CONCEPT MAPS

Concept maps are word diagrams used to organize information in a visible format. They not only show ideas, facts, and details, but also their interrelationships. Concept maps arrange ideas in a hierarchy: The largest, most inclusive item holds increasingly smaller, less inclusive items.

Uses of Concept Maps:

1. To organize textbook passages which you need to remember.
2. To pull together main ideas that are separated by other ideas.
3. To make a one-page summary of an entire chapter.
4. To review for exams.
5. To summarize and organize lecture notes.
6. To organize ideas for writing papers or making speeches.

Example:

Advantages of Mapping:

1. The visual images of concept maps are likely to stick in your memory longer and more accurately than words alone.
2. Both hemispheres of the brain are used: the left, which processes words; and the right, which processes pictures.
3. Notes are placed in their proper levels of rank, making items more meaningful.
4. Ideas that seemed separate suddenly have a connected structure. This is especially helpful with difficult textbook material.
5. Students who are visually oriented become better learners.

Constructing Concept Maps:

1. Read the passage to be mapped.
2. Select the most important idea in the passage. Write this idea at the top, center of your page.
3. Reread the passage, identifying key concepts and circling them or writing them on a separate piece of paper.
4. Rank the concepts hierarchically, from most inclusive to least inclusive.
5. Arrange concepts on your paper according to hierarchy and relationship.
6. Link concept words by drawing lines showing the connections between them. Label the lines with words that indicate the relationship.
7. Review your concept map, and add any necessary information.
8. Write a paragraph to summarize the concept map. The better organized your map is, the easier writing a meaningful paragraph will be.