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Let's learn some Ukrainian using Duo Lingo

Let's learn a few handy, welcoming phrases and share them with each other:
https://www.duolingo.com/

This could be useful for our Ukranian friends to use to improve their English too.

SayHi is a great FREE app for iOS and for Android that you might find useful.

Click here for more information on [SayHi](#)

Click here to view a [video on how to use the SayHi app](#)

Install this on your smart phone and it allows us to have a conversation in two languages and easily understand each other.

Choose the two languages in which you are trying to engage and just tap a button and start speaking.

FREE Voice Typing in Google Docs in Chrome on a Windows Computer - can be adapted to support students from Ukraine and beyond

This will allow a person to speak to Google Docs in English or Ukrainian and it will type what they say. Then they can copy/paste this to Google Translate …………

This is **FREE** speech recognition in **Google when using Google Chrome on a Windows computer**.

It could be incredibly useful for people who have a difficulty writing and indeed for speed and convenience for all of us.

When using Google Docs you have the option to "Voice Type".

Click here to see a video on how it works: Video showing how to use Voice Typing in Google Docs

Click here for further information: Google Support for using the Voice Typing function

While this is a wonderfully handy tool it is still **essential that students develop their touchtyping skills** – please see my other email for resources on this.

Immersive reader and Dictate - wonderful free literacy support in Office 365 online - can be adapted to support students from Ukraine and beyond

The read aloud, speech-to-text, translation and picture dictionary tools illustrated in the resources/videos below can be adapted to support students from Ukraine and beyond ….

Dear students   and educators,

If a student uses Office 365 it has excellent built in literacy supports called Immersive Reader.

Microsoft Immersive Reader is a free tool in Office 365 Online that supports literacy development for learners regardless of age or ability.

Immersive Reader uses proven techniques to enhance:

• Reading comprehension

• Language learning

• Decoding for readers with dyslexia

Please click here for broad overview of what it offers in Office 365: Video showing how to use Immersive Reader in Office 365

In addition to translating and reading aloud in a variety of different languages
Immersive Reader can now read aloud "as Gaeilge" too!!!!!

For those of us who have writing difficulties it is very important to work on developing touch-typing skills. Please see my pervious email for resources for this. MS Office 365 offers speech recognition which could be a powerful tool when writing/typing is not an option due to writing/stamina difficulties. Essentially it allows you to speak to the computer (in MS Word, Outlook and Powerpoint) and it will type what you say.

This video will show you what it offers:

Dictate Speech Recognition: Video showing how to use Dictate speech-to-text tool in Office 365

Xmind - free mind mapping software - can be adapted to support students from Ukraine and beyond

Could be used to create simple, clear visual communication materials with pictures, videos etc.

Dear students and colleagues,

Mind maps have many, many applications in the educational environment from helping to make very visual timetables to being an excellent comprehension and study tool where the student makes their own mind map of a certain chapter or topic. In creating the mind map the student processes the information very intensely. Through the use of colour, space and images they can make their own very visual representation of their learning materials. They can print it out or if they use the mind map on the computer they can also avail or sound files (perhaps to help with languages) or of video files (YouTube has some wonderful education resources). Once created their own mind map on a topic is the perfect customised revision aid helping to go back over materials in the run up to an exam.
These videos gives a brief introduction to mind mapping with Xmind ….

[Video showing how to use Xmind to help students to plan/structure their written work.](#)

[Video showing how to use Xmind to study and revise](#)

Xmind is free mindmapping program that can be downloaded from here : [Link to download Xmind 8 for windows](#)
PLEASE DOWNLOAD Xmind 8 for your laptop.

Click here for Xmind for iPad/iPhones: [Link to download Xmind Zen for iPads and iPhones](#)

Xmind is now available for your phone: [Link to download Xmind Zen for Android phones and tablets](#)

So you can store your mind mapped study/revision notes on your cloud storage of choice (DropBox, Google Drive, One Drive etc) and view them to revise on your phone (using the drill down functionJ a lot!).

7 ways to use mind maps for students

1) Making Notes

Firstly, Mind Maps are a great way for students to make notes on all of the information they receive. Do you ever feel like, as students, you are being told a ton of facts and figures and have no way to get it all down and remember it? Mind Maps help students to note down only the most important information using key words, and then make connections between facts and ideas visually – keeping all of your topic thoughts together on one sheet.

This makes note making easier or students, as it reduces pages of notes into one single side of paper. Having one visual resource to refer to makes everything easier. Then, when you come back to review your notes, you will remember the information more quickly – quite a feat!

With many Mind Mapping programs, you can attach files, videos, documents and web links to your Maps for information at your fingertips! You can add to these and edit when you revisit them for your exams.

2) Planning an Essay

Students get it all the time – your teachers are asking you to create an essay plan. But do you just not know where to start? Or, when you make a plan, do you find it hard to stick to? By creating a Mind Map to plan your essay, you generate more ideas quickly and, with the radial structure, you can quickly see the connecting topics, main paragraphs and structure.

Mind Maps will help you make a realistic plan for your essay, and create a logical structure for the introduction, main sections and conclusions. Mind Mapping focuses your mind on the message you want to get across and the key information you want to include, making you less likely to go off topic or start rambling – a great tool for making sure you hit the marking criteria.

With iMindMap, you create your Map of keywords, plus you can add notes if you need more detail. Once you have made your Mind Map, you can even export it to Microsoft Word – with your notes in place, your essay is nearly fully written! Great for students' coursework. Mind Mapping to plan essays is especially useful for students facing timed essays in their exams!

3) Studying for Exams

Speaking of exams, how many students hate studying for exams? Having to go back through piles of notes, forgetting what they were about in the first place! With Mind Mapping,

studying and exams don't have to be scary. Simply review the notes you have made on each subject, and Mind Map the key information you need to remember.

To check that you have memorised this information, you can create a new Mind Map with only the main topic branches, and then fill in the rest from memory. You will find that you will have remembered more, and maintained the connections between ideas – ideal for answering exam questions! When students use mindmapping software, you can collapse branches to test yourself, or focus in and out on different aspects of the subject.

4) Creative Inspiration

Have you ever tried to write a story, paint a picture or plan an essay but had no ideas to start with? Mind Mapping sparks billions of creative ideas, for students to turn into the next great novel or artwork! Mind Maps work in the same way as your brain, meaning that when you have a thought – this could be an image, a word or a feeling – this instantly sparks off hundreds of connecting ideas.

Mind Maps are just a way of representing this process on paper, so start Mind Mapping and you'll find thousands of ideas flooding out. Plus, Tony Buzan, the inventor of Mind Mapping and all-round smart guy, says that when you start Mind Mapping students should note down any ideas that they have – no matter how crazy or random! This is where the best creative plans come from – so don't be afraid to be off the wall…

5) Problem Solving

If you have a tough problem or obstacle you need to overcome, Mind Mapping can help you to see things clearly. Students should know that the ability to problem solve is looked for by universities and future employers – Mind Mapping will get you ahead of the pack!

When you encounter a problem, your instinct is to panic, meaning your heart starts beating faster and you feel stressed. Instead of 'forcing' your mind to find a solution, Mind Mapping helps to open up many possibilities and options to solve the problem.

When you Mind Map for a solution, you can add any ideas or resources you can think of, and the nature of Mind Mapping means that you spark off more possibilities from your original thoughts. You can then refine your Map for the most practical or realistic solutions available. For students, by Mind Mapping a solution to your problem, you should become focused on the many options you have, and then choose the quickest/easiest/best one for your problem.

6) Making Presentations

Making presentations at school, college or university and eventually at work can be daunting for people, but they are a great way of showing that you know the subject well and are confident to talk about it. With Mind Maps, presenting is a breeze for students. Reading from sheets of notes is boring for students – with Mind Mapping you only have keywords and images to stimulate your memory, so you automatically present in a more conversational way as you keep eye contact with your audience.

When you make your presentation Mind Map, you only keep the most interesting facts and information, and you lay it out in a clear structure. You can even add numbers to order your talking points. With most mindmapping software, you can plan your presentation with all of your ideas and resources, create your presentation map and , with some, even present using an inbuilt Presentation Mode – all from within one Mind Map! These Presentation Modes can animate your Mind Map as you talk, to really wow your crowd.

7) Group Study

Group study can be a really fun way for students to share their knowledge, and Mind Mapping can help you to get the best out of a brainstorming session. First, you should make an individual Mind Map of your thoughts on the topic, as this will focus your mind on your own ideas and opinions – not all the other students'!

Then when you join together, you can combine your ideas with your friends', without losing your personal insights on the topic, creating a new Mind Map with everyone's ideas. With mindmapping software, you can create a Mind Map with each of your friends' names as main branches, and then even record Audio Notes of you and your fellow students' discussions, adding each persons' input to their individual branch.

What is a Mind Map?

A Mind Map is a visual thinking tool that can be applied to all cognitive functions, especially memory, learning, creativity and analysis. Mind Mapping is a process that involves a distinct combination of imagery, colour and visual-spatial arrangement. The technique maps out your thoughts using keywords that trigger associations in the brain to spark further ideas.

Mind Maps can be drawn by hand or using software such as Inspiration or Xmind. There are many other mindmapping programs. When creating a Mind Map, there are several elements to consider including the map's central image, branches, colours, keywords and images. Lets take a look at these now…

Steps to creating a Mind Map
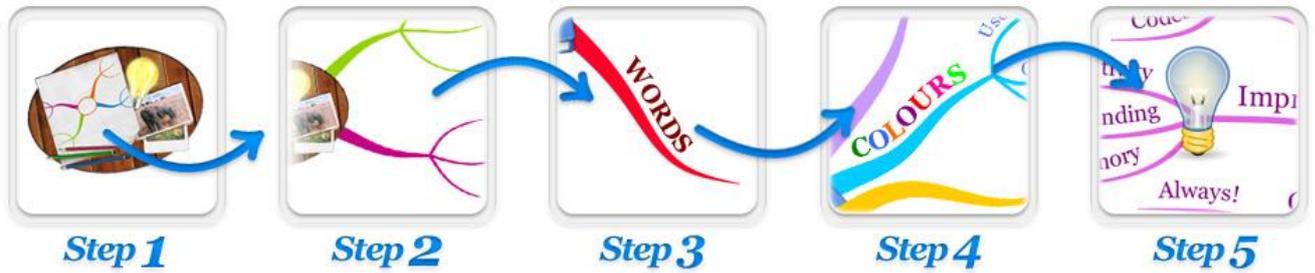
Step 1. Create a central idea

The central idea is the starting point of your Mind Map and represents the topic you are going to explore.

Your central idea should be in the centre of your page and should include an image that represents the Mind Map's topic. This draws attention and triggers associations, as our brains respond better to visual stimuli.

Taking the time to personalise your central idea, whether it's hand drawn or on the computer, will strengthen the connection you have with the content in your Mind Map.

Step 2. Add branches to your map

The next step to get your creative juices flowing is to add branches. The main branches which flow from the central image are the key themes. You can explore each theme or main branch in greater depth by adding child branches.

The beauty of the Mind Map is that you can continually add new branches and you're not restricted to just a few options. Remember, the structure of your Mind Map will come naturally as you add more ideas and your brain freely draws new associations from the different concepts.

Step 3. Add Keywords

When you add a branch to your Mind Map, you will need to include a key idea. An important tip in Mind Mapping is using **one word per branch**. Keeping to one word sparks off a greater number of associations compared to using multiple words or phrases.

For example, if you include *'Birthday Party'* on a branch, you are restricted to just aspects of the party. However, if you simply use the keyword *'Birthday'*, you can radiate out and explore the keyword, party, but also a wide variety of different keywords such as presents, cake etc.

One word per branch also works well for chunking information into core topics and themes. The use of keywords triggers connections in your brain and allows you to remember a larger quantity of information. This is supported by Farrand, Hussain and Hennessey (2002) who found that medical students who adopted Mind Mapping experienced a 10% increase in their long-term memory of factual information.
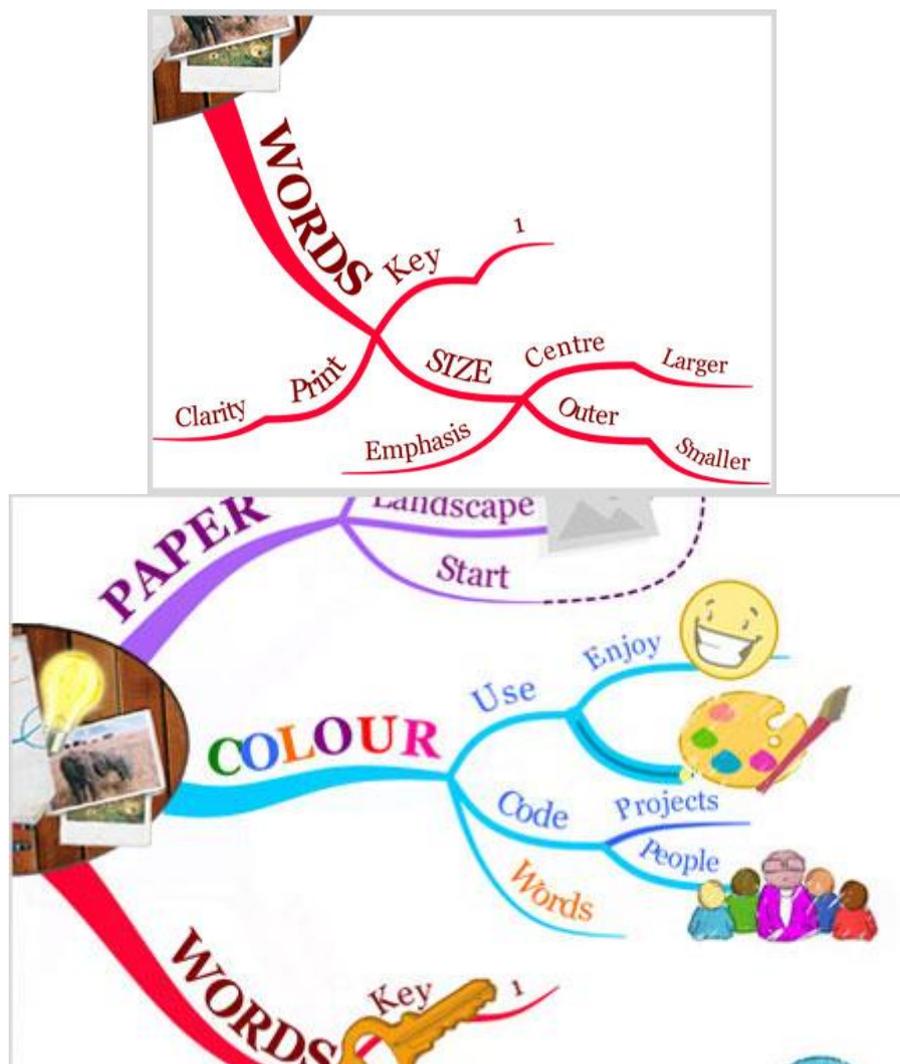
Step 4. Colour code your branches

Mind Mapping encourages whole brain thinking as it brings together a wide range of cortical skills from logical and numerical to creative and special.

The overlap of such skills makes your brain more synergetic and maintains your brain's optimal working level. Keeping these cortical skills isolated from one another does not help brain development which the Mind Map seeks to do.

One example of whole brain thinking is colour coding your Mind Maps. Colour coding links the visual with the logical and helps your brain to create mental shortcuts. The code allows you to categorise, highlight, analyse information and identify more connections which would not have previously been discovered. Colours also make images more appealing and engaging compared to plain, monochromatic images.

Step 5. Include Images

Images have the power to convey much more information than a word, sentence or even an essay. They are processed instantly by the brain and act as visual stimuli to recall information. Better yet, images are a universal language which can overcome any language barrier.

We are intrinsically taught to process images from a young age. According to Margulies (1991), before children learn a language, they visualise pictures in their minds which are linked to concepts. For this reason, Mind Maps maximize the powerful potential of imagery.

Completed mind map….

STRUCTURE
- Radiant
  - Association
    - Flow
    - Brain
  - Hierarchy
  - Thinking
- Clear
  - Order
- Reflects
  - Brain
    - Nature
    - You

PAPER
- Blank
- Landscape
- Start

COLOUR
- Use
  - Enjoy
- Code
  - Projects
- Words
  - People

BRANCH
- Thickest
  - Image
  - Word
- Main
  - Length
- Subs
  - Thinner
- Nature
  - Organic
- Radiate
- Connected
  - All
  - Centre

WORDS
- Key
  - 1
- SIZE
  - Centre
    - Larger
  - Outer
    - Smaller
- Print
  - Clarity
- Emphasis

IMAGES
- Throughout
  - Word
  - 1000
  - Worth
  - Codes
- Improve
  - Creativity
  - Understanding
  - Memory
- Centre
  - Always!
  - Focus
    - Topic
  - Colours
    - +3
- Fun