



## Concept Mapping

- ✓ Allow yourself at least 30 minutes to complete this activity.
- ✓ Get several clean sheets of paper and several markers of different colors.
- ✓ In the center of a page, draw a small picture of your topic. This can be either abstract or representational and the purpose is to jump-start creative thinking.
- ✓ To generate ideas about your topic, start writing key words on spokes radiating out from the central picture. Write only single words (not phrases), and keep the lines connected to the central picture.
- ✓ Free-associate rapidly and **DO NOT CENSOR** any idea. Keep writing constantly, and try to fill the page as quickly as possible. (Start another page if necessary.)
- ✓ Use different colors whenever possible.
- ✓ When you run out of ideas about your central picture, start associating ideas from the words you've generated.
- ✓ After you run out of words, look at the results and try to find patterns and associations between ideas. Draw arrows and use colors and pictures to connect related ideas.
- ✓ Redraw your map. Eliminate any extraneous ideas and group related ideas into some kind of organization. You should now have several important concepts related to your topic. You might also have a rudimentary structure for how to present these ideas. You may be able to generate a series of questions that will need to be answered during your investigations.
- ✓ If your results don't provide a suitable topic, then walk away for a while. Return later and select one of your new ideas/concepts and repeat the exercise.