research papers. As such, many students tend to organize their papers around their sources rather than main ideas that will help develop their thesis statement. This tends to do two things: limit your understanding of the conversation your research is entering into and undermine your argument through poor organization.

In order to visualize the ways in which your sources are in conversation with one another and your topic, we are going to be creating concepts maps using Prezi. (If you do not already have a Prezi account, please sign-up for one now.)

## **What are concept maps?**

Concept maps are visual outlines of your paper. You'll be able to visually link ideas and sources together that will help you think through the organization of your paper and how your sources comment on your main ideas and how they intersect with one another.

## **What do they look like?**

It's really up to you as to how you want your concept map to look like. Ideally, the concept map is designed so that it will best fit the author's needs. You can see [my example of a concept map here](#). I would recommend organizing it around key ideas that you want to touch on in your research essay and connecting the articles you read to those key ideas. You might want to show how those ideas and authors connect through visual or written examples.

## **What you'll need:**

Annotated Bibliography  
Prezi

## **Reflection:**

What did you learn through this assignment? What did you find helpful? Do you think you will use your concept map as you compose the rest of your paper? Are you planning on making any changes to your current draft now that you've created a concept map?