Our Brains Love Mind Maps!

Mind mapping is a unique note-taking method that increases recall. It uses the left and right hemispheres of the brain, is better able to show relationships between ideas than linear notes, and allows you to quickly record large amounts of information. Below is a refresher on mind mapping. If you’re not already using it in school, why not try it out by making a mind map about your SuperCamp experience.

1. **Print the topic in the center and enclose it in a shape. If possible, make the shape relate to the topic.**
   For example, if your topic is SuperCamp, you might draw a heart around the word SuperCamp.

2. **Next add different color branches for each key point or main idea.**
   Write the name of a key point or main idea along each branch, such as *friends, academics, ropes course, relationships/communication, 8 Keys*, etc. Make each branch a different color to remember them more easily.

3. **Now add details and key words to your branches.**
   On the branch titled friends add small branches and hang the names of your friends on them. Add other details that remind you of these special friends. Then add details to personalize your other sub-topics.

4. **Add symbols and pictures.**
   The more creative and colorful your mind map, the better you will understand and remember the information. Add pictures, symbols, more color, and detail. The more unique or outlandish your design, the better your mind map will work for you—today and in the future.

You can mind map lecture notes, a text-book chapter, next week’s quiz, essay topics, your next vacation, or a to-do list. So, practice your mind maps and put them to use—at school and at home. Soon you’ll be reaping the benefits of greater recall, greater efficiency, and better grades, while having fun in the process.

**Mind Mapping Hot Tips**

1. **Turn paper to landscape view:** allows more room for words and images in the direction we write
2. **Central image:** a picture is worth a thousand words—thoughts start in the center of our mental world
3. **Length of branch = length of word:** extra branch space disconnects the ideas
4. **Connect branches to central image:** visually connects the central image to the main topics
5. **Print key words in upper-case letters:** printing allows the brain to more easily photograph the image thus improving recall
6. **Use images, colors, and symbols throughout your mind map:** a picture is still worth a thousand words
7. One word per branch: creates a visual distinction between ideas
8. Branches go from thick to thin, organic and flowing: organic branches give visual rhythm and match the natural structure of brain cells
9. Each branch family one color: to group related topics together
10. New branch, new color: separates main topics