

Using a Mind Map

A mind map is a creative way to introduce a concept. Owing to the silent nature of this exercise, the students are forced to think carefully about their analysis and critique of the concept in front of them.

Explanation

The students will be introduced to a concept through visual and analytical processes. The teacher will offer a prompt to the students. The teacher will write a word on the board inside of a large circle. Each student will be given a small amount of time to think of as many words as he or she can that are related to the prompt on the board. The students will write down these words in their notebooks through a series of connected circles. After a brief time, the students will be instructed to share with the class the words or phrases they generated. The teacher will write these words on the board, connecting them to the large circle and word prompt. This exercise concludes with a discussion surrounding the word on the board and how it pertains to the subject of the day.

Method

1. Choose a word that pertains to your lesson for the day. Write it on the board inside a large circle. Ask the students to take out their notebooks and pens or pencils. Instruct the students to write the same word inside a circle in their notebooks.
2. Next, ask the students to consider the meaning of the word and to think of words and phrases that are related to it. Inform the students that they are to connect these words and phrases to the word in the central circle by writing them down in smaller circles connected by a line to the central circle (see the handout “Mind Map” [Document #: TX001160]).
3. Provide approximately 5 minutes for the students to complete this exercise. When the time has expired, invite the students to share their words and phrases with the class. The students must also provide an explanation for their words and phrases.
4. Write each word and phrase on the board, connecting these to the original word. Repetition is not only acceptable but expected!
5. Finally, lead the students in a discussion surrounding the original word on the board and its meaning, paying special attention to the words and phrases suggested by the students.

