



# MIND-MAPPING....

## THE POWERFUL, BRAIN-FRIENDLY, THINKING TOOL

Mind mapping is a fantastic tool for getting stuff into and out of the head. It has been around for centuries in different forms. You may have heard people talk about a-maps, brainstorming or memory maps. We will look at a version of mind mapping which pulls together the best and most efficient aspects of these different techniques....

### Rule 1... the page must be landscape



We see the world in landscape. When we look at things in portrait our brow bones and cheek bones get in the way. That's why modern TV's are widescreen!

### Rule 2... there must be an image in the centre of the page



On an A4 sheet of paper your central image should be about the size of your fist. Make your picture colourful. If you want to write something use bubble writing or shadowing on the letters and make them chunky and colourful – this makes the brain see the words as pictures.

**NEVER** draw a bubble, border, cloud or any other type of delineation around your central image. This blocks the natural flow of information that the eyes and brain absorb.

### Rule 3... all lines are connected



As you build your mind map each line must connect to each other or to the central image. Do not draw any lines in a corner – just as these lines are disconnected from the mind map, so your brain will disconnect them from its memory!

### Rule 4... KEEP IT SIMPLE



Use one word or one picture per branch – remember a picture is worth a thousand words! Your mind loves to build associations and the more you leave to your imagination, the harder your brain will work creating memories that link to your word/picture.

### Rule 5... use colour



Colour is like candy for our brains. We naturally think in colour NOT in black and white. The lines in each section of a mind-map should be the same colour. Our brain doesn't read single pieces of information at a time, rather it 'chunks' words or images together. Using a different colour for each branch works with the brains natural desire to 'chunk'.



# HOW TO MIND-MAP....

Let's have a look at how to create a mind map as a memory tool. We'll do one together about Einstein....

## STEP 1... start with a body of text

### **Albert Einstein**

Einstein was born in Germany in 1879. As a child, Albert hated school and his teachers thought he was rather "stupid". In fact he was asked to leave school because his teachers found him disruptive. He was a very curious child and wanted to know how everything worked. When he was five years old, his father gave him a compass, which he loved and took apart to understand how it worked. When he was 12 he was given a geometry book, which he read from cover to cover, and so began his love of maths.

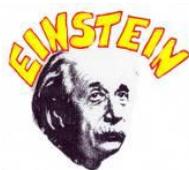
## step 2... Search for the key words

**NB. Typically only 10% of the text is key words – words that are essential for understanding.**

### **Albert Einstein**

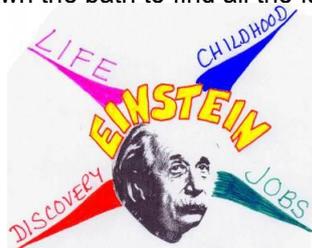
Einstein was born in Germany in 1879. As a child, Albert hated school and his teachers thought he was rather "stupid". In fact he was asked to leave school because his teachers found him disruptive. He was a very curious child and wanted to know how everything worked. When he was five years old, his father gave him a compass, which he loved and took apart to understand how it worked. When he was 12 he was given a geometry book, which he read from cover to cover, and so began his love of maths.

## step 3... Create your central focus Making sure there is no border or bubble



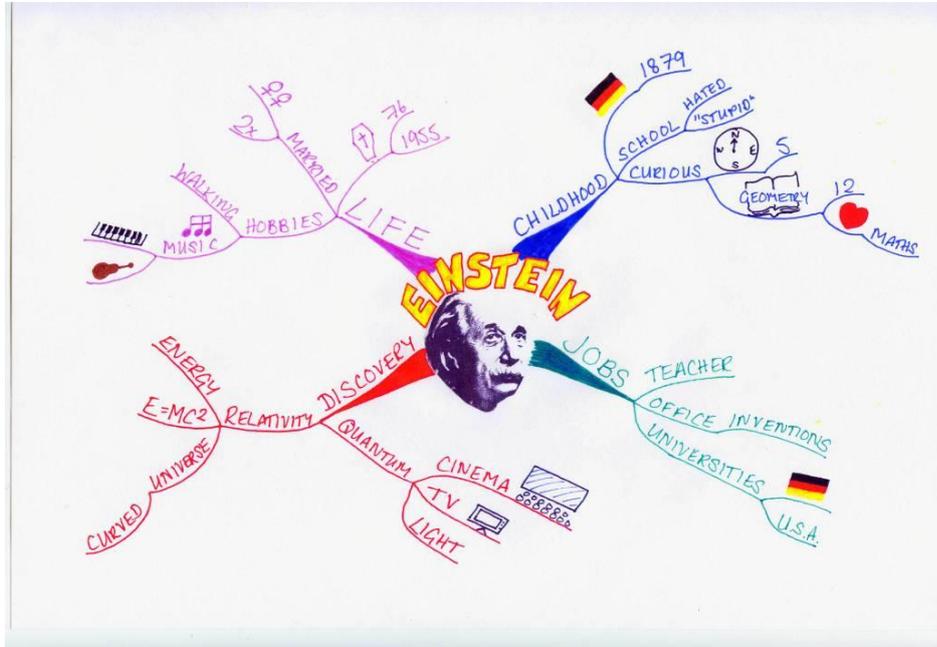
## step 4... select your section headings

These could simply be the paragraphs that you see in the text or, indeed chapter headings if you are doing a 'higher level' mind map. Alternatively, you can choose to divide the text into sections that make sense to you. These branches are triangular shaped going from large to small so your brain can focus down the path to find all the facts. Each one should be a different colour.



## STEP 5... add the flow of information

This is where you add the detail – the keywords that you have selected. Remember to keep each word/picture on top of the branches.



**“imagination is more important  
than knowledge!!!  
(albert Einstein)**

Mind maps can be used for many different applications....

**Remembering facts** – just as we saw with Einstein above and with Marco Polo during the workshop, mind maps are an amazingly effective tool for memorising facts.

**Creating** – mind maps are brilliant for encouraging creativity and enabling you to generate new ideas in brainstorming sessions. The way they are laid out gives you a better overview and makes new connections more visible so you can create an infinite number of thoughts, ideas, links and associations on any topic.

**Plan and organise** – mind mapping can be used to help you **plan and organise your thinking** before you start writing or get stuck into a project. You can develop all your ideas and see where and how they relate to each other before deciding the best way to go about things.