

Using concept maps to teach information literacy

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“Concept mapping is a strategy people use to organize and make sense of knowledge much like road maps are created to organize highways, towns, parks, rivers, lakes, and so forth.”

--Kenneth J. Sufka,

“The A Game: Nine Steps to Better Grades”

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# Example 1

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## Build a Research Strategy

**Step 1:** Write down your research question or topic. Then circle the most important phrases or concepts in your topic. These are your **keywords**.

What is the effect of exercise on the mental health of college students?

**Step 2:** Write each of your keywords or keyword phrases in the boxes (you should always have at least two). Then brainstorm some alternative words you might use to find information about your topic.

Keyword and alternative keywords  
exercise  
physical activity  
athletics  
diet  
social interaction

Keyword and alternative keywords  
mental health  
stress  
anxiety  
well-being  
mental disorders?

other key concepts:  
social interaction  
fraternities,  
sororities

Keyword and alternative keywords  
college students  
undergraduates  
young adults  
men v. women  
pre-med students  
student athletes

**Step 3:** Identify different subject areas that are relevant to your topic. This will help you decide where to search for sources.

Subject area 1:  
psychology

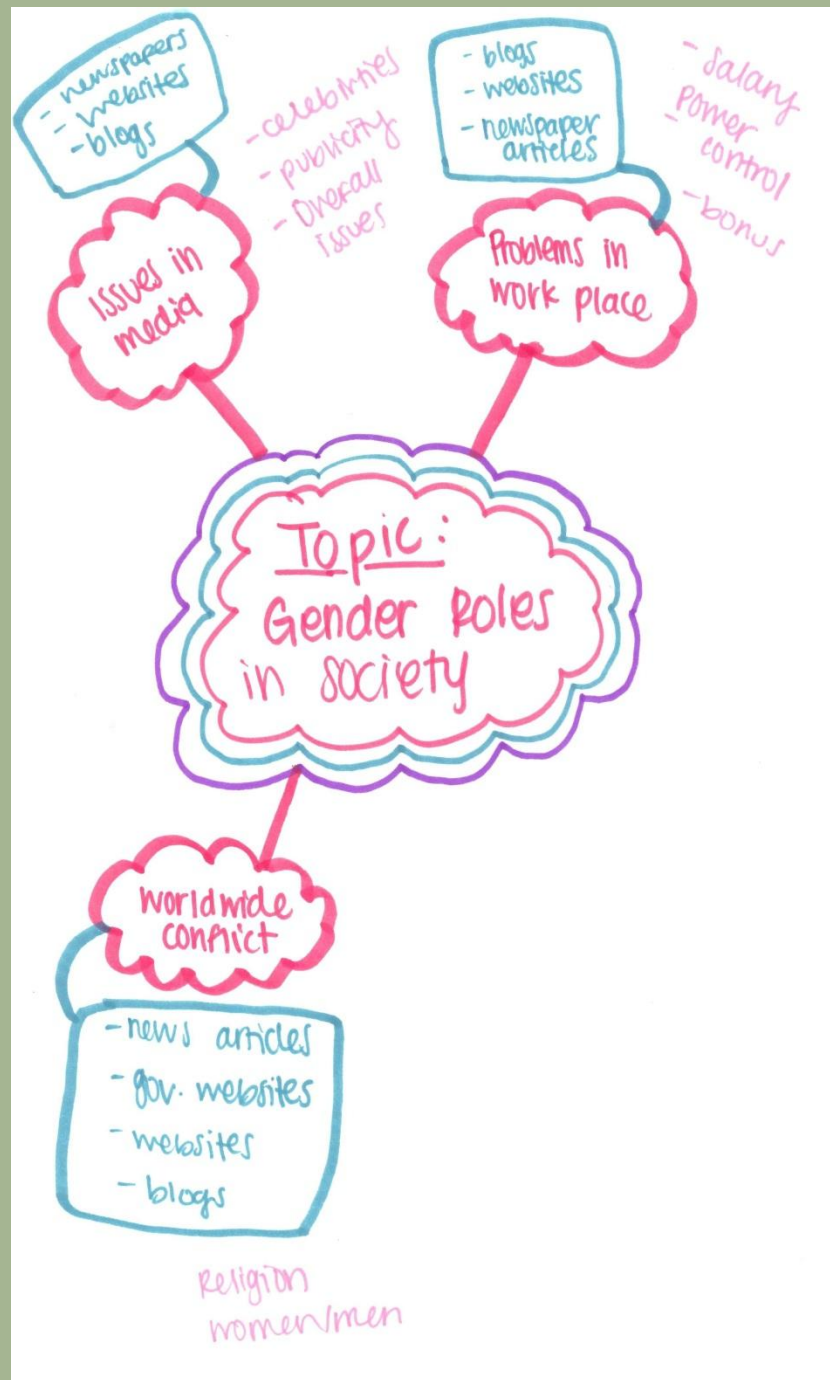
Subject area 2:  
sports

Subject area 3:  
education

Subject area 4:  
nutrition

also:  
sociology  
health

# Example 2



## Why use concept maps in the information literacy classroom?

Visual

Active learning

Create connections, identify gaps in knowledge

Keyword identification and generation

Resource types & purpose

Research process and strategy

## What can concept maps teach?