

Basic Word Pop Instructions

[See an example of a completed "word-pop"](http://playthinkact.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/mindmap-example-e1467470315759.png) [http://playthinkact.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/mindmap-example-e1467470315759.png]

See a [1-minute video](https://s3.amazonaws.com/six-strategies/mindmap.mp4) of how that "word-pop" was produced. [https://s3.amazonaws.com/six-strategies/mindmap.mp4]

The Central Word Level

1. Select a word or a phrase to think about. Write it down in the middle of a blank piece of paper. Note: This will work best if the paper is in "landscape" orientation. Also, it will help to write in a relatively normal size ... unless you're working on newsprint or some other larger format.
2. Draw a circle around this Central Word.

Level Two Word Pop

1. Use a different color marker/pencil for this step.
2. Now let your mind free-associate with your Central Word. Scatter words or very short phrases all around that Central Word. This does not have to "make sense." If you think it write it down! Write down at least 5, but up to 8 such free-associations. Just let the words "pop" out. Straight from mind to page.
3. *Here are some possible ideas for the kinds of associations you might make:*
 - o synonyms of the Central Word
 - o a memory of a life-experience that the Central Word triggers for you
 - o a visual image of the Central Word — you don't need to draw the image, just name it—but if you want to draw something quick, hey, it's your web, go for it!
 - o antonyms (opposites) of the Central Word
 - o any apparently random word that pops into your head!
4. After there are 5-8 words/phrases scattered about the page, draw lines from those 2nd level words and the Central World. If you wish, you may circle the 2nd level words.
5. Next, put your "coffee cup" on top of the Central Word. The idea is to "forget" about the Central Word. It is no longer the focus of your thinking.

Level Three Word Pop

1. Select a different color marker or pencil. Choose one of your Second-Level words or phrases. Follow the basic instructions above, but this time "popping out" words or phrases that relate to the selected Second-Level item. Draw lines from each Third-Level back to the Second-Level item.

2. Repeat for at least two more Second-Level items, creating even more Third-Level items. If time is available, complete a Level Three Word-Pop for all the Second Level items.
3. If you wish and have the time, carry the process out to Level Four Word-Pop.

Connecting the Dots

1. Leaving the "coffee cup" in place, look at all the words & phrases on your outermost rim (either your Third Level Word-Pops or your Fourth Level Word-Pops). Highlight the some words or phrases that interest you a lot. Not the "most important items"! Select the most curious or surprising or delicious item or whatever. Above all, do not try to be serious. Follow your own delight. Pay attention to your own wild mind.
2. Remove the "coffee cup." Ideally, you would have "forgotten" about that Central Word altogether. If you forgot, good for you! Pat yourself on the back ... you're totally into the spirit of play.
3. Get ready to write: You'll need paper, pen, and ideally a timer of some sort (cell phone?).
4. Do a timed writing (5-10 minutes) where you take one item from your outermost rim (either Level Three or Level Four) and relate that item to the Central Word. Write as though this is the most obvious connection in the world (even if it's not). Connect the dots.
5. Do another timed writing, using a different outermost item and the Central Word.