

Rules for Creating Mind Maps

1. The mind map must reflect the child's ideas and knowledge.
2. Drawings should be simple.
3. The main idea is represented first in the centre.
4. Branches are in colour.
5. Branches are stylised to aid remembering.
6. Branches are labelled with single words and simple iconic drawings.
7. From each branch a smaller branch is drawn for each item within that subcategory.
8. Items are represented with a simple iconic drawing and/or single word.
9. More branches can be added as needed.

Find the Pictures

Object of the Game: To introduce the child to mind maps.

Equipment: Animal pictures on the CD, paper and coloured pens or pencils.

How to Play: Start by sticking the black and white iconic picture in the centre of a piece of paper. Explain to the child that you are going to make a mind map of the different animals that are found on a farm, in a zoo, can be a pet, etc. Help the child sort the pictures of the animals into their subcategories, e.g. animals, crops, buildings and vehicles. Draw a branch for each subcategory projecting out from the central picture. Write and draw a label for each branch. Ask the child to help you stick the subcategory pictures at the end of the branches. Practise with different categories, e.g. clothes, food and toys.

To Make It Easier: Draw the branches onto the map and tell the child which subcategory each branch is for before they sort the pictures, e.g. say 'This branch is for animals on the farm. Can you find them?'

To Make It Harder: Ask the child to sort the pictures into subcategories themselves and arrange them on the sheet of paper.

Reinforcement: Praise and encourage the child for any attempt to use their knowledge about categories from the activities they have already done.

Drawing Icons

Object of the Activity: To introduce the child to the idea of using simple iconic drawings to represent what they know.

Equipment: Pen or pencil and paper.

How to Play: Explain to the child that you are going to practise drawing very simple pictures as quickly as possible. Show them the difference between a picture that you take your time over and a very simple quick one that only you need to understand. Ask them to practise drawing various objects and people they know. Stress that the drawing is not meant for other people to see and so long as they know what their drawing means, it does not matter whether anyone else does.

To Make It Easier: Talk the child through their drawing telling them what to draw so that they do not add in too much detail.

To Make It Harder: Use a watch to time them to emphasise the importance of them drawing the image quickly.

Reinforcement: Praise all attempts to produce quick drawings regardless of whether you can tell what they are. As long as the child knows that is all that counts.

Memory Magic Activity 5.2

Branches

Object of the Activity: To provide the child with further practice at drawing mind maps.

Equipment: Pictures provided on the CD, paper, glue and coloured pens or pencils. A copy of the Rules for Creating Mind Maps.

How to Play: Ask the child to sort the pictures into a central category picture and various subcategories. Help them to arrange the pictures and stick them onto a piece of paper. Next ask the child to draw on the branches of the mind map. Encourage them to make these branches as colourful and interesting as possible as this helps the child to remember the branches and hence the subcategories. Help the child to write and draw a label for each branch.

To Make It Easier: Start with a completed mind map but with single line branches. Ask the child to help you make them more colourful and stylish and to label them with simple drawings.

To Make It Harder: Once you feel the child has understood how to create a mind map ask the child to create the mind map on their own. Discuss if they could improve the mind map by making it more colourful or using simpler drawings.

Reinforcement: Praise and encourage the child to think of ways of making the branches more memorable using colour and style.

Memory Magic Activity 5.3

A Complete Map

Object of the Activity: For the child to put together everything they have practised so far about Mind Maps and draw a complete mind map.

Equipment: Pictures provided on the CD, paper and coloured pens or pencils. A copy of the Rules for Creating Mind Maps.

How to Play: Give the child the category pictures and ask them to sort them into a central category pictures and appropriate subcategories. Then ask the child to draw a mind map of the pictures. Following the nine rules provided.

To Make It Easier: Allow the child to create their mind map by sticking the pictures onto the paper.

To Make It Harder: Think of a topic that interests the child, e.g. football, pets or favourite TV character. Ask them to create a mind map of what they know about that topic following the rules of using lots of colour and simple iconic drawings.

Reinforcement: Praise and encourage the child to use everything they have learnt about mind maps.

Memory Magic Activity 5.4

Draw a Scene

Object of the Activity: To encourage the child to use the simple iconic drawings they have been practising when drawing a scene.

Equipment: Paper, pen or pencil.

How to Play: Describe a simple scene, e.g. 'I can see the beach with 2 children playing with buckets and spades.' Encourage the child to visualise the people and objects as you name them. Next ask them to draw the scene talking through each aspect of the scene and how they can draw it simply and quickly.

To Make It Easier: Place a picture of a table or chair, etc. in front of the child. Describe some objects that are on, next to, under, in front of or behind the table. Encourage the child to visualise the objects as you name them. Next ask them to draw the objects on the picture.

To Make It Harder: Ask the child to draw the scene on their own and tell them you are going to time them!

Reinforcement: Praise and encourage any attempts to use rehearsal and visualisation to remember the objects and where they are in the picture and the use of simple iconic drawings.

Memory Magic Activity 5.5

Key Events

Object of the Activity: To introduce the child to the idea of identifying key words in a story.

Equipment: Simple scenes provided on the CD, paper, coloured pens or pencils.

How to Play: Place the picture for the scenario in front of the child and tell them the first set of information they need to remember. Read the first paragraph with the child. Ask the child the questions related to the first paragraph to help them rehearse and recall the information. Help the student to underline the key words in the story using different colours. If the child is a non reader, instead of underlining the key words ask the child to draw a simple iconic drawing for each of the main points.

To Make It Easier: Ask the child to listen for only one piece of information at a time.

To Make It Harder: Do not tell the child what information they need to remember before reading the story.

Reinforcement: Praise all attempts to use the Magic Tricks practised so far including rehearsal, visualisation and categorisation.

Memory Magic Activity 5.6

Story Mind Maps

Object of the Activity: To introduce the child to using mind maps to represent their knowledge about a simple story they have heard.

Equipment: Scenes provided on the CD, paper, coloured pens or pencils. A copy of the Rules for Creating Mind Maps.

How to Play: Place the picture for the scenario in front of the child. Reread the first paragraph revising the key information. Help the child to create a mind map of the key words they previously identified in the paragraph. Next read the second set of information the child must listen for and read the second paragraph. Ask the child the relevant questions to rehearse the information, underline the key words in the second paragraph and extend their mind map to include the new information.

To Make It Easier: Ask the child to remember only one or two pieces of information from each paragraph.

To Make It Harder: Do not tell the child which pieces of information they should listen for.

Reinforcement: Praise and encourage all attempts to use the Magic Tricks they have learnt to date including rehearsal, visualisation, categorisation, and mind maps.

Memory Magic Activity 5.7