

Activity 3: Let's mind map together!

Aim(s): To build on the rules for mind mapping by having a go at applying the rules using a kinaesthetic approach working with others to support their understanding of the skills of mind mapping

Resources: This activity needs significant preparation in advance. Cut out lots of large mind map arm shapes, out of something like lino, or card and paint in a variety of colours. Large sheets of paper work just as well but are not quite so durable. The central image can be either an object or just a picture printed, laminated and cut out. Key words for the main branches (SCHOOL = Teachers, lunchtime activities, events, feelings, friends etc) also need to be printed and cut out. Some key words are included but you may want to add others of your own. The children will also need plain A3 paper for their own mind maps.

Time: 25 mins

Using a large enough space lay out the central image on the floor and randomly place at least 4 or 5 arms around it. Explain to the children that the group is going to mind map a very familiar topic...their school, represented by the central image. You might ask them if they were drawing this mind map what would they use as their central image about their school.

The next decision the groups need to make is what is going to be the key areas the group mind map could include. Show the children the range of key words and pictures/objects you have already prepared. Ask individuals to pick up the cut out key word/picture/object of their choice and place it on an arm of the mindmap. Often, children will place words at the end of the arm; if this happens ask the group to think back to the rules and remember where the words should go. It is important that the word is placed along the length of the arm.

Once the whole group identifies the main branches, individuals can then either complete the mind map on paper or small groups can work on the larger mind map taking an arm each. This approach gives them an initial structure and also allows them to get physically involved.

Alternatively, if the weather is supportive you may want to use the playground to create a giant mind map using chalk where groups of students can work on individual arms. A more permanent mind map can be created on huge sheets of lining paper pinned onto a smooth wall.

At the end of the session, students should be encouraged to reflect on when they might use mind mapping in and out of school.

Points to make:

1. Words must sit along the length of the arm.
2. Words and pictures work together to give meaning so both need to be chosen carefully.