Developing Concept Maps

Identify the key concepts, events and objects in the material that is to be mapped. This requires a careful reading (or thinking) of the selected material and separating the key concepts, events, and objects from the rest of the text (or activity).

Select a focal concept from the list of key concepts according to the extent to which they interrelate closely. There are no fixed rules for selecting a focal concept. It satisfies your need to find meaning in the material. The clusters or groupings of concepts you will come up with, will reflect your personal judgments about the closeness of association among them.

Arrange and link the focal concepts and clusters of related concepts with lines. Your arrangement if the concepts for mapping is meaningful to you and is based, in part, on the focal concept you have selected. The use of arrows will help draw out the focal concept from the related concepts and communicate your arrangement of the concepts more effectively. The focal concept and clusters of related concepts may appear in any order on your page. Another person mapping the same subject matter may well have a different and valid arrangement that is meaningful to him or her.

Label the connecting lines on your map to show valid and meaningful relationships between the concepts. Work with one pair of concepts at a time. Once linkages are labeled, your map should be readable in the direction of the arrows.