

		Act: 8W1
Grade: 8	Strand: Writing	Concept: Brainstorming at the beginning of the writing process
Description of Task:	Students list as many ideas as possible that are related to their writing topics. They organize and evaluate their ideas at the end of the activity and record them in a chart or web.	
Expectations:	8e2 • use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts, including school work (e.g., to write technical instructions, to clarify personal concerns, to explore social issues, to develop imaginative abilities); 8e3 • organize information and ideas creatively as well as logically, using paragraph structures appropriate for their purpose (e.g., paragraphs structured to develop a comparison or establish a cause-and-effect relationship); 8e23 – use spreadsheets, computer-generated charts, and graphs for specific purposes (e.g., to convey data) and in appropriate contexts (e.g., research reports).	
Software Type:	Concept Mapping	
Computer Skills Prerequisite	Students must be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and run the program • Create symbols and lines to record ideas • Use program functions to organize and connect related ideas and to delete ideas that do not fit the organizer • Save and print the file 	
Student Instructions: (for teacher)	1. Ask students to select a topic of interest for their written work 2. Review the stages of the writing process and tell students that this activity addresses the first stage, the brainstorming of ideas. 3. Remind students to record every idea they can think of that is related to the topic. They should wait until the end of the exercise before eliminating weaker ideas and organizing their remaining ones. 4. Encourage students to look for connections among related ideas and organize them by category. They should organize ideas within categories from strongest to weakest to help them begin to write.	
Teacher Notes:	This activity can be used to begin any piece of writing in different subject areas. Students may use brainstorming to begin drafting the piece on the computer. They can continue the process (e.g. first draft, etc.) on the computer, or by hand. Students may wish to refer to previous examples kept in a dedicated file to see how others organize their work or to help them gain new ideas. Related offline activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students share completed charts or webs with one another • Students combine charts or webs collaboratively • Students begin writing using the chart or web 	
	Activity Template File: Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student Instruction BLM: Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Assessment:	How many ideas are the students listing? (curriculum) Are their ideas varied or similar? (curriculum) Are they waiting until the end of the exercise to judge their ideas' quality? (curriculum) Do their categories make sense? (curriculum) Are the connections among the ideas in the categories clear? (curriculum) Are their webs or charts well organized? (curriculum) Do they use the functions of the program to visually support the organization of their ideas (e.g. use of colour to distinguish categories)? (ict)	