Mindmapping

Context

Mind maps and conceptual maps help students to note down only the most important information using key words, and then make connections between facts and ideas visually.

They are particularly useful with students who have difficulty organizing and integrating thoughts and ideas. This also makes note-taking easier to write and to read, being meanwhile a rapid and efficient method for brainstorming, recording, organizing, and presenting information.
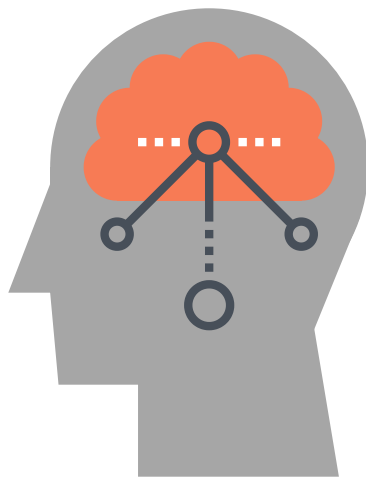
In many cases Special Need Students may need to follow written information such as lecture, homework or instructions in a clear and visual form. Students with LSD (Specific Learning Disorders) such as Dyslexia, or with language acquisition issues, may need to use mind or concept maps to access lesson content more easily.

General Principles

Mind maps and **conceptual maps** consist in two different ways to summarize information in diagrams.

These two both work by breaking down long constructs in pieces of key info resumed in "nodes" (clusters of information that represent single concepts).

Each node can be linked one another in relation with the previous ones, if the two concepts are connected.

Constructs are this way summarized through they're most important concepts, spreading clusters of info in small and clear nodes.
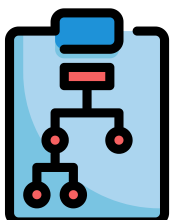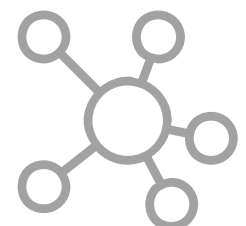Long texts can be therefore summarized in a few nodes, avoiding to read a full page to revise homework or exams.

Mind and conceptual maps however are similar in they're objectives but differ in they're composition.

Differences

Mind maps start from a central concept and grow in different brench-related ideas connected to the central one or one to the other; these were invented for implementing visual memory for memorizing concepts and infos related to each other.
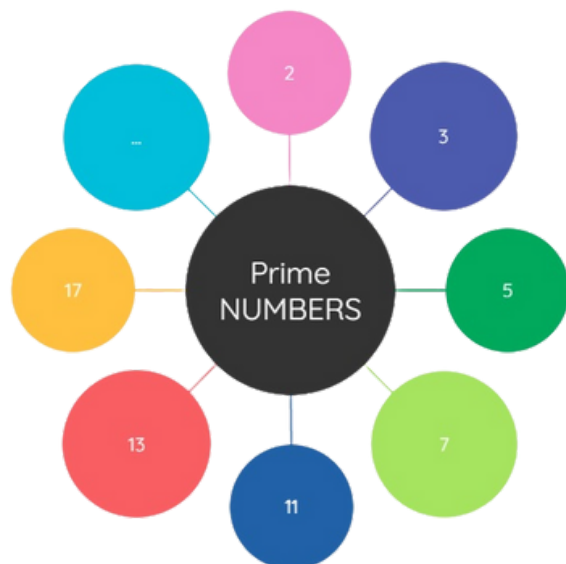
Concept maps differ from mind maps, because they don't grow from a central concept, as they can be free-form, based on connections between concepts in more diverse patterns. Also, concept maps typically have text labels on the links between nodes.

MIND MAPS

A mind map is hierarchical and shows relationships among pieces of the whole. It is often created around a single concept, drawn as an image in the center of a blank page, to which associated representations of ideas such as images, words and parts of words are added. Major ideas are connected directly to the central concept, and other ideas branch out from those major ideas.

It is best used for brainstorming, memory training and associacion of concepts surrounding a single one.

CONCEPTUAL MAPS

A conceptual map is instead a diagram that depicts suggested relationships between concepts.
Typically it represents ideas and information that can be included in boxes or circles, which it connects with labeled arrows, often in a downward-branching hierarchical structure or in in free-form maps. The relationship between concepts can be articulated in linking connection sentences with explanations.

It is best used for studying and note-taking.

Very long texts can be resumed in
a few nodes by finding **key words** and concepts that compose long constructs.

Resources

Online tools like **Cmap, MindMeister, Lucidchart, Bubbl.us** or **Zapier** help to create conceptual and mind maps. These resources also provide examples and definitions on their blogs about both these styles of mapping.
If you would like to deepen your knowledge in this subject: Tony Buzan, psychologist and inventor of mind mapping wrote a book called "**Use your brain**", while developing mindmapping technique which explains mind mechanism and processes through which memory works.