

Elaboration skills

ACE - Grow Your Skills



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Elaboration skills

Skills to absorb and process knowledge and information. Think of: summarizing, coming up with your own examples and using a mind map.

Description

By elaboration skills, the skills to absorb and process knowledge and information are meant. You bridge new and previous experiences and knowledge. You actively engage with the material and think about it. So it is not about literally repeating the material, but processing the material in a different way. You create anchors in your memory to remember new information or link them to other information. You can use many different strategies for this.

Which strategy you choose depends on the study tasks. Do you want to understand texts, prepare for a test or prepare for a writing assignment? That determines the choice of strategy.

Do you want to read or understand texts for assignments or tests? Then it helps to:

- create a visual representation of the main topics;
- organize all key concepts and show the connections;
- take notes or summarize;
- explain the text in your own words.

If you need to study for a test, it is useful to "immerse" yourself in the content. You actively engage with the material and think about it. You process the material in a different way. This can be done by, for example:

- spreading the learning moments well so that you have enough time to repeat;
- testing your understanding of the material by writing down everything you have memorized or taking practice tests;
- explaining ideas to someone else;
- creating images relevant for what you learn;
- varying the order in which you usually learn;
- thinking of concrete examples.

Tips

- *Start in time.*
- *Create a schedule with set learning times and breaks.*
- *Get feedback.*
- *Ask for help if you don't understand something.*
- *Set realistic goals.*

If you have a writing assignment then it helps to:

- organize the ideas you have;
- find good sample texts for inspiration;
- work in cycles of planning what you want to write, writing a draft and revising it. To write the perfect text all at once is difficult.





Assignment 1 Strategies

Experiment with new strategies.

(The 10 minutes set for this assignment doesn't include the time you need for the study task.)

Step 1: Pick a study task you need to do.

I still need to do this study task: _____

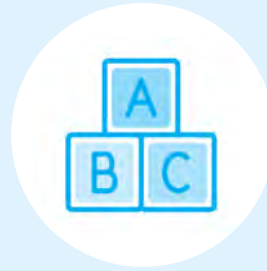
Step 2: Study the learning strategies below.



Studying a text

Learning strategies:

- Create a conceptmap
- Use memory tricks
- Test yourself
- Put your own thoughts into words
- Make a drawing
- Imagine a drawing
- Organize and elaborate
- Take notes
- Summarize



Structuring a text

Learning strategies:

- Sort
- Distinguish main and side issues
- Make a chart/table
- Identify the theme
- Summarize
- Make a presentation



Learning the material

Learning strategies:

- Learn in stages
- Retrieve information
- Actively process
- Use multiple channels
- Vary in strategies
- Think of examples
- Take notes



Lecture

Learning strategies:

- Summarize
- Take notes
- Identify the theme
- Repeat
- Listen carefully
- Make a conceptmap



Writing assignment

Learning strategies:

- Use sample texts
- Formulate a clear writing objective
- Plan/write/review
- Test and evaluate
- Organize your writing ideas



Problem solving

Learning strategies:

- Brainstorm
- Use detailed examples
- Test yourself
- Express your own thoughts
- Make a drawing
- Imagine a drawing
- Think of solutions and test them
- Reason analogically



Assignment 2 *Making a mind map*

Studying texts.

If you want to process a large amount of knowledge, it helps to structure the knowledge. For this, it can be helpful to make a mind map. This can be done by, for example, using an A3 paper and pencil. Another way is to use a digital tool.

Analog or digital

A mind map is a diagram composed of concepts, texts, relationships and/or pictures arranged in the form of a tree structure around a central theme. Creating a good mind map involves a lot of creativity. In this way, you are already studying deeply, because you are making connections between the different elements.

How to make a mind map?

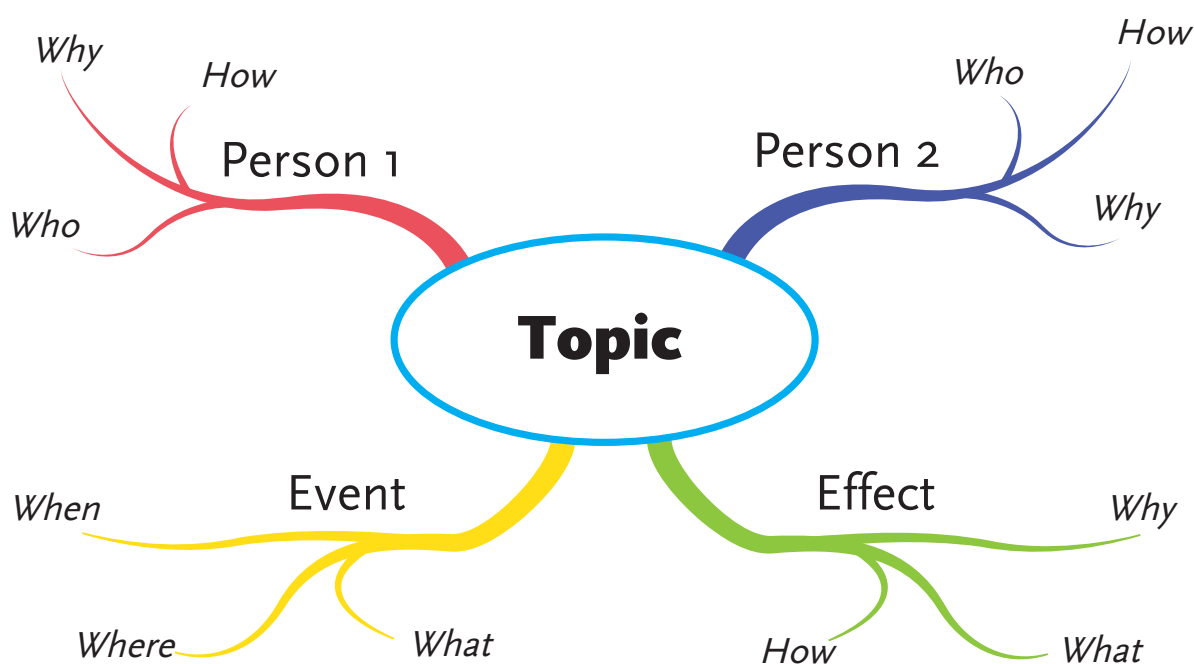
Step 1: Use unruled paper, markers of various thicknesses, coloured pencils, wax crayons and highlighters. Lay the sheet of paper horizontally (landscape). Make sure there is enough space to draw, stick and write.

Step 2: In the middle of the paper, put the topic on which you are going to create this mind map. Make a drawing of the word or just write the word, as long as the topic is prominently displayed on the page.

Step 3: From the word or drawing in the middle draw some coloured lines outward. One line goes to one important element. It is helpful to give each line its own colour. You make the lines near the center thicker than the rest of the branches. Make sure these main lines are all about the same length.

Step 4: Next, give each element a name. Underline the words so that all the important words in the mind map are underlined with a coloured line. Draw or paste illustrations to go with it. Be creative, make it something special.

Step 5: New lines can then be drawn from the ends of these lines. These lines become thinner and thinner. Compare it to the branches of a tree. You can now use the same method as in Step 4: put the words on the line, pictures at the end. As you further work outwards, the words and drawings become smaller and smaller.



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