

Mindmapping

GRS Writing Group – FRI 7 DEC 2018

Wordprocessors, such as MS Word, may not be the best tool for drafting. Word processors are designed to typeset text and do not help you get your thoughts on a page quickly or order or structure your thoughts. In fact, it has also been suggested that drafting using a Wordprocessor can be counter-productive for efficient production of high quality text. As the text looks ‘finished’, you may feel the text needs to be equally ‘polished’ and focus on minor editing concerns rather than considering the overall flow of your ideas. While individual ideas may then look and sound good, the structure of the text overall may not be as strong as it could be. In addition, text generated in Wordprocessors is often drafted and viewed as single paragraphs on a screen, making it difficult to explore relationships between paragraphs and sections. And it can be time-consuming getting your thoughts typed into the WordProcessor, which may cause you to ‘lose your train of thought’.

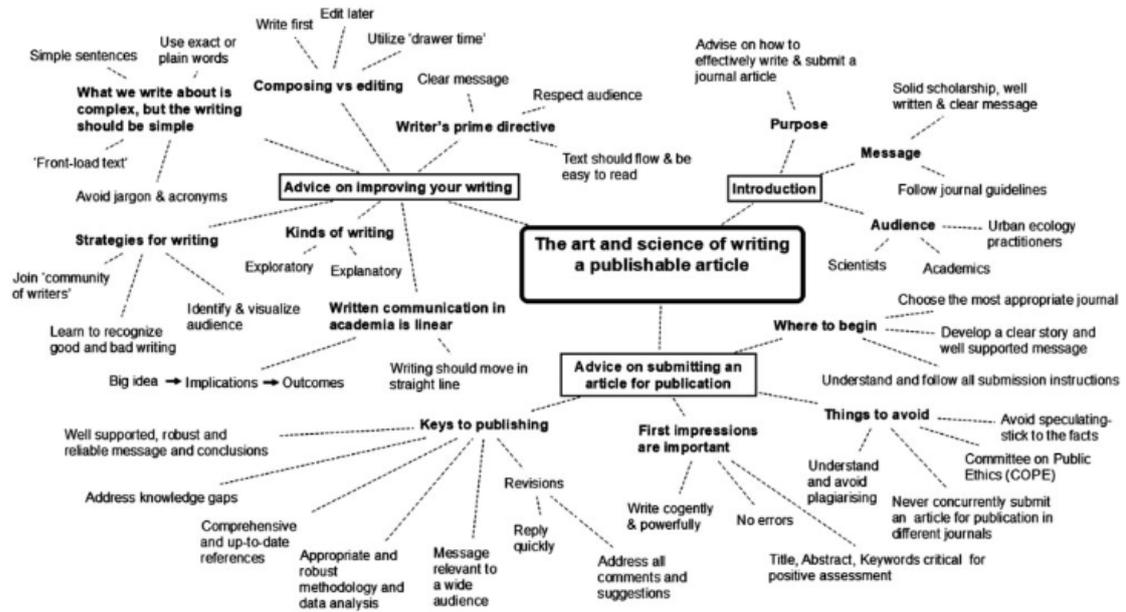
To improve the efficiency and quality of your writing, you may consider using an alternative tool for quickly generating early drafts and developing your message – one that does not involve making stylistic choices about the appearance of your text and frees you to explore the relationship between ideas without needing to take into account academic writing rules or the linear nature of sentences and paragraphs.

Mindmaps are a useful tool for developing first drafts of work. Known as a pre-writing strategy, they allow you to:

- ‘brain dump’ ideas quickly
- capture a large number of ideas on a single page
- explore the organization of these ideas by re-considering, deleting, or re-arranging ideas
- explore relationships using text, colour and position
- develop a logical flow of ideas

As a pre-writing tool, mindmaps help you to shape a ‘mess’ of ideas into a hierarchy of ideas that can then be used as the basis for writing paragraphs. You can use the following process:

- 1) Using a pencil and A3 page, create a ‘sun diagram’. Write down the theme of the writing in the centre of the page and brain dump ideas /points radiating out from the centre
- 2) Group ‘like’ ideas together by colour
- 3) Turn the colour coded sun diagram into a Mindmap by ‘clustering’ like ideas – forming branches and subbranches (twigs) radiating out from central theme
- 4) Order branches and twigs and convert to list



From Pickett and MsDonnell. 2017. The art and science of writing a publishable article. Journal of Urban Ecology.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321791881_The_art_and_science_of_writing_a_publishable_article



Sheffield University. 301 Academic Skills Resource: Mind Mapping (with examples of Sun Diagrams)
https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.575918!/file/MindMappingFactSheet.pdf



How to Make a Mind Map
<https://destech.wordpress.com/about-2/introduction-to-mindmapping/how-to-make-a-mind-map>



MindTools: MindMaps
https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newISS_01.htm



How to Mind Map - Free Online eLearning Program
<https://imindmap.com/how-to-mind-map/>



Free mapping software: Edraw
www.edrawsoft.com/freemind.php



Free trial (30 days) Inspiration9
<http://www.inspiration.com/visual-learning/mind-mapping>



Free trial (30 days) MindGenius
<https://www.mindgenius.com/mind-mapping.aspx>

For further details of the UWA GRS Writing Group, including advice sheets to download, see:
www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/students/resources/communities#writinggroup