

Mind Mapping: An Effective Learning Technique

Bindu Saxena*

Abstract

One of the fundamental principles of National Education Policy is an emphasis on conceptual understanding rather than rote learning and learning-for-exams. To develop the understanding of concepts among the learners, teachers have to use various strategies and techniques in the classroom. These techniques are chosen according to the mental level, needs, and interests of the learner to make the learning process interesting and retain the attention of the learners. It is a fact that children are aware of so many things and the teacher is there to facilitate the learner to construct knowledge and develop concepts. One such technique that is very useful is mind-mapping. In this technique, learners can be involved in the teaching-learning process. It is a very interesting technique and beneficial for the teachers as well as the learners.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers play an important role in the lives of learners. It becomes more important when the learners are young. To make the learning process interesting, teachers have to use various methods, strategies, and techniques in the classrooms. These are selected based on the content to be delivered, the needs of the learners, the interest

of the learner, previous knowledge of the learner, etc. A good teacher selects the techniques for teaching a topic taking into consideration various factors. A technique makes our class more interesting and interactive is mindmapping. It was given by an English psychologist and author, Tony Buzan.

In this technique, the concepts are presented systematically. Learners

* Assistant Professor, SCERT, Delhi

have knowledge related to various things and have varied experiences. So, their experiences should be taken into consideration during the teaching-learning process. The topics should be introduced in such a way that the learners can be actively involved in the activities to maximise learning. The questions related to their previous knowledge and experiences can be asked and the responses (in one or two words) of learners can be written on the board. After all the responses are written, the irrelevant responses can be removed by the teacher citing the reason for the same. Then, the teacher can draw the line

between the related words, and a mindmap can be made by joining the words. Mindmaps can also be drawn on the chart paper and shown to the learners.

Components of Mind Maps

There are seven components of a mind map and it is necessary to include all the components in a mind map. It will make the mind map more interesting. An example eliciting all the components of a mind map is given here [This mind map is drawn for the lesson titled ‘Water O’ Water! of the NCERT EVS Textbook Looking Around for Class III, Chapter 3].

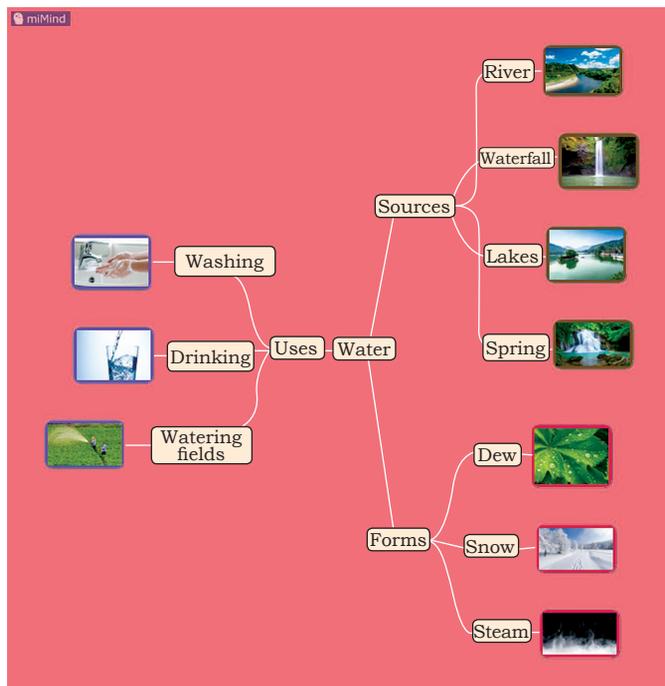


Figure 1: Mind map on the topic ‘Water’

The components of the above mind map are:

The central theme is the main topic around which the mind map is to be developed. In the given mind map, 'water' is the central theme. Several branches radiate from the central theme. These branches are called associations. In the above mind map, three branches radiate from the central theme 'water', sources, forms and uses. These are called first level associations. The branches which radiate from first level association are known as second level associations. The examples of second level associations are river, waterfalls, lakes, springs, etc. Similarly, the images are the third level associations. More associations can also be added to a mind map.

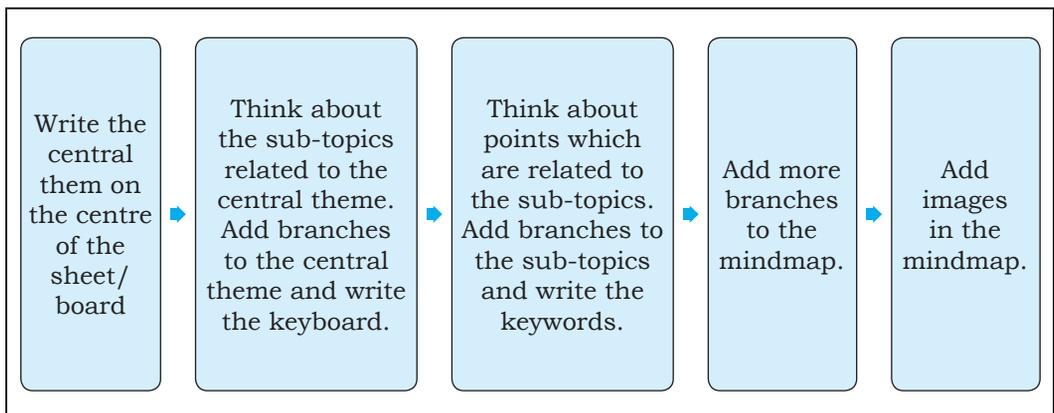
Keywords are the words written in a mind map, for example, form, river, streams, dew, etc. The keywords are

joined to each other by drawing lines between two keywords to identify the relation between the words, such as Water → Sources → Lakes. These lines can either be straight or curved. The keywords which are closely related should be in proximity, i.e., written near each other (like uses, washing, drinking, watering fields) to enable the learner to relate the concepts. Different colours can be used to colour the boxes or words related to each other to make the mind map attractive and interesting. It is also done to distinguish separate branches. It can be seen in the mind map.

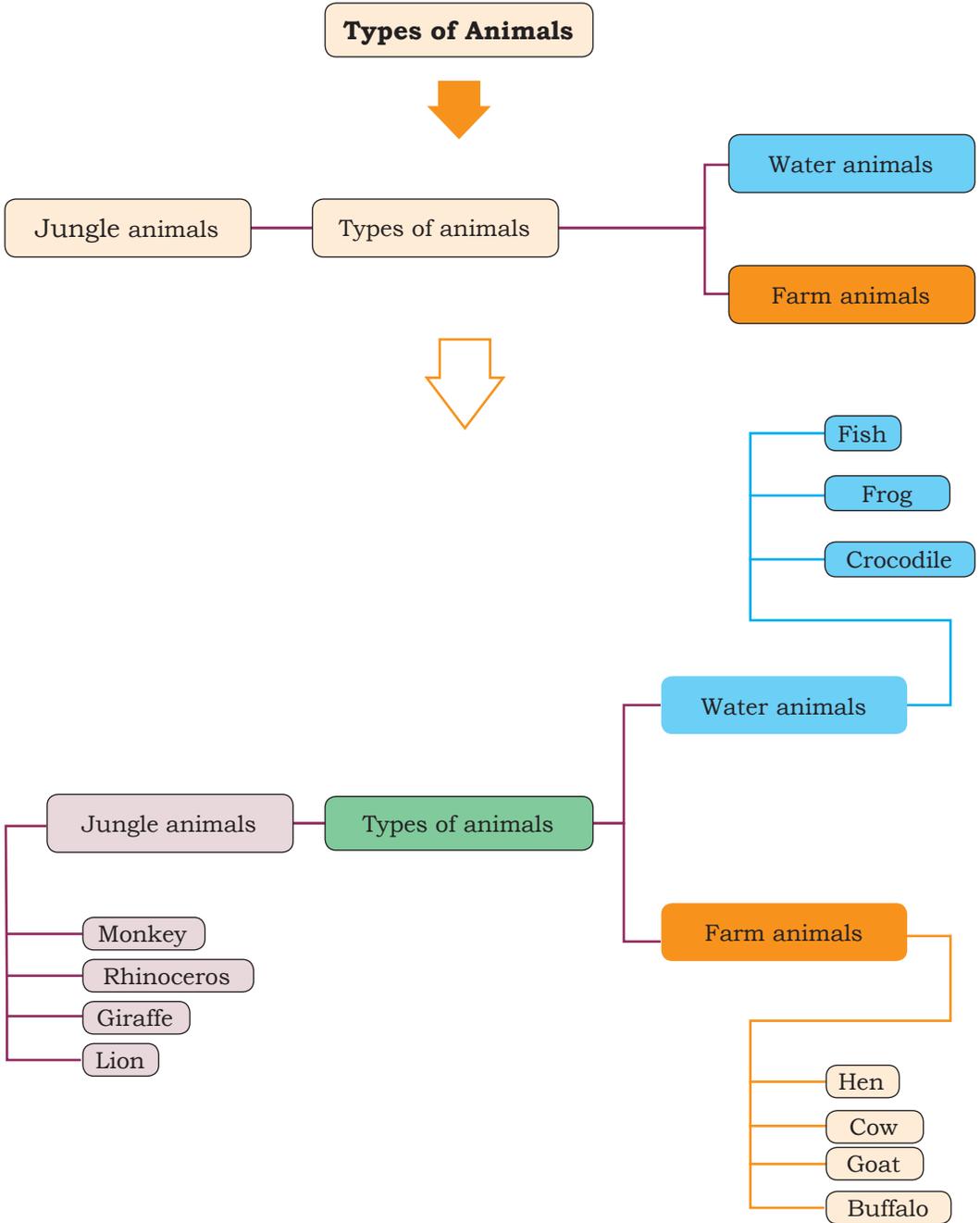
Images can also be included in the mind map to make it more attractive, interesting and retain the attention of the learner. It will also help in understanding the curiosity of the learner.

Making a Mind Map

Creating a mind map involves following steps.



An example is given below understand the steps:



Uses of Mind Mapping for a Teacher

Teachers can use mind maps for making presentations on the chart or board. It can also be used while developing a lesson in the classroom. Mind maps can be made on various topics such as nouns, pronouns, adjectives, themes related to chapters, etc., in English; plants, means of transport, family, animals, etc., in Environmental studies; days of the week, shapes, time, money, patterns, etc., in Mathematics. Teachers can also use mind maps during brainstorming sessions.

Besides this, the teachers can make a mind map while planning a lesson. All the objectives, activities, methods of teaching, learning material, etc can be included in the mind map. This can boost teachers' confidence (Boyson, 2009). A mind map is a very interesting assessment tool. It can be used for assessing the learners (Goodnough et.al., 2002).

Benefits of Mind Mapping

There are several benefits of mind mapping. Learners can easily memorise the concepts because the concepts are written in the form of one or two words and are presented in an organised way. Mind maps can be used for the improvement of conceptual understanding (Goodnough et al., 2006; Brinkmann, 2003). Learners can find relations among various concepts depicted in the mind maps. It helps them to find similarities and differences and they can understand the

concept in a better way. Mindmapping improves memory. (Farrand et al., 2002, Toi, 2009). Children can retain the content for a longer time (Nesbit et al., 2006). When the teacher involves the children, while drawing the mind map, it promotes thinking among the children. They think in divergent ways. It encourages innovation, creativity and concentration (Buzan, 2002). Children can also revise the content easily as the content of three to four pages comes in one page. So, the children do not find learning as a burden.

Mind maps are very useful for primary classes as children retain pictorial mind maps very easily. The topics of different subjects can be integrated into the mind map, e.g., when the learners are taught about leaves, patterns can also be included in the mind map. Mindmaps can also be used for multigrade teaching. In case a teacher has to deal with more than one grade, then the teacher can take into consideration the topics to be taken in different grades and identify the topics that can be taken through one mind map and all the children can be involved in the learning process. The use of mind maps helps teachers make variations in their teaching methods to reach to diverse learners (Nesbit et al., 2006). Mind maps can be drawn on charts, paper, board and in e-format. Many apps are available where teachers can make mind maps.

Points to be Taken Care of While Teaching through Mind Maps

The teachers should try to involve all the learners while developing a mind-map. They should use simple words usually one or two words as a keyword. They should include symbols or images to make the mind map interesting. The teacher should avoid using complicated phrases, ambiguous words and too many associations in a mind map.

CONCLUSION

Mind maps are very useful and helpful. It makes the learning process more interesting and interactive. It also enhances creativity among the learners and helps in retaining more concepts. It takes less time to learn new concepts. To make learning more enjoyable, mind maps can be used in a variety of ways which can be explored by the teachers.

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WEB LINKS

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<http://www.inboundtom.co.uk/introduction-mind-maps/#:~:text=Mind%20mapping%20enables%20us%20to,feet%20and%20retain%20information%2C%20quickly.>

https://www.mindmapper.com/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIz-uR7qem6gIVwX8rCh0iOgPYEAAAYASAAEgJ6MfD_BwEfile:///E:/The%20Mind%20Map%20Book%20-%20Tony%20Buzan%2007.pdf

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony_Buzan

[https://www.toolshero.com/personal-development/mind-mapping-buzan/\(PDF\)The efficacy of the 'mind map' study technique \(researchgate.net\)](https://www.toolshero.com/personal-development/mind-mapping-buzan/(PDF)The%20efficacy%20of%20the%20mind%20map%20study%20technique%20(researchgate.net))