

## What are mind maps?

Mind maps are a graphical method of taking notes. The visual basis of them helps one to distinguish words or ideas, often with colors and symbols. They generally take a hierarchical or tree branch format, with ideas branching into their subsections. Mind maps allow for greater creativity when recording ideas and information, as well as allowing the note-taker to associate words with visual representations.<sup>1</sup>

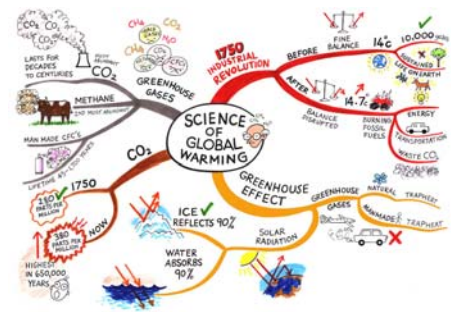


Figure 1: An example of a hand drawn mind map<sup>2</sup>

## Why use online mind maps?

Online tools such as MindMeister bring the concept of mind mapping to the web, using its facilities for real-time collaboration to allow truly global brainstorming sessions. Users can create, manage and share mind maps online and access them anytime, from anywhere. In brainstorming mode, fellow users from around the world (or just in different rooms) can simultaneously work on the same mind map and see each other's changes as they happen.<sup>3</sup>

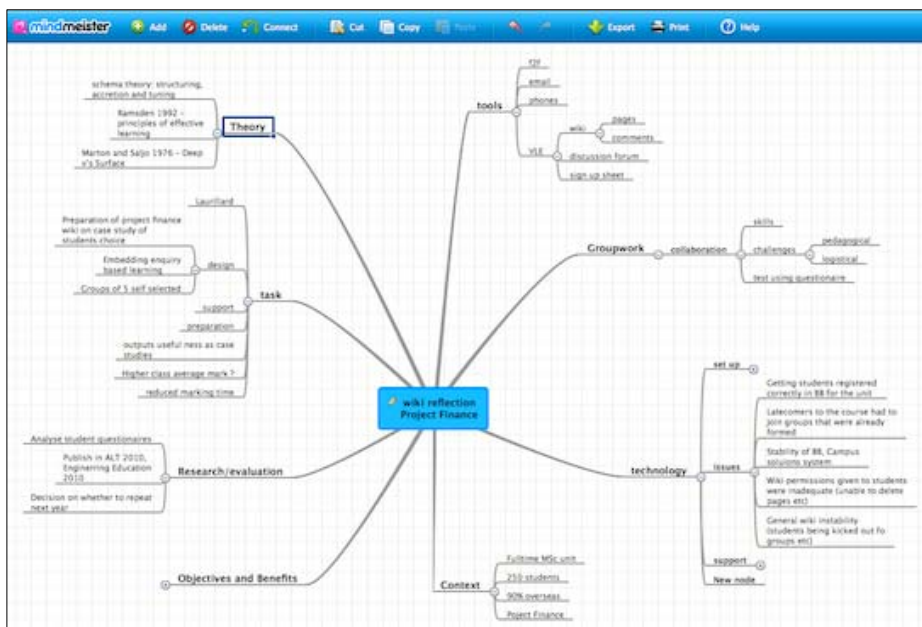


Figure 2: An example mind map created using Mindmeister

## Where can I get an online mind map tool?

If you want to collaborate in real-time with your colleagues, you can use an online tool such as bubbl.us, Mindomo, or MindMeister. These tools don't conform to Tony Buzan's principles<sup>4</sup> of mind mapping in all respects, which call for free form curving branches and multiple colours. However, they're still useful for collecting your thoughts, taking notes, or sharing your ideas with your colleagues.<sup>5</sup>

Mindmeister: <http://www.mindmeister.com/>  
Mindomo <http://mindomo.com/>  
Bubbl.us <http://bubbl.us/>

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mind\\_map](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mind_map) (characteristics)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.topicscape.com/mindmaps/29>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.mindmeister.com/content/about>

<sup>4</sup> Buzan, Tony; (2000) The Mind Map Book, Penguin Books, 1996.

<sup>5</sup> <http://webworkerdaily.com/2007/03/08/three-web-based-mind-mapping-tools-reviewed/>