

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- 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 writing surface on which to begin thinking "out loud" while brainstorming potential research topics and subtopics related to Module 5 stimulus materials. Students may also choose to use markers or pens of various colors to organize and process their thinking.

What To Do

Small groups will 'map' their collective thinking. Their map will 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 map with arrows to connect ideas or choose some form of organic color coding. However, students do not need to overthink the organization; this is not a presentation poster. Aesthetics are not part of the process, and concerns about 'look' will take the focus away from the content.

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

Post-map Discussion

This mind-mapping activity sets 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 will determine the grading criteria