Spring 5-18-2017

Integrating Idea Mapping into Professional Development and Practice: A Guidebook for Educators

Sarah Rose Parsons
University of San Francisco, s22parsons@gmail.com

University of San Francisco

Integrating Idea Mapping into Professional Development and Practice:

A Guidebook for Educators

A Field Project Proposal Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second Language

By
Sarah Parsons
May 2017

Integrating Idea Mapping into Professional Development and Practice:

A Guidebook for Educators

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

by
Sarah Parsons
May 2017

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

Approved:

_____   _____
Instructor/Chairperson   Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The daily metrics of the teaching profession can prove emotionally and physically taxing, especially when laid out across the rapidly growing veil of technological advancement and a lack of support from one's community and administration. The means of support for professional development, which are often presented in schools for educators, focus mostly on students and content delivery. These programs rarely pay attention to the personal growth needs of the educator. Educators can in turn help themselves if they are provided with the tools and time to do so. Thus, this project seeks to serve that purpose, founded on the theories of Howard Garner, Lev Vygotsky, Paulo Freire, and Jack Mezirow. This project provides a means for further professional support with a focus on the individual, informed by one's own expertise and educational professional practice. This project takes the from of a workshop guidebook, and integrates the practice of idea mapping with personal experience in the field of education, to provide an easy-to-use program for furthering one's own planning, organizing, creative, and cognitive skill sets. In practice over time, idea mapping can expand one's own cognitive abilities, and when employed in a workshop style setting where practitioners can view one another's thought processes, participants can benefit from witnessing how other's think and conceptualize projects. Idea mapping has been practiced much in the field of business, however it had yet to be tailored to meet the needs of educators. It is hoped that with the use of this project, educational practitioners will be feel more supported in their field, and that the skills provided will help one to better serve their students and educational community over time.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

With a history of being underfunded, under supported, and underappreciated, America's teachers are consistently working to add to their teaching repertoires in order to keep their jobs, satisfy administrators and state standards in order to make ends meet, and to stay abreast of current educational technology and practice. Teachers are often isolated in their classrooms, with no one to consult for help with on-the-spot problem solving and are overall burnt out (Russell, Altmaeir, & Van Velzen, 1987). A teaching induction program known as the *Beginner Teaching Support and Assessment* (or BTSA) was created to help rectify the dropout rate among newly practicing teachers in the United States, however solely providing mentorship to new teachers only addresses one facet of the problem and BTSA has proved less effective than desired (Mitchell, Scott, Hendrick, & Boyns, 1998). As proponents of life-long learning, teachers strive to continue educating themselves, and like anyone else, they at times need support along the way. Not just at the beginning of their careers, but throughout. Teacher education programs should reexamine the ways in which they are training teachers, and should work towards providing more comprehensive professional programs that supports one's own ability to teach themselves as well as learn from their professional community, as opposed to solely focusing on student learning outcomes and content delivery (Webster-Wright, 2017).

Today, students are bombarded with multisensory media, much of which is visual and interactive. There is a need for teachers to become better equipped to teach these new

types of students who learn differently than past generations, and in order to help today's teachers help their students, there is a need to reform teacher education.

As though engaging learners is not difficult enough, coming up with new, innovative ideas for the classroom can grow more difficult with age and teachers need to lean on one another for support and new ideas to keep the classroom environment engaging. Having a fresh perspective on a situation can provide new ways to address and solve problems (Zimmerman, & Schunk, 2001). Take, for example, Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, which drastically influenced the ways in which educators (as well as many other practitioners in other fields) approach learning, teaching, and cognitive development (Gardner, 1983). Before Gardner, teaching methods and styles catered mainly to only one or two learning styles. Today, we can better understand that there are multiple ways to solve a problem, and that not just one of them is correct. Today, we value creativity, innovation, and critical thinking. The new Common Core State Standards beg teachers to teach lessons that support critical thinking more productively, however we are not employing our teachers with these skills themselves. Theories, like Gardener's, examine different ways of conceptualizing learning, and have paved the way for new, progressive educational practices (such as the "educating the whole child" approach) that work to educate learners holistically with varied methodologies (Stoddard, 1992). Experienced teachers are wells of knowledge in their field, yet the problem lies at times in the ability to deliver their thought processes (in accordance with project conceptualization, or lesson development) in a clear, concise, and understandable way. Not only that, but there is hardly enough time for teachers to share with each other in professional contexts due to overhead demands and lack of

funding (Russell, Altmaier, & Van Velzen, 1987). We need to provide more time for teachers to access innovative professional development outlets, such as thought mapping, so that they may better serve themselves, as well as have more tried-and-true tools to use in times of need as a means for better serving their students and educational communities.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this field project is to meet the need for more long-term professional support for those in the field of education. This project will serve as a means to providing additional professional support for educators in their teaching practice that can come from either peers or self-service over time as a means for personal and professional empowerment. This project was created in hopes of alleviating some of the stress brought upon by isolation in the field of education, and a rapidly growing evolution of technological innovation that is contributing to making educators feel underprepared. There is a need for educators to become knowledgeable not just about further methods for content delivery - but also with how to better educate themselves. This project will further support said educators and their personal journeys toward professional growth, lifelong learning, and critical thinking skills. The strategies presented in this project are already being utilized in other fields within areas of professional development, however less so in professional development practice within the field of education. By utilizing reflective practices, such as thought mapping, teachers (and those within the field of education) can better support one another, their students, and educational communities. This guidebook is a pathway for teachers to share their cognitive processes (for materializing projects) through "thought" or "idea mapping;" a method wherein participants create graphic models for project conceptualization in a visual and affordable

way. This project does not require schools and institutions to have affluent budgets in order to be conducted adequately, therefore providing access to all types of sociocultural communities. This will be done in hopes of supplying accessible, professional tools for educators in the form of alternative thinking modalities in order to better serve students and learning communities across a broader spectrum. When applied over time, the strategies introduced in this project could be used and retrieved by the practitioners when applicable, without the need for costly resources.

Theoretical Framework

The theories and concepts that inform this project include Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, which outlines a need for diverse learning and teaching methods to support an inherent spectrum of learning styles present in all learners (Gardner, 1983). This project is also structured by Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory that shows us how learning happens best when done through guided, experiential and social experiences (Vygotsky, 1980). With considerations of Jack Mezirow's transformative learning theory, this project is also informed by a critical lens of professional practice, which suggests that educators should critically examine their own professional environments to obtain other perspectives and a reflective awareness within their practice to better serve their educational community (Langley-Weber, 2012).

At the time when the theory of multiple intelligences (MI) was introduced, learning was believed to be more black and white than we believe it to be today. This theory proposed that people inherently learn differently, and that there are many styles of learning, all of which need to be honed and addressed with a variety of pedagogical methods by educators. These styles of learning include: visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic,

musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, and logical-mathematical. This project utilizes this theory by suggesting that educators need better professional development practice that is supported by varied learning and teaching methods for varied learning styles. When available, professional development workshops for educators often consist of being shown a PowerPoint presentation or lecture with minimal social interaction. Though this is not always the case, it is most often easier to conduct and more cost effective. These styles of teaching only pertain to a narrow spectrum of learners, where we should be supporting a wider array of types professional learners. A major part of this project includes a guidebook for holding seminars wherein educators and administrators can teach one another their thought processes for conceptualizing projects through visual, thought-mapping methods, therefore catering to learning styles that require visual models, interpersonal interaction, and experimentation, as opposed to intrapersonal learning, which is arguably where most learning as an adult takes place.

The sociocultural theory supports an understanding that learning happens well through guided, experiential, and social interaction. Social interaction is essential for the interactive seminar that this project outlines. Practitioners who participate in the seminar proposed by this project will interact with and share ideas with other practitioners in a social setting in hopes of optimal learning outcomes.

The transformative learning theory calls for a critical, reflective examination from the educator on their professional environment, stating that educators must be agents of change who directly influence their own professional development. In order to participate in effective professional development opportunities that are held up to our own standards in the field, we must create them ourselves through a reflective and critical lens. Thus,

this guidebook will be made under that lens; a seminar created by a reflective practice to promote reflective practice, as a means for empowering an educational community.

Significance of the Project

This project serves to improve upon educator professional development, by giving educators a tangible platform for optional thinking modalities when it comes to: problem solving, lesson planning, and critical thinking in the workplace. This project also serves to give educators options for professional development that stretch beyond traditional lecture style models for teaching, and instead provides a social interaction model for learning. The practices of thought and idea mapping happen in other fields, however less so in education, though it could prove equally as useful. This project serves to rectify this discrepancy and utilize idea mapping to benefit the educational sector as well. This project further equips educators with the means to help themselves, if they find that they are struggling with locating mentors or colleagues who can help clarify their roadblocks while conceptualizing new projects/lessons in the field. Since this guidebook helps teachers to further support themselves, the hope is that in doing so, teachers will be able to support their students and fellow educational community better over time. Observing and learning about different perspectives on an issue helps one to see problems from new angles (Zimmerman, & Schunk, 2001). Seeing other perspectives in a visual way can help clarify difficulties, misunderstandings, and develop critical thinking strategies among educators. Being able to see the ways other experienced professionals map out and conceptualize thoughts can assist with solving complex problems, which can also boost one's self-esteem and professional morale over time. This project also serves to help empower educators who are tirelessly working to serve the academic population of

our society on less than desirable salaries. Funding and monetary needs are always in question in the field of education, and this project does not ask for excessive or exorbitant funds in order to run efficiently. The materials required to execute this project are minimal, and consist of materials that most publicly funded institutions would already have. This serves to better supply our schools and educational institutions in a more sustainable manner.

Limitations of the Project

The possibilities for enacting this project could be limited by a need for ample time and experience levels. Within the field of education, there is often a lack of time during the workday to conduct professional development workshops, therefore enough time will need to be present in order for this project to be utilized adequately. Ideally, the seminar proposed could take one to two hours during the average work day.

This project does not require much funding to run, however there is a need for experience within the field of education for this project to prove most effective. The ideal candidates for this project are practitioners in the field that have been teaching or working in the field of education for a minimum of two to five years.

Definition of Terms

BTSA – An acronym for the Beginner Teacher Support and Assessment induction program (Mitchell, Hendrick, & Boyns, 1998).

Krashen's i+1 model: A model developed by Dr. Stephen Krashen that suggests students learn best when the content being delivered by an educational is only slightly above their ability level in the area of study. This was development in accordance with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) .

MI – An acronym for Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences theory (Gardner, 1983).

Scaffolding – A method of teaching wherein an educator builds on a teaching concept using Stephen Krashen's "i+1 model" and Lev Vygotsky's "Zone of Proximal Development" in order to allow the learner access to sequential, leveled material appropriate for their intellectual level of the concept being studied. The teacher guides students with a step process that is based on slowly building skills from the ground up, to reach a higher, more difficult skill level over time (Krashen, 1989; Vygotsky, 1980).

SLT – An acronym for Lev Vygotysky's social learning theory (Vygotsky, 1980).

TLT – An acronym for Jack Mezirow's transformative learning theory (Langley-Weber, 2012).

Think-aloud strategies – A teaching method used to show students one's thought process by modeling and speaking about thinking out loud, used often during elementary literacy teaching and learning (Wilhelm, 2001).

Thought/Idea mapping - The practice of creating visual models (either on paper or digitally) to show one's thought processes toward conceptualizing a project. The process of making thinking visible through graphic organizers and visuals (Nast, 2006).

Top down approach – An organizational style of business that refers to those with the most power being at the highest level of administration, and the major decisions occurring solely within the highest level of hierarchy (within the business structure) without input from anyone below this level. This model exhibits a passive employee base (Duverge, 2015).

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) – A theory developed by Lev Vygotsky that describes a learner's viable and potential learning spectrum, in accordance with what they are capable of doing at the time of instruction (Vygotsky, 1980).

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

In the field of education today, the teacher dropout rate continues to climb as teachers are feeling more and more under supported and underpaid in an age where technology advances so quickly, that new devices become practically obsolete over night (Mitchell, 1998). Teachers need a means of keeping up in this fast-paced world, and need more strategies for helping themselves become more capable practitioners (Langley-Weber, 2012; Webster-Wright, 2009). In accordance with Paolo Freire and Jack Mezirow's (2012) work, there is a need for those in the field of education to take the reigns of professional development into their own hands in order to provide themselves with more sustainable, effective, and reflective professional development practices (Webster-Wright, 2009). If teachers are given readily applicable tools to inform their teaching practice and help build their own cognitive skills, and not just their students', then they will feel better equipped to meet the high demands of the global economy and highly technical world that their students are entering into today.

Discussing information with one another, sharing ideas, and working with colleagues are some of the ways that educators can support themselves in their field. Interactive tasks that incorporate social interaction have proven to be some of the more effective ways that people learn and solidify understanding and teachers use these theories to inform their teaching practice (Hausfather, 1996).

This literature review consists of three parts, the first being an examination of data that suggests teachers need additional support in their field and that educational and professional development reform is overdue (Webster-Wright, 2009). The first section of

the literature review will also present background information and studies focused on the efficacy of teacher education and induction programs in California and the United States, the state of educational and technological innovation on a national and global scale, as well as the technological momentum of our modern society and how the realm of communication is advancing visually (Lester, 2006). These pieces of literature will serve to provide a platform for discussing the need for teacher education reform and empirically informed professional development among educators.

The second section of this literature review will focus on metacognitive writings on thought models and idea mapping, and how people conceptualize their own thinking. Work by authors such as Herbert Simon, Jamie Nast, and Howard Gardner will be introduced. These writings will be examined for a background on understanding how one's thinking can differ from others, and how one can teach another their own, individual cognitive processes in order to assist with learning and teaching. Subjects such as learning processes, problem solving methods, memory structures, perceptions, modalities for understanding, and concept formation models will be discussed as a means for providing background support for idea and thought mapping in professional practice (Nast, 2006; Simon, 1979). A variety of authors and models will be introduced to provide suggestions and examples of differing graphics organizers and methods for teaching and learning idea mapping. In this section, examples of successful thought mapping practices from other fields will also be introduced and discussed to show the efficacy of such practices. Testimonies from those who have developed strategies for idea mapping and teaching idea mapping, as well as reflections on these practices will also be introduced.

The third and final section of the literature review will suggest tried-and-true methods for holding idea mapping workshops in order to use the idea mapping practices presented in this project in a professional development setting that occurs in the workplace (Neidorf, 2006). Personal, professional experience and literature by authors who have developed workshop and seminar style curricula will be considered and discussed for a holistic view on applicable means to follow through with conducting this project. This project relies on personal experience as well as research-based teaching methods for creating a guidebook that focuses on holding and conducting successful idea mapping workshops in order for the most viable workshops to take place. This section will include discussions on how people think and think differently, visualization strategies, suggestions for how to hold workshops about thought mapping, and how to incorporate thought mapping into one's teaching practice.

Teacher Professional Development and the Future of Education

While entering into the field of education, one hears often about the high drop-out rates among new teachers and how teachers need more support in order to remain in the classroom (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). According to an article in *Educational Leadership* from 2003, teachers will continue to drop-out early on in their teaching careers, and will feel under supported until better induction programs are instituted (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). An induction program is a mentorship program that provides new teachers with on-site, experienced mentors to help them with questions and issues that arise. This program is required when beginning a new teaching career (with a new California teaching credential) at public schools. Having better induction programs would potentially prove very useful for schools and educators, however this option appears as

though it would be time consuming and costly to institute. Public school districts, where many of these high drop-out rates are occurring, do not have the means and time to implement such programs. In conclusion, schools need more cost effective solutions to keep teachers in the classroom.

Educational innovators such as Ken Robinson have been arguing for years that schools worldwide need new approaches to education (Robinson, 2011). Robinson talks mainly about student experience, and school reform models that cater to creative thinking and bringing creative practices back into the classroom that promote subject integration and enhanced, more modern and unique options for student education (Robinson, 2011). However, those focused on professional development practice argue that we also need a similar style of innovation in the area of teacher education and professional development practice in the field of education (Webster-Wright, 2009). Such authors claim that it is not enough to give teachers more methods for content delivery in teacher education and professional development programs, but that teacher educator's actually need to more closely examine what skills they are in fact providing teachers with, and what methods they are using while educating teachers and administrators all together (Webster-Wright, 2009). Continuing to learn is an inherent expectation among professionals and stakeholders across all fields, however regardless of evidence-based research, professional development programs in the field of education narrowly focus on content delivery instead of enhancing learning. There is a need for more authentic, evidence-informed, reflective professional development practice within the field of education (Webster-Wright, 2009).

Amidst the theoretical educational pendulum swinging back and forth between balancing and introducing traditional and innovative methods into the classroom, and practices within education consistently changing as they inherently do, scholars are examining the future of visual communication (Lester, 2013). A journalist named Paul Lester claims that societally, the world is moving toward more visual modes of communication, and therefore we need to prepare professionals to enter into such a world (Lester, 2013). We can see evidence of this in various realms of society today, namely in the field of technology. Smartphones, iPads, the internet of things, and new technology hit the market daily with image-based, user friendly software that is more advanced and efficient than the software platforms that came before them. Even babies and young children are able to operate these image-based products because of their user-friendly interfaces, and linguists argue that this could be changing and influencing the way we use language as we know it. Students and young children are being born into an image-based, technologically advanced, visual world, and educators are feeling overwhelmed and doubtful of their abilities when it comes to educating these new learning modalities (Healy, 2016).

In a lecture that I witnessed at a teaching conference in Colorado in the fall of 2016, an educator named Thomas Healy from the Pratt Institute in New York City held a workshop titled, "Reading Skills for the Selfie Generation." In his workshop, Healy discussed how new generations of learners are subconsciously integrating multiple types of stimuli while reading whereas older generations of learners only needed to grapple with one or two at a time when they were learning to read (Healy, 2016). He also talked about feeling overwhelmed as a "20th century teacher in a 21st century classroom." In his

workshop, Healy (2016) focused on learning and teaching reading, and explained an example of teaching and learning reading today. He explained how previously, one would sit down and read a book and that there were no ads to distract you, no moving images to call your attention. The act was passive and slow. Today, all generations of people, but especially young learners, often read via digital mediums, where there are constant scrolling images, buttons to click, and flashing ads. Reading and the environment around us has drastically changed and is now interactive, whether we choose to acknowledge it or not, and young learners expect reading to be interactive with high levels of constant stimuli. Older generations of learners are content with sitting and reading passively without other stimuli, however that is changing and newer generations are not. Healy said that he realized this issue when one of his high-school aged, international students attempted to zoom in on an image in an old, printed textbook as one would with their fingers on a digital screen. This experience shocked him, and at that point he realized that this is a bigger issue than he had previously thought. From there, he began to take his limited knowledge of educational technology into his own hands, and with much hesitation, learned how to utilize technology and manipulate electronic files into more interactive reading materials in order to create more engaging lessons for his students. After witnessing Healy's seminar, I felt more capable of creating said materials, and more confident while manipulating technological programs for educational purposes. Witnessing an educator, who claimed that he was inexperienced with using technology and held some of the same insecurities as I did, who was able to successfully teach himself how to use technology to develop engaging materials, was an empowering experience. He taught us how to create an interactive electronic file by using think-aloud

strategies and by showing us his step-process in a visual manner, and this method was much more effective then other workshops where these steps and think-aloud strategies were not implemented (Davey, 1983). Professionals can benefit from developing and teaching their own learning strategies, as was shown by Healy's methods (Calleja, 2014). Students and teachers alike are bombarded with various forms of interactive media daily, and it's not just young students that need new models of learning and teaching to understand and keep their attention.

Overall, times and learning media are changing quickly and so should teacher education. Teaching conferences, professional development workshops, and educational literature are showing us how to better cater to our students, but are they helping cater to the educator's learning experience as well? If the induction programs are unsatisfactory and teachers and educational staff are feeling the need for more support, cost-effective and innovative models of teacher education and preparation should be explored and implemented to help rectify this issue and keep teachers in the classroom.

Metacognition, Learning, and Intelligence Theories

In the eighties, a man named Howard Gardner opened new pathways for understanding human intelligence and learning by introducing his theory of multiple intelligences through his book *Frames of Mind* (Gardner, 1983). Gardner's theories suggest that people are inherently born with differentiated intellectual and computational styles of intelligence. His theories drastically changed the field of education because they allowed teachers to act upon what they were witnessing among their students, and diversify their teaching methods to meet the needs of various learners and improve education in their classrooms with measurable data (Gardner, 1983). Around the same

time as Gardner, a man named Herbert Simon examined and studied human thought

processes, specifically in the areas of learning processes, problem solving, and decision

making (Simon, 1979). According to Simon, people have different criteria for reaching

and accomplishing tasks and goals, and varied levels of patience when working towards

said goals. Simon claims that our differentiated criteria and patience while working

toward goals affect the outcomes of achieving said goals. Simon also acutely examined

human decision-making processes and compared them to playing a game of chess

(Simon, 1979). He explains that in chess, people are "limited to legal moves," and that

this can be reflected in daily human activity when it comes to decision-making (Simon,

1979). Humans are either limited by and/or are encouraged by their individual and

personal experiences. Thus, people inherently bring differentiated knowledge and

capabilities to their personal and professional lives and experiences when it comes to

making decisions (Simon, 1979). From Gardner and Simon's work, one can deduce that

people inherently think, learn, and react to situations differently based on empirically

informed knowledge, and that these varied modalities of thinking and learning also allow

people to act upon and utilize unique skillsets for the potential benefit of enhanced

learning outcomes. Where one person might choose one option, another might choose

something different, and these opposing ways of thinking can affect people's choices

when it comes to thought conceptualization.

Before Simon and Gardner, Lev Vygotsky (along with Jean Piaget) developed his

social learning theory, which claims that people retain new information well when

learning is interactive and in a social context (Vygotsky, 1980). Discussion, having

other's challenge your ideas, and hearing feedback aid with one's ability to learn, and

these are situations that require other perspectives and external input. In order to address the changing nature of education, and to enhance teacher education and professional development practice, we need to allow educators to educate themselves from their own reflective, professional experiences, and this should happen in an authentic and social context (Calleja, 2014; Vygotsky, 1980). In the theme of examining methods of teaching in order to create more transparency for improved learning outcomes, a man named Benjamin Bloom (in the nineteen fifties) developed a model for creative and critical thinking that is still applied in the field of education today, mainly in the content area of teaching critical thinking skills while reading (Anderson et al., 2000) Bloom developed a pyramid model that introduced scaffolded and leveled critical-thinking curricula in an ascending structure (with skill levels from least to most difficult) in order to inform sequential learning and student-centered, supportive teaching strategies (Bloom, 1956). From Bloom's work, the field of education has gained teaching strategies such as the "think aloud strategy," where teachers model what they are thinking out loud to promote students' ability to reflect and build upon their own questioning and critical thinking skills while reading (Davey, 1983). Showing students an experienced reader's thought process out loud has proved effective and integral within new national standards of literacy education (Fisher, Frey, & Lapp, 2011; Walker, 2005).

As think-aloud strategies have become more popular, and have proved to be an important part of the world of improving literacy in elementary education, new methods of modeling thinking have come about. Jamie Nast (an author and professional consultant) teaches "idea mapping" to professionals around the world, and explains how one can create visual thinking models to aid with professional development within the

field of business (Nast, 2006). Essentially, the practice of idea mapping is to make thinking visible. Nast claims that, "idea mapping eliminates the gridlock of linear thinking and nurtures the visual learner in all of us" by capturing the natural, associative process of how the brain works (Nast, 2006). She claims that linear learning strategies do not always work so well when it comes to strategizing and learning, and that people actually "remember 10% of what they hear, 20% of what they read, and about 80% of what they see and do" (Nast, 2006). In accordance with Vygotsky's social learning theory - these statistics make sense.

With the research and theories we have today that span generations, discussing the best learning and teaching methods, paired with the knowledge of new innovations in visual modeling and communication, there appears to be the possibility for new groundwork in testing some of these theories with the implementation of new educational practices. Idea mapping is already being used in the field of business, however not as much in other fields, such as in the field of education. Knowing that people: learn by example, have inherently different skillsets to share, that they learn in social contexts, from each other, and through experience, one must question why something like idea mapping isn't already being implemented on a larger scale – especially in a field where being "in-the-know" about current educational technology and practice could mean the difference between losing and keeping your job. Synthesizing theories behind sound teaching methods and tried-and-true learning theories accompanied by new modes of delivering information (like making thinking visible) is why said theories exist in the first place – to influence future generations in positive ways and to improve upon what already exists in the world. Implementing idea mapping practices, which are informed

and back by foundational people in the field, could ultimately help improve teaching practice by supplying educators with alternative tools for problem solving in the classroom, therefore potentially enhancing student experience over the long term. Idea mapping is a practice that anyone can do, and it doesn't take much time or money to implement. If educators are taught to idea map, they are being taught to conceptualize their thoughts in a new way, that could help them see problems from a new angle, becoming better practitioners in their field, let alone advocates for themselves in their own classrooms (Nast, 2006). As it is being used widely in various fields, research shows that idea mapping (or mind mapping, as some call it) is useful and effective at helping one retain and conceptualize information (Czerniak & Haney, 1998).

School Morale, Workshop Models and Theories

According to an article published in 2016 regarding the correlation between professional development, shared learning experiences, and improving school morale, the studies showed that professionals sharing their individual knowledge and experience resulted in above average improvement in school morale and working conditions (Kalan, Zirak, Azad, & Golparvar, 2016). In this longitudinal study, over two hundred teachers were interviewed within three different high schools. Some of the research questions included in this study were (Kalan et al., 2016):

> Is there a relationship between organizational learning mechanisms in schools and teachers' knowledge sharing behavior and professional development ability? How is the [sharing] of each organizational learning mechanism in predicting teachers' professional development ability? (pg. 218)

Positive school morale is vital for school success and positive student learning outcomes. From my own professional teaching experience, I have witnessed some of the worst and best examples of how school morale can affect student experience and levels of

achievement. Morale is defined as "the emotional and mental condition of an environment," as well as, "the sense of common purpose with respect to a group" ("Definition of MORALE," n.d.). If school morale is low, students lack motivation toward a common purpose and so do the school's teachers. This becomes a cyclical system, where negativity and low morale from the school's administration directly and adversely affect student and teacher motivation and thus, student learning outcomes. Finding means for improving school morale is of utmost importance for a school to run successfully and for schools to be able to retain their staff. Holding professional development workshops and providing opportunities for teachers and staff to feel supported is one helpful way to improve school morale but there are also many others (Kalan et al., 2016). For example, displaying colorful, relevant posters and educational material around the school can be helpful, but it is not enough. Regardless - schools, teachers, and staff need to stay up-to-date on current educational practices, and need to provide professional development opportunities (from within their institution) that are practical and relevant to their own school's needs and agenda. In addition, Paolo Freire and Jack Mezirow argue that educators and administrators need to educate themselves from their own experienced knowledge base, in order to provide themselves with the best possible quality of professional development and teacher education (Calleja, 2014). This should be done to meet their individual needs, which change from person to person and institution to institution.

Through attaining multiple teaching certificates, participating in diverse opportunities for professional training, reflection, evaluation, and years of experience, one learns how to run successful and engaging educational workshops. Experienced and

reflective individuals know that "knowing one's audience," assessing student needs, employing Krashen's i+1 model, catching the audience's attention with relevant visuals, realia, examples, personal stories, and activities are all necessary components for a successful and engaging presentation or workshop (Neidorf, 2012). As there are already many visual examples and opportunities for audience engagement and interaction built in to the concept of idea mapping, those areas are already covered (Nast, 2006). In her book, *Idea Mapping: How to Access Your Hidden Brain Power, Learn Faster, Remember More, and Achieve Success in Business*, Jamie Nast (2006) outlines how one can conceptualize their own idea maps. From years of experience teaching and presenting, paired with research on cognitive modeling and differentiated ability, how individuals learn best, and tried-and-true teaching practices, alongside Jamie Nast's work and presentation of idea mapping for business purposes, one can build a foundation for creating workshops and applying the concept of idea mapping to other professional fields. Nast (2006) provides straight-forward, visual examples for how to create idea maps, and this project uses these models as inspiration for the creation and development of original materials and idea maps. This project also uses personal materials previously used in my own professional teaching practice for project execution in the classroom. This project will modify Jamie Nast's idea maps to be used for project execution, as opposed to the use of to-do lists for personal daily goals, etc. (as she does in her book) (Nast, 2006). Nast (2006) also claims that her book could be used as a substitute for attending her in-person workshops, and that she wrote the book as a means to provide idea map education on a broader scale, as to benefit as many people as possible (Nast, 2006).

As agents of change, educators and those in the field of education are called to be open-minded, up-to-date, and to continue learning so as to be the best influence on future generations as one can be (Calleja, 2014). Even though this is an expectation among educators, and many teachers are held to high standards and must achieve various levels of education and certification to even be considered for jobs, the actuality of the situation is that within the United States, many of the people who run schools, districts, and the Department of Education have never had to work at or set foot in an actual school before ("Goodbye to Schools as Businesses," 2009). This lack of real-word experience, understanding, and personal connection to those they are affecting causes major problems for those at the bottom of a hierarchical business model that many schools are run by ("Goodbye to Schools as Businesses," 2009). This model is known as "the factory model" of education. It was born out of the American industrial revolution and the societal needs of the time, however it no longer benefits a society that values critical, original thinking and questioning as we do today (Leland & Kasten, 2002). The factory model of education is exhibited in many schools throughout the United States, namely publically funded institutions, and in turn stratifies society into levels that largely benefit selective groups, while creating foundations for inequality within the realm of education (Leland & Kasten, 2002). Scholars argue that this model is obsolete and only truly benefits those at the top; we can see this in higher education institutions where deans of universities are taking home enough money to purchase new homes and cars annually, while at the same time the schools they are operating cannot afford to hold on to educators, departments, or classes for students, and those enrolled are forced to supplement their four-year degrees with registering for classes at near by community

colleges, or by taking more than six years to graduate (Clark, 2016; Chang, Landis, & Yu, 2011; Leland & Kasten, 2002). Large-scale educational models and interests are sadly in the hands of those who are narrowly focused on personal gains rather than progressive humanitarian efforts, and in order to provide ourselves with the quality education and professional development we need to better support our students and personal learning goals in the 21st century, we need to undue the linear structures of the factory model that we have been taught, learn to think critically and innovatively, and most importantly - learn to create what we want for ourselves (Calleja, 2014; Leland & Kasten, 2002).

Overall, schools need to advocate for themselves in order to uphold their personal values and individual standards in order to improve student and teacher experience. Experienced professionals know what they need and can help each other feel supported professionally. There are too many messengers and road blocks between the department of education, superintendents, those "at the top," and the teachers in practice who are controlled by legislature, and teachers need to take back their professional agency in order to become the agents of change they can be. With training and experience, educators and administrators have what they need to make change, they just need more opportunities to express their expertise and share their knowledge with others in their field. If we provide educators and administrators with this time to share said knowledge and experience in order to support one another, teachers will feel more capable of accomplishing the overwhelming number of tasks they are expected to complete daily, because their support network will be coming from their level, as opposed to from those who are setting the structure from a place of little to no hands-on experience.

Summary

In conclusion, there are many problems which plague educators today, that are contributing to an overwhelming amount of stress on teachers' shoulders and a decline in the number of satisfied and capable practitioners in the field of education, however facing these issues is possible if given enough attention with the help of current educational and cognitive research. Granted, this is a complex and multi-faceted issue, and there are various confounding variables, however shedding light on the need for professional development reform, and acknowledging the evident gap in updated and relevant teacher education content is one area that could drastically help. There is a need for more innovation in the realm of educator professional development reform, specifically from a place of personal investment and experience, in order for educators to feel supported, capable, and abreast of current educational technology and practice to improve their potential in the classroom. This should all be done as a means to supplying students with what they are inherently entitled to, regardless of differences and socioeconomic backgrounds: the best possible education an institution can provide.

Where there once was less knowledge, today there exists enough cognitive theory and educational research to suggest that educators should be provided with foundational tools for consistently evolving strategies and practices for conducting their lessons and teaching their students. It is no longer enough for educators to attend teacher education programs (that have not been reformed or updated to current pedagogical practices), graduate, and be sent out into the field without means for developing further empirically informed, professional development opportunities down the road in their professional careers, or else teachers will continue to drop off and burn out. And not just any

professional development strategies, but professional development strategies informed by an educator and school's own needs and struggles. Teacher education programs and professional development opportunities should be reflective spaces where attendees and students can inform their studied material and their teacher's lessons and vice versa, as educators are expected to do in their own classrooms. The "sage on the stage" model no longer caters to modern day, student-centered classroom expectations and models that are employed in today's classrooms, and so should be teacher education programs.

To conclude, current cognitive, educational, and technological research supports the notion that people are visual learners, and that interpersonal communication is moving in a more visual direction. That being said - so should be professional and educational strategies and methods. Idea mapping is a visual method that can help individuals reassess their means for organizing, understanding, and conceptualizing projects, of which teachers are expected to manage daily. There is much potential for idea mapping to aid teachers and those in the field of education in their professional practices, as a hope to alleviate some of the stress of searching for methods for conceptualizing projects and planning lessons, as well as potentially addressing other needs that come up while teaching and administering within a school setting. With tools such as idea mapping, and modern methods for educating themselves as well as their students, teachers may feel more empowered within their classroom, therefore providing a supportive, foundational learning environment for their current and prospective students.

CHAPTER III
THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Brief Description of the Project

This project takes the form of a guidebook and presentation, including activities, templates, and guides, for how to teach and run an idea mapping workshop for educators in a professional development context. The target audience includes experienced professionals in the field of education, i.e. teachers, administrators, related positions, and those who have been working in the field of education for a minimum of three years. The focus of this project is to utilize the practice of idea mapping for teaching and project conceptualization in an educational context, as idea mapping is often used in the field of business and used in other fields outside of education. The project includes a PowerPoint presentation, handouts, examples, interactive activities, and visual materials, such as: graphic organizers, images, and templates.

The first part of the project serves to explain the framework and research behind idea mapping, how idea maps can prove useful, the guide's goals and objectives, recommendations for use of the project, materials needed, and the workshop structure and flow. It will also introduce the author of the main that will be used to explain and teach idea mapping, *Idea Mapping: How to Access Your Hidden Brain Power, Learn Faster, Remember More, and Achieve Success in Business* by Jamie Nast (2006).

The second part of the project introduces the workshop script, presentation slides, and activities explained for ease of use of conducting the workshops that this guide was created for. The PowerPoint presentation begins with an activity and background information on idea maps, then is followed by examples of idea maps and an instructional, step-by-step guide on how to teach idea mapping, followed by a wrap up

activity and reflective practice exercise. This part of guide includes notes for the instructor who will be conducting the workshop.

The final section of the guide includes all of the materials, handouts, and templates needed to conduct this workshop successfully. The materials included are: two examples of different styles of idea maps (as well as their accompanied templates), a reference handout for ideas of other uses for idea maps in the field of education, a reflective practice half-sheet handout so those who are attending can think in-depth about their experience thinking and sharing about idea maps during this workshop, as well as an instructor feedback form to assist those conducting this workshop with on-going professional development.

Development of the Project

The concepts and ideas for this project were born out of observations and examinations of educational practitioner needs from first-hand experience in the field, research through various post-graduate, educational training programs, and from a diverse background in arts education and work experience within the United States and abroad that provided opportunities for on-going reflective practice. While working in an elementary school in the Bay Area of California in 2013, I was asked to assist a teaching colleague with a creative project for her classroom, and began wondering how thought processes and project conceptualization structures differ between practitioners. She told me that she admired my vision and process for designing projects in my own classroom, and wanted me to provide her with creative consultation for her own classroom projects. From this experience, I decided it would be beneficial to establish some type of art-integrated co-working space that teachers, professionals, and/or artists could share their

creative processes for the benefit of expanding one's cognitive abilities in this realm, and to provide one another with more cognitive tools for project execution in their classrooms. Over time, this idea manifested into different projects, evolving consistently from one thing to another, wherein I discovered Jamie Nast's work and how it could influence some of the ideas I had about making thinking visible and useful for professional development and project conceptualization.

In my own teaching practice, I have struggled to develop activities for certain lesson plans and student needs (as an ESOL instructor), and navigating the vast terrain of the teaching materials can prove tedious and cumbersome. In reality, teachers do not have time to sift through materials online, or otherwise, for hours just to find the right activity to suit their lesson. To save time, teachers in the same educational communities can help each other through empirically informed strategies that meet need-specific teaching goals. From my experience, I have seen this prove more effective for the teacher (and students' achievement level) over time, than teachers spending more time than they have seeking out lessons and activities that they have to modify and manipulate to meet their lessons and individual students' needs.

The Project

The project in its entirety can be found in the appendix.

CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

In today's rapidly advancing technological climate, professionals in all fields are working to build their creative and technological skills to compete for the best, well-paying jobs (Healy, 2016; Lester, 2013; Robinson, 2011) . Educators, and the people in the field of education, are doing what they can to keep their jobs, serve their students, and stand up against a system that doesn't prioritize educational funding. In order to fight teacher burn-out, empower educators, and best serve the younger generations within the United States, there is a need for educators to produce original and creative means for problem solving and their own original practices toward further professional development (Calleja, 2014; Russell, Altmaier, & Van Velzen, 1987). Educators need to ask themselves, "What do I need to better do my job, and how can I meet those needs with the support of my community? What would that look like?" By collaborating with one another from within their own field, educators will be better able to serve themselves, and their own professional learning gaps. Experienced professionals have the first-hand knowledge they need to resolve their own issues and are the experts on what gaps exist in their field. Therefore, the most qualified consultants for creative problem solving are those who obtain the experience and knowledge to do so; they just need to be afforded the time to work together to solve said issues. Instead of sitting back and waiting for politicians to do something, and the educational pendulum to swing in their favor, those in the field of education can brainstorm and develop methods to help themselves on a local and immediate level. Implementing self-made tools and methods, such as using the process of idea mapping, one can help empower their own professional, educational

community to trust in their own abilities, utilize one another's expertise, and address specific problems within one's own professional arena (Nast, 2006). Using idea maps, and socially engaged, reflective practices, could further help teachers feel supported in their classrooms, thus providing a more solid foundation to stand on while facing the daily metrics and challenges of teaching.

The purpose of this project was to provide an alternative tool for educators and administrators to use, to further build their creative, cognitive, and professional skills within the ream of educational professional practice. This projects seeks to identify gaps and problems within the realm of education, namely the issue of teacher burn-out and its causes, and to address those problems by suggesting and providing alternative tools to for educator support of professional development. Post graduation and training programs, there exists a lack of self-development tools provided for educators in teacher education programs (and within the professional practice of teaching) that focuses on subjects outside of content delivery for students.

Another important piece of this project was to supply educators with a means for long-term professional support in their field. The lack of tools mentioned specifically refers to educational tools that do not solely focus on content delivery for students, but instead on how to improve one's own cognitive and creative abilities as an educator, in order to inform one's teaching practice over time. Plenty of strategies and methods for teaching exist, but what about strategies and methods for seeing other perspectives, understanding one's own creative process, and understanding others' thinking and cognitive processes? This guidebook was created to help fill that gap, and teach those in the field of education how to show each other's creative processes in a visual,

comprehensible manner, in hopes of providing more self-regulated tools in the classroom that can be applied in more areas than just content delivery for students.

The significance of this project is to directly address the need for continued professional development opportunities for those in the field of education beyond one's initial training program(s), and to supply educators with resources and materials to further develop their own cognitive abilities and individual reflective teaching practices. For this purpose - this project is informed by experienced individuals in the field, as well as up to date educational research. The materials in this project are reflections of real-life situations and problems that one can encounter in their teaching practice, and serves to meet those issues using first-hand knowledge and original materials. This project accomplishes this task by supplying those who use it with a means for professional training that includes a cognitive development process (known as idea mapping) that can be used consistently over time, which supports cognitive development training and building new thinking skills over time, without the need for much financial or physical resources (Nast, 2006). This project also helps accomplish this task by including: background information and research on idea mapping, a step-by-step guide for creating and producing idea maps, teaching materials, discussion opportunities, and a professional PowerPoint presentation, all informed by experienced practitioners in the field, in order to supply users with the most effective, research-based materials on the subject possible.

Recommendations

This guidebook's primary goal is to help those in the field of education further develop their own individual, professional skills, which focus more on one's personal development rather than a practitioner's student body and content delivery. Student

achievement and content/subject teaching are part of the equation, however this project seeks to support a foundation for personal growth for the educator, in order to better support one's students over time. This project is intended to help the individual develop more complex and reflective cognitive abilities in relation to their teaching practice, in order to better utilize teaching materials and in hopes of providing more engaging lessons to their students. The author would suggest that those who use the guide use it at their own discretion with their own needs and limitations in mind. To optimize use of this guide, one should refer to all sections beforehand, and review the slides and materials provided to familiarize oneself with the interactive nature of the prospective workshop supported by this workshop guide. This workshop includes many opportunities for interaction between participants, and is best executed by supporting participants in this practice. Those running this workshop should supply as much time as possible for pair discussion and individual reflection as possible, and should focus on teaching the activities and examples more so than the background information given.

REFERENCES

Chang, C.-C., Landis, M., & Yu, S. C. (2011). Investing in Accounting: A Call for Professional Involvement in Higher Education. *American Journal of Business Education*, *4*(2), 27–32.

Clark, A. (2016). OU President David Boren's proposed pay cuts would save almost $250,000. *UWIRE Text*.

Czerniak, C. M., & Haney, J. J. (1998). The Effect of Collaborative Concept Mapping on Elementary Preservice Teachers' Anxiety, Efficacy, and Achievement in Physical Science. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, *9*(4), 303–320.

Duverge, G. (2015, October 16). Top-Down vs Bottom-Up Management Styles. Retrieved from http://www.tuw.edu/business/top-down-vs-bottom-up-management/

Healy, T. (2016, September 19). Reading Skills for the Selfie Generation. Retrieved from https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2016/09/19/reading-skills-for-the-selfie-generation/

Leland, C. H., & Kasten, W. C. (2002). Literacy Education for the 21st Century: It's Time to Close the Factory. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *18*(1), 5–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/105735602753386315

Feiman-Nemser, S. (2003). What new teachers need to learn. *Educational leadership*, *60*(8), 25-29.

Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: the theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.

Goodbye to Schools as Businesses. (2009). [Editorial]. Retrieved March 6, 2017, from http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/23_03/edit233.shtml

Kalan, S. M. S., Zirak, R., Azad, R., & Golparvar, B. (2016). Determining the relationship between organizational learning mechanisms and teachers' knowledge sharing behavior and professional development ability. *International Journal of Organizational Leadership*, 218.

Lester, P. M. (2006). *Visual communication: images with messages*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Mitchell, D. E., Scott, L. D., Hendrick, I. G., & Boyns, D. E. (1998). The California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program. 1998 Statewide Evaluation Study. *Eric*. Retrieved January 26, 2016, from .

Nast, J. (2006). *Idea mapping: how to access your hidden brain power, learn faster, remember more, and achieve success in business*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Neidorf, R. (2012). *Teach Beyond Your Reach: An Instructor's Guide to Developing and Running Successful Distance Learning Classes, Workshops, Training Sessions, and More* (2nd ed.). Information Today Inc.

Robinson, K. (2011). *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative* (2 edition). Chichester: Capstone.

Russell, D. W., Altmaier, E., & Van Velzen, D. (1987). Job-related stress, social support, and burnout among classroom teachers. *Journal of Applied Psychology,72*(2). Retrieved January 26, 2017, from

Simon, H. A. (1979). *Models of thought*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Stoddard, L. (1992). *Redesigning education: a guide for developing human greatness*. Tucson, AZ: Zephyr Press.

Webster-Wright, A. (2010). Reframing Professional Development Through Understanding Authentic Professional Learning. *Sage,79*(2). Retrieved January 26, 2017, from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0034654308330970

Wilhelm, J. D. (2001). *Improving Comprehension with Think-aloud Strategies*. Scholastic Professional Books.

Zimmerman, B. J., & Schunk, D. H. (2001). *Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: theoretical perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

APPENDIX

Utilizing Idea Mapping for Educators:

Workshop Guide

Table of Contents

What is Idea Mapping, and How is it Useful?
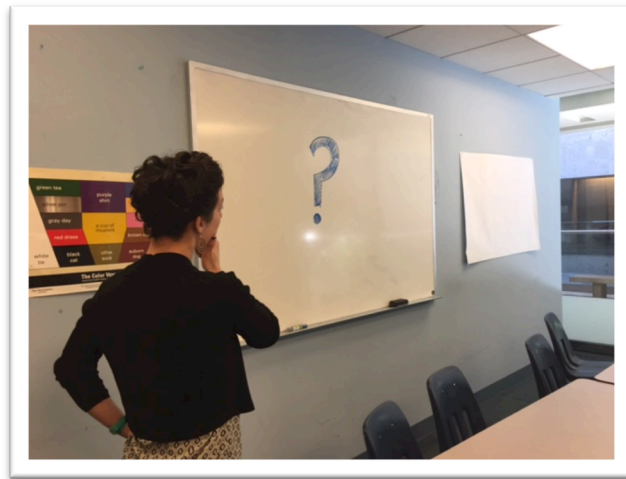
Idea mapping is the process of using visual maps and graphic organizers to make thinking visible. In this workshop guide, you will utilize the process of idea mapping (with a focus on the field of education and teaching) to help you conceptualize projects and lessons in the classroom. This guide will supply you with additional strategies for lesson planning, project conceptualization, and supplemental professional development opportunities while teaching or working in an educational environment.

Have you ever been stuck on a project and wondered, "How would someone else do this?" This guide to conducting idea mapping workshops can help answer that question. This workshop guide is meant to be used by experienced educators and administrators (and those in the field of education), who can directly apply their experience and knowledge of educational practice and theory to the creation of idea maps in a workshop style, professional development setting. Witnessing and sharing thought processes in a visual manner can help practitioners develop more options and creative strategies for activities and lesson creation. This guide will prove most useful if adapted to your school's/institution's individual needs.

This guide uses the book, *Idea Mapping: How to Access Your Hidden Brain Power, Learn Faster, Remember More, and Achieve Success in Business* by Jamie Nast (2006), as well as scholarly research and personal experience in the field of education, as reference points for creating idea maps and conducting successful idea mapping workshops. Jamie Nast is a professional coach who has helped a variety of established companies and institutions nationwide develop better organizational tools and business practices through the teaching and the use of idea maps.

This guide is also informed by Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Lev Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory, as well as Paolo Freire and Jack Mezirow's lens of critical pedagogy.

(Note: not all sections of this guide need to be applied for successful execution of an idea mapping workshop, and those using this guide should use it as they see fit. Refer to the recommendations section of this guide beforehand, for the most useful means of using this guide for your specific needs.)

This guide includes:

- A PowerPoint presentation used to conduct idea mapping professional development workshops.
- A step-by-step guide for how to conduct an idea mapping workshop.
- Materials such as: handouts, graphic examples, templates, and worksheets for the teaching of idea mapping, as well as conducting interactive activities during a professional development workshop.
- A reflective practice exercise.
- Ideas for implications of idea mapping in the field of education.

Goals

This guide was designed to enhance and support one's professional development, cognitive skills, and teaching practice in the field of education. Often, teacher education programs and professional development opportunities provide educators with new methods for content delivery, yet rarely focus on supplying teachers with additional tools to enhance their own learning skills and strategies. Educators need more training opportunities that focus on one's personal journey toward individual growth and reflective practice, which in turn enhance one's professional sphere. Idea mapping is a useful, practical tool that enhances one's cognitive and perceptive abilities, providing strategies for project and lesson conceptualization in a user-friendly, reflective, and visual manner. Idea mapping is being used widely in many fields, particularly in the field of business, and is sometimes referred to as "mind mapping." As an educator, I have found idea mapping to be integral to my own teaching practice, yet have struggled to find idea mapping tools specifically tailored to my needs as a teacher. I decided it would prove useful to apply the strategies of idea mapping to lesson planning and project conceptualization for the classroom, in order to benefit my own teaching practice, as well as others in my same field. This guide is meant as a straight-forward resource, and starting point, for those who want to learn more about practicing the structure of idea mapping. Applying the lessons from this workshop and idea maps to one's teaching practice will prove most beneficial for those using them in a collaborative work environment, as well as by those using them consistently in one's own teaching practice over time.

Objectives

This guide teaches educators (and those in the field of education) to utilize idea maps to exact projects and lessons more effectively by adapting others' thought processes into tools of the trade. Each activity in this guide is meant to help those executing this workshop with the step-by-step process of idea mapping, how to share idea maps with others in a workshop setting, and how to carry on creating idea maps in one's professional practice as a means for professional "self-help," and assisting oneself with creative consultation in times of need.

By the end of this workshop, participants will have:

- Created their own idea maps.
- Understood how to run their own idea mapping workshops.
- Strategized ways to incorporate idea mapping into their own professional practice, as pertaining to: lesson planning, teaching, design, and project manifestation.
- Interacted with other experienced colleagues in their field through the sharing of ideas and idea map designs during discussions and interpersonal activities.
- Discussed and developed strategies, through idea mapping, that could assist with improving student buy-in and student learning outcomes.
- Witnessed other people's creative strategies and thought processes through visual models.
- Reflected on their own professional practice through visual models, graphic organizers, discussion, and independent critical thinking.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are recommended in order to best utilize this guide for conducting the most effective idea mapping workshops for educational professional practice:

1) **Experience**:

   Those facilitating this workshop should have some experience in the field of education. The most effective workshops will be run and attended by those with first-hand knowledge and experience of: success and failure with lesson and content delivery, student achievement goals, resourcefulness for teaching, varied curricula, summative and formative assessments, needs analyses, administrative needs, pedagogical theories and methods, current and widely-used educational methods and research, the modification and adaptation of lessons for varied learning styles and individual students' needs, cognitive development theories, professional presentations, time management, team collaboration, flexibility with planning, varied student populations, and reasonable expectations of classroom and school conduct.

2) **Time**:

   Though this workshop is not meant to be lengthy, finding enough time during the school day to conduct professional development workshops can prove difficult. Ideally, this workshop would be conducted in its entirety, but if that is not possible, this workshop can be modified to meet your timing needs. Please sift through the materials in this guide in order to select what parts are most useful for your particular time constraints.

For a shorter workshop (25-30 min.)

1) Intro: spend a few (3-5) minutes explaining what idea maps are and how they can help (outlined later in this guide and in the PowerPoint presentation outline.) Brief introduction of Jamie Nast and theoretical framework can come here instead.
2) Do the intro activity. (3-5 min.)
3) Then, show examples of idea maps slides and model how to create one. Have the participants create their own along with you using the step-by-step guide and templates in this guide. Allow for this to take 5-10 minutes for participants to begin creating their own idea maps. This will not be enough time to finish, but at least they can start the process and see how it is done. Provide examples and handouts for them to take with them and reference.
4) Pair share idea maps with a neighbor.
5) Return to intro activity now using idea maps (quick 2-3 min. pair activity)
6) Wrap Up Reflection: (3-5 min.) It is essential that participants share their idea maps with others *and* reflect on this experience for this workshop to prove most effective.
*Allow for the most time to be during interaction between participants, for sharing their different idea maps with each other and for the reflection handout. If time, the intro simulation habitat wall activity works well for engaging the audience and as an applicable example for utilizing idea mapping in a realistic way.

Materials Needed

The materials needed to conduct this workshop are:

1) Computer (and potential internet) access
2) A projection device
3) Paper and writing utensils
4) Copy machine

Workshop Outline

Total Time:

**Whole Version: 45 min. – 1 hr.**

Short Version: 30 min.

Activity	Time/ Interaction	Materials
1) Introductory Activity: Conceptualizing a classroom wall design project. -Engage, create, interact	Facilitator to Participants Participant Pair Work (5-8 min.)	PowerPoint Presentation, paper for participants, writing utensils
2) PowerPoint Presentation -Background -History -Theoretical Foundation	Facilitator to Participants (10 min.)	PP Presentation
3) Create an Idea Map Activity -Interact, Pair work	Participants Independent Work Participants Pair Work (15 min.)	Participant Packet, PP Presentation, Writing Utensils, Idea map template (in packet)
4) Wrap Up, Implications for Education -Conclusions -Reflection -Applications in the field -Q&A	Facilitator to Participants Participants Independent Work (10-15 min.)	PP Presentation, Reflection handout, applications in the field hand out

PowerPoint Slides, Script, and Activities Explained

**Materials to prep beforehand!
      -packet of materials for participants
          (idea map examples (2) and template)
      -your own idea map example (optional)
      -reference sheet handout for wrap up activity
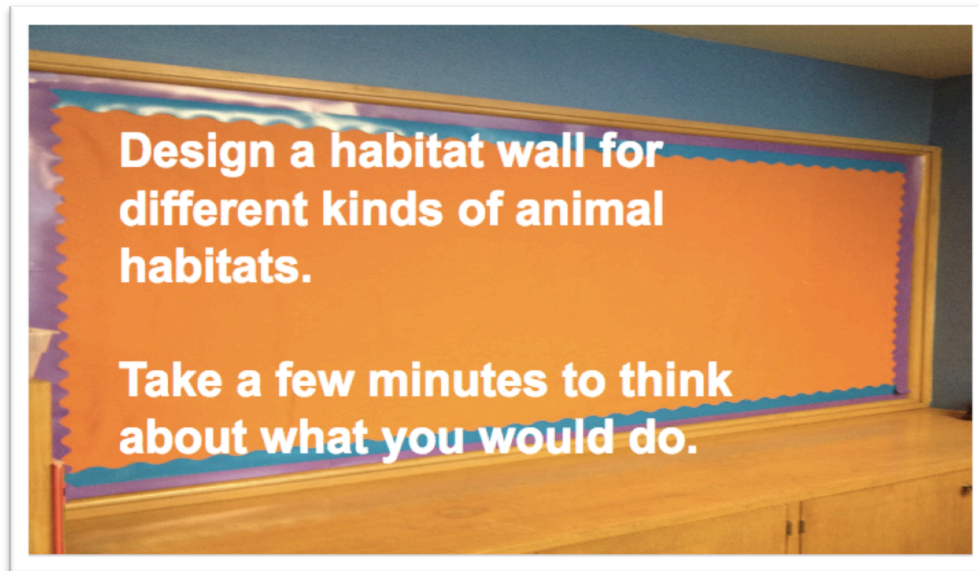   -scrap paper for intro activity (optional)

1) Title Slide – Intro Slide
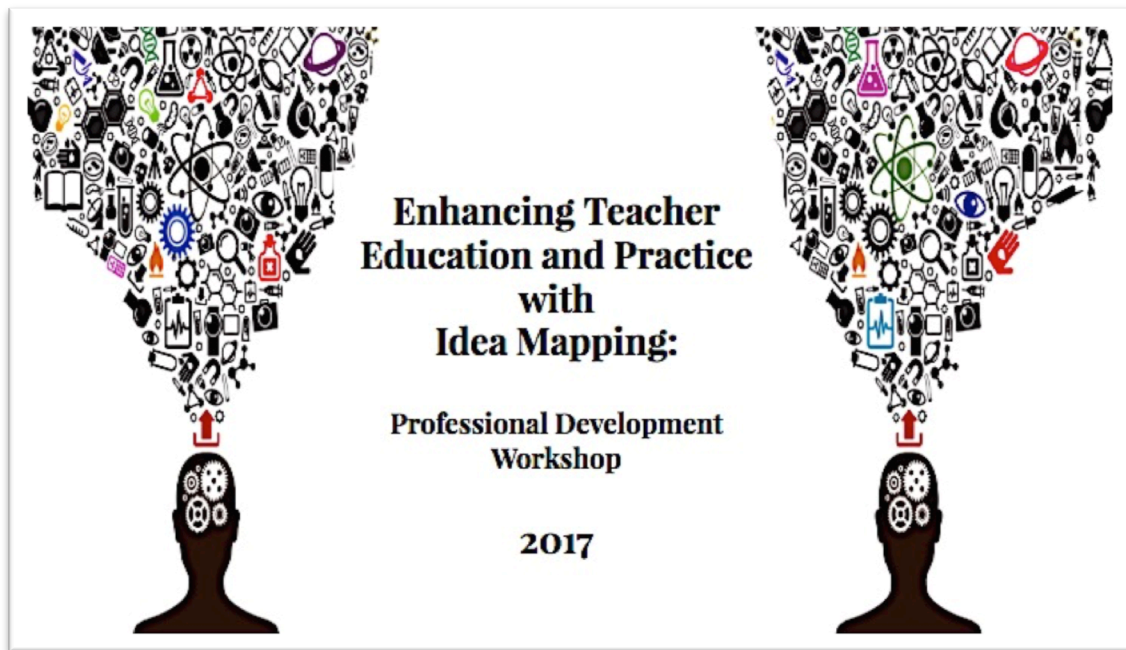
2) Slide 2: Intro Activity: (5 min.)

Step One: Introduce yourself and concept for workshop. Then begin activity:

T- "A colleague asks you to design a habitat wall for their classroom…" (simulation activity) "You will use this habitat wall for a unit on different animal habitats throughout the world."

Step Two: Once participants have a few minutes to plan…facilitator –
"Share your ideas with a neighbor." (quick pair share)

Step Three: Then, facilitator asks participants to *note differences*
between each other's plans/ideas (quick, 2-3 min.)

2) Continue/ Begin PowerPoint Presentation (5-10 min.)

Slide 3: Intro/ Agenda

**T – "**In this presentation, we will be:
>   -Learning about the background, educational implications, and
>   structures of idea mapping.
>   -You will create your own idea map and have discussions with
>   other participants.
>   -And there will be a time for reflection activity at the end."

Overview: "Sharing one another's thought/ step processes can give us window's into the mind, and provide us with alternate means for problem solving. Together, you just shared the different ways in which you envisioned tackling a project. We are going to continue to examine those differences in order to strengthen our educational practices, using the structure of idea mapping."

Slide 4: What is Idea Mapping?
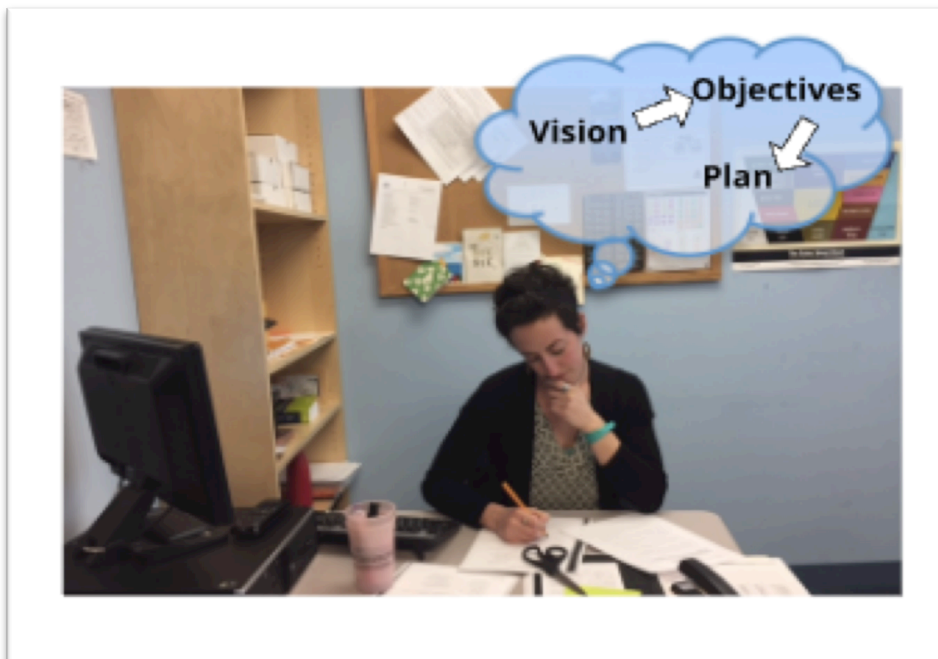
F – "Idea mapping is the process of making thinking visible by creating visual maps and graphic organizers to convey one's thoughts for an assigned purpose."

F Questions: "Who has used the think-aloud method with their students before?" Elicits an answer from someone, or explains if no answer.

Note: Think-aloud method – a strategy for developing literacy where the T models thinking out loud to show the process of reading, questioning, and critical thinking using rhetorical questioning and talking to oneself.
Ex: "Hmm, I am wondering why X character wants to cross that bridge." Questioning while thinking helps embed knowledge and scaffolds learning and critical thinking skills. (CA Common Core State Standards, 2014.)

F –"Idea mapping is a visual, organizational tool that can help one concretize and materialize their thinking processes, in order to use them in other situations and contexts."

Slide 5: Why Idea Mapping?

F – "In today's rapidly advancing technological world, methods for communication and technology are becoming more visual. Visually oriented strategies for teaching and learning have been shown to be beneficial for most learners (Gardner, 1983) yet they aren't being employed in all fields. Idea mapping is one visual strategy that can help with learning and planning."

Slide 6: "Why?" Cont'd:
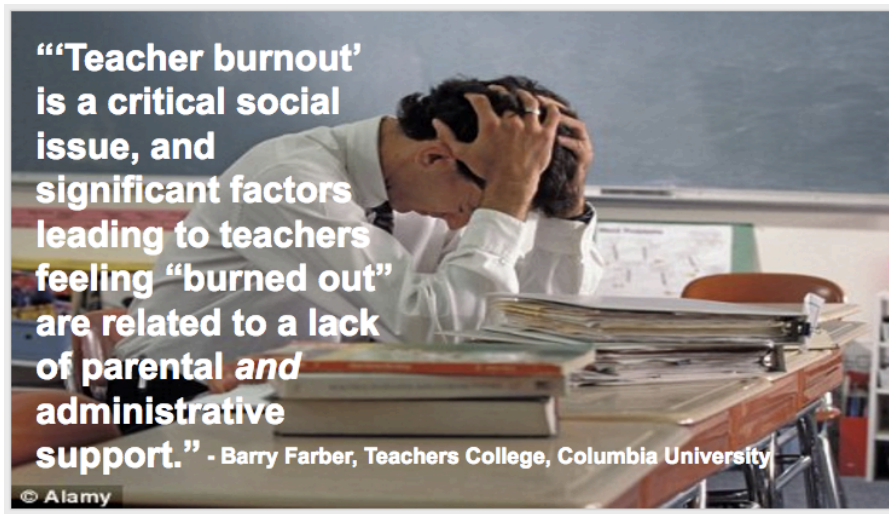
F - "Educators are feeling overwhelmed with the daily metrics of their jobs, on top of the pressure to meet standards and student needs, while still being expected to learn and explore the endless database of 21st century educational technology that's consistently changing. Idea mapping is a simple, easy to use, cost-effective tool that educators can utilize and apply to a range of professional needs over and over again."

Quick Check-In Pair Share: "Have you felt like this way in your own teaching practice?"

Slide 7: Who is Behind Idea Mapping? (Optional Slide)
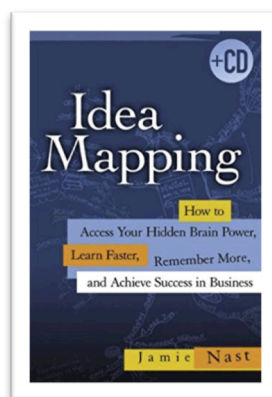
F – "Idea mapping is used in various fields, and often in the field of business. It is sometimes referred to as 'mind mapping,' however mind mapping is a little different. The foundation for this workshop uses the author and professional coach Jamie Nast's book, *Idea Mapping: How to Access Your Hidden Brain Power, Learn Faster, Remember More, and Achieve Success in Business* in order to apply the practice of idea mapping to the field and practice of teaching and education."

Slide 8: Educational Theories that Support Idea Mapping
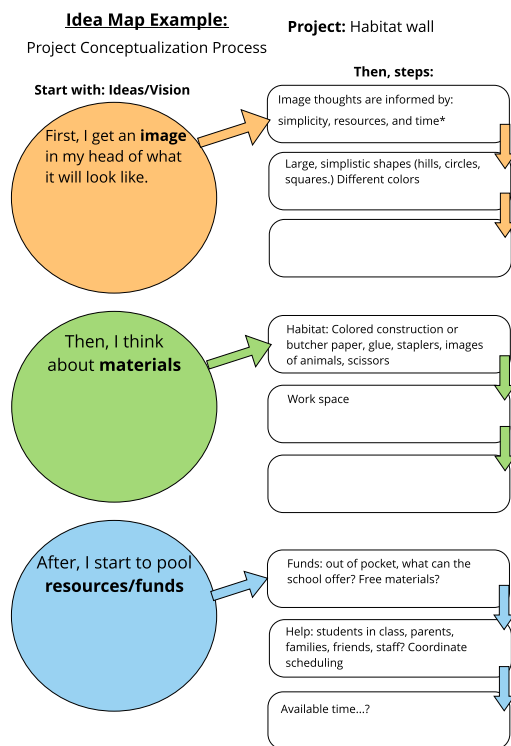(Optional Slide)
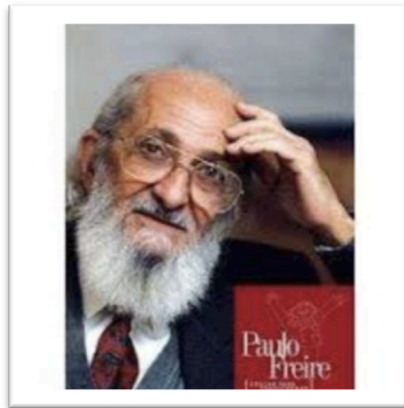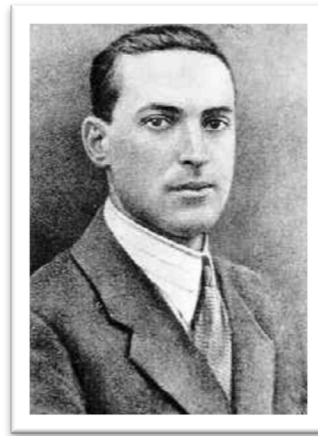
T – "The process of creating visual idea maps and sharing said maps with colleagues in order to enhance the learning and teaching process is

supported by Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory as well as Lev Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory."
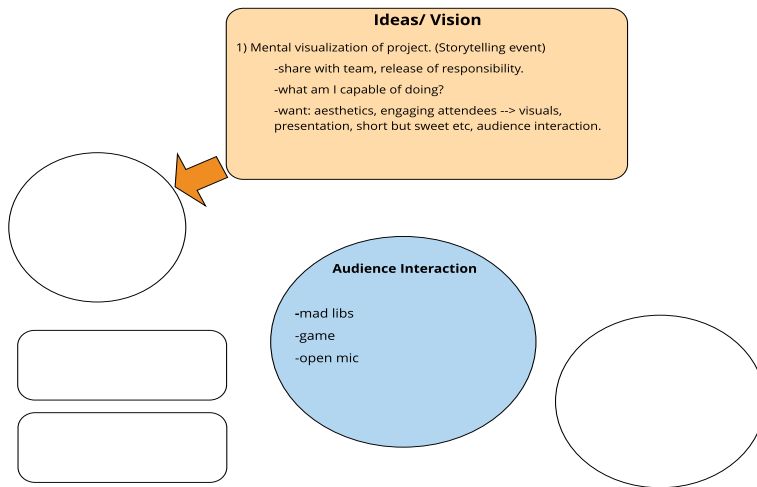
*Gardner's Theory Synopsis: There is a spectrum of eight learning styles and modalities, that inform a person's ability to learn and retain knowledge. These areas are: musical-rhythmic, visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic.

*Vygotsky's Learning Theory Synopsis: People learn well through social interaction and the sharing of ideas, by reinforcing or challenging notions and by providing external feedback.
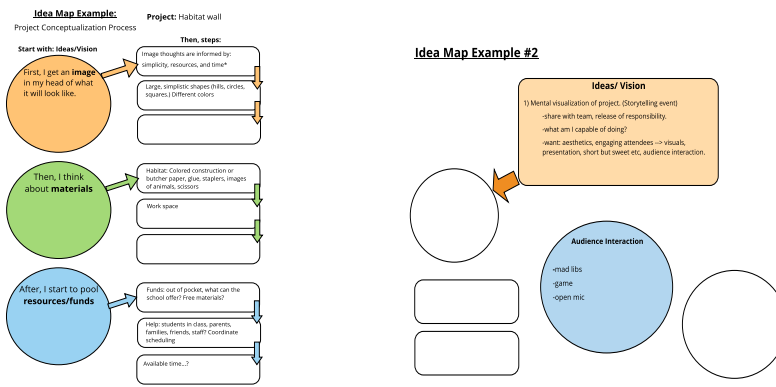
Slide 9-10: Examples of Idea Maps

Idea Map Example:
Project Conceptualization Process

Project: Habitat wall

Then, steps:

Start with: Ideas/Vision

First, I get an **image** in my head of what it will look like.

Image thoughts are informed by: simplicity, resources, and time*

Large, simplistic shapes (hills, circles, squares.) Different colors

Then, I think about **materials**

Habitat: Colored construction or butcher paper, glue, staplers, images of animals, scissors

Work space

After, I start to pool **resources/funds**

Funds: out of pocket, what can the school offer? Free materials?

Help: students in class, parents, families, friends, staff? Coordinate scheduling

Available time...?

Idea Map Example #2

Ideas/ Vision

1) Mental visualization of project. (Storytelling event)

-share with team, release of responsibility.

-what am I capable of doing?

-want: aesthetics, engaging attendees --> visuals, presentation, short but sweet etc, audience interaction.

Audience Interaction

-mad libs
-game
-open mic

Slides 11: Create Your Idea Map! (Activity) (15 min.)

Idea Map Example:
Project Conceptualization Process

Project: Habitat wall

Start with: Ideas/Vision

First, I get an **image** in my head of what it will look like.

Then, steps:

Image thoughts are informed by: simplicity, resources, and time*

Large, simplistic shapes (hills, circles, squares.) Different colors

Then, I think about **materials**

Habitat: Colored construction or butcher paper, glue, staplers, images of animals, scissors.

Work space

After, I start to pool **resources/funds**

Funds: out of pocket, what can the school offer? Free materials?

Help: students in class, parents, families, friends, staff? Coordinate scheduling

Available time...?

Idea Map Example #2

Ideas/ Vision

1) Mental visualization of project. (Storytelling event)

-share with team, release of responsibility.

-what am I capable of doing?

-want: aesthetics, engaging attendees --> visuals, presentation, short but sweet etc, audience interaction.

Audience Interaction

-mad libs
-game
-open mic

Note: This activity is meant *to begin* the process of creating and sharing idea mapping. If time doesn't allow, not all participants will finish their idea maps. Encourage workshop participants to complete them when they can.
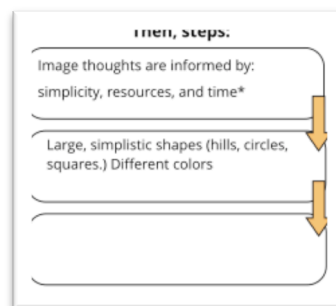
Materials: **Hand Out Packet of Examples and Templates for particiapnts to use.**

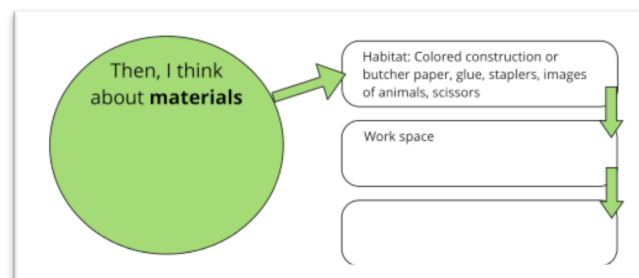**F Explain Process.** Model and Guide (below):

F: "Step One: Use notes from Intro Activity to create Idea Map for Habitat Wall Project. Start with your ideas/vision. Fill in that space on the template."

Start with: Ideas/Vision

First, I get an **image** in my head of what it will look like.
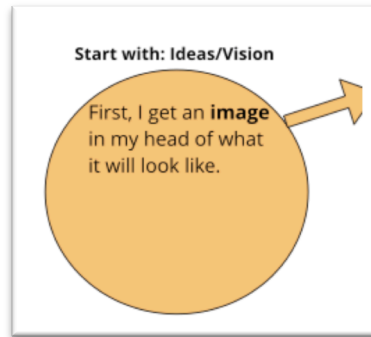
-"Step Two: Think about the most important elements to you. Begin to fill in that space on the template."

Then, steps:

Image thoughts are informed by: simplicity, resources, and time*

Large, simplistic shapes (hills, circles, squares.) Different colors

-"Step Three: Consider what you would do next. For me, I begin to think about materials. Consider your own individual process to inform your unique idea map."

Then, I think about **materials**

Habitat: Colored construction or butcher paper, glue, staplers, images of animals, scissors

Work space

Independent Work: (5 min.) Once guided, allow for a few minutes of independent work.

Pair Share: (3-5 min.) After, participants explain their idea maps to a partner. Tell them to note differences*

Slide 12-13: Implications for Education and Teaching
(Wrap Up) (5-10 min.) Use hand out in Materials section*

F - "How Can Idea Maps Prove Useful in the Classroom?"
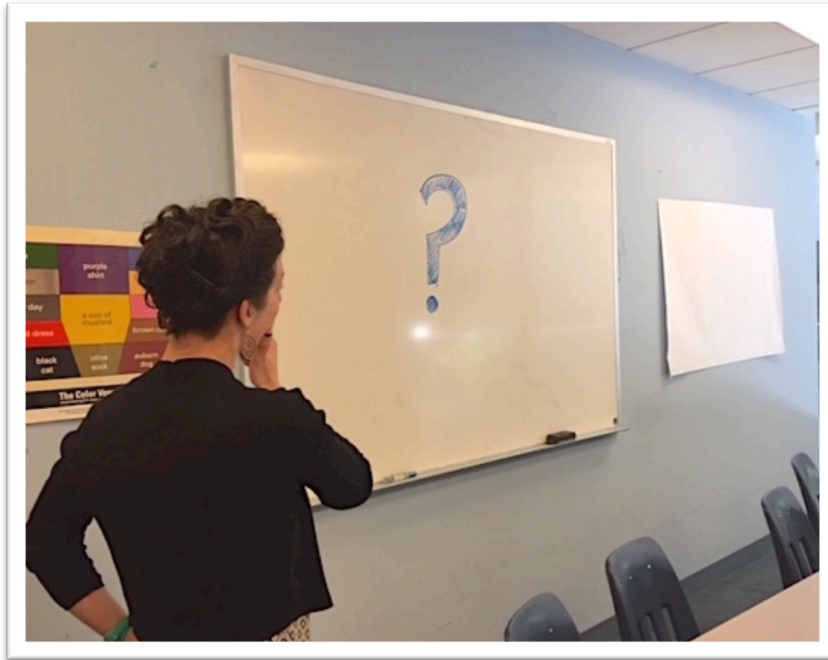
*F: Go to, next slide, which is a blank version of first slide.

F – "Coming back to the habitat wall again. With your partner, use your idea maps to share your thought processes of creating this wall again, but now with your map. What would be your first step. Is it different? If so, why? Second step? Explain and share."

After, pass out "Uses for Idea Maps Ref Sheet" Handout
 (See Handout in Materials Section)

Go over one point under each section (teaching, lesson planning, etc.) Encourage participants to add to the list.

Slide 14: Reflection Activity (5 min.)

F: Pass out Reflection Half Sheet. Then, quick participant pair-share.

Collect half sheets from audience for feedback.

Slide 15: Go Out and Use Your Idea Maps!

Slide 16: Q&A

Slide 17: References and Bibliography

References:

Hausfather, S. J. (1996). Vygotsky and Schooling: Creating a Social Context for Learning. *Action in Teacher Education, 18*(2), 1–10.

Gardner, H. (2011). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences.* Basic Books.
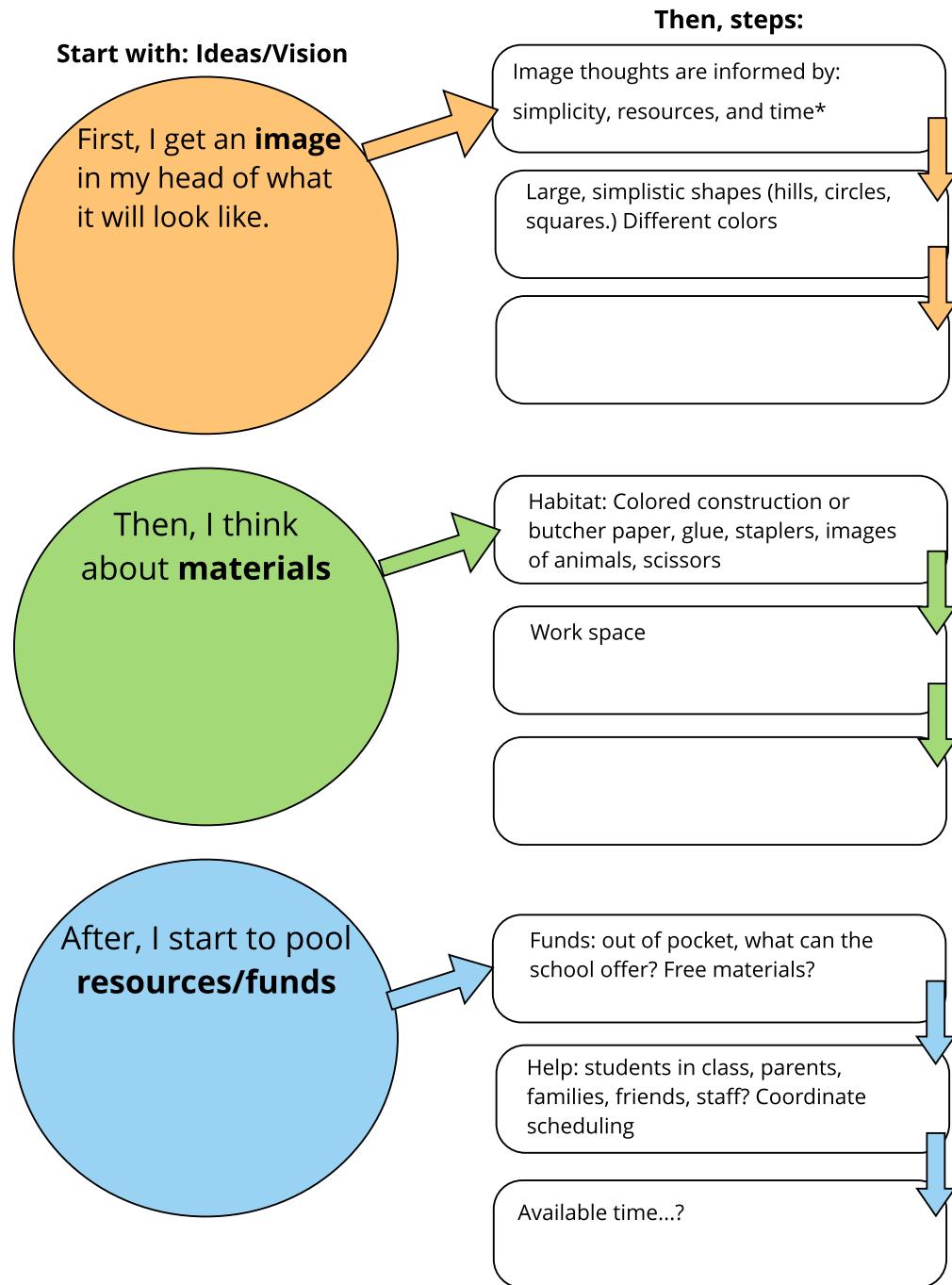
Nast, J. (2006). *Idea Mapping : How to Access Your Hidden Brain Power, Learn Faster, Remember More, and Achieve Success in Business.* Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley. Retrieved from http://0-search.ebscohost.com.ignacio.usfca.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=172526&site=eds-live&scope=site
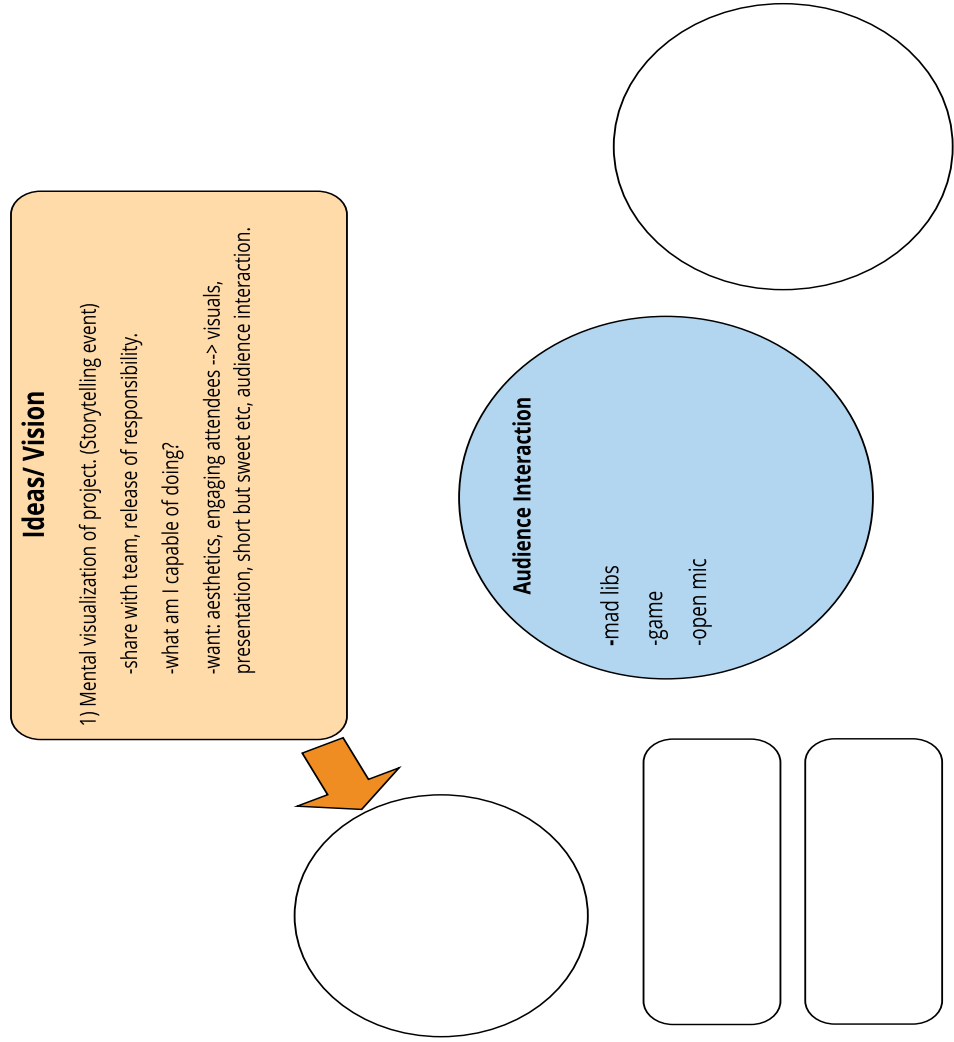
Materials

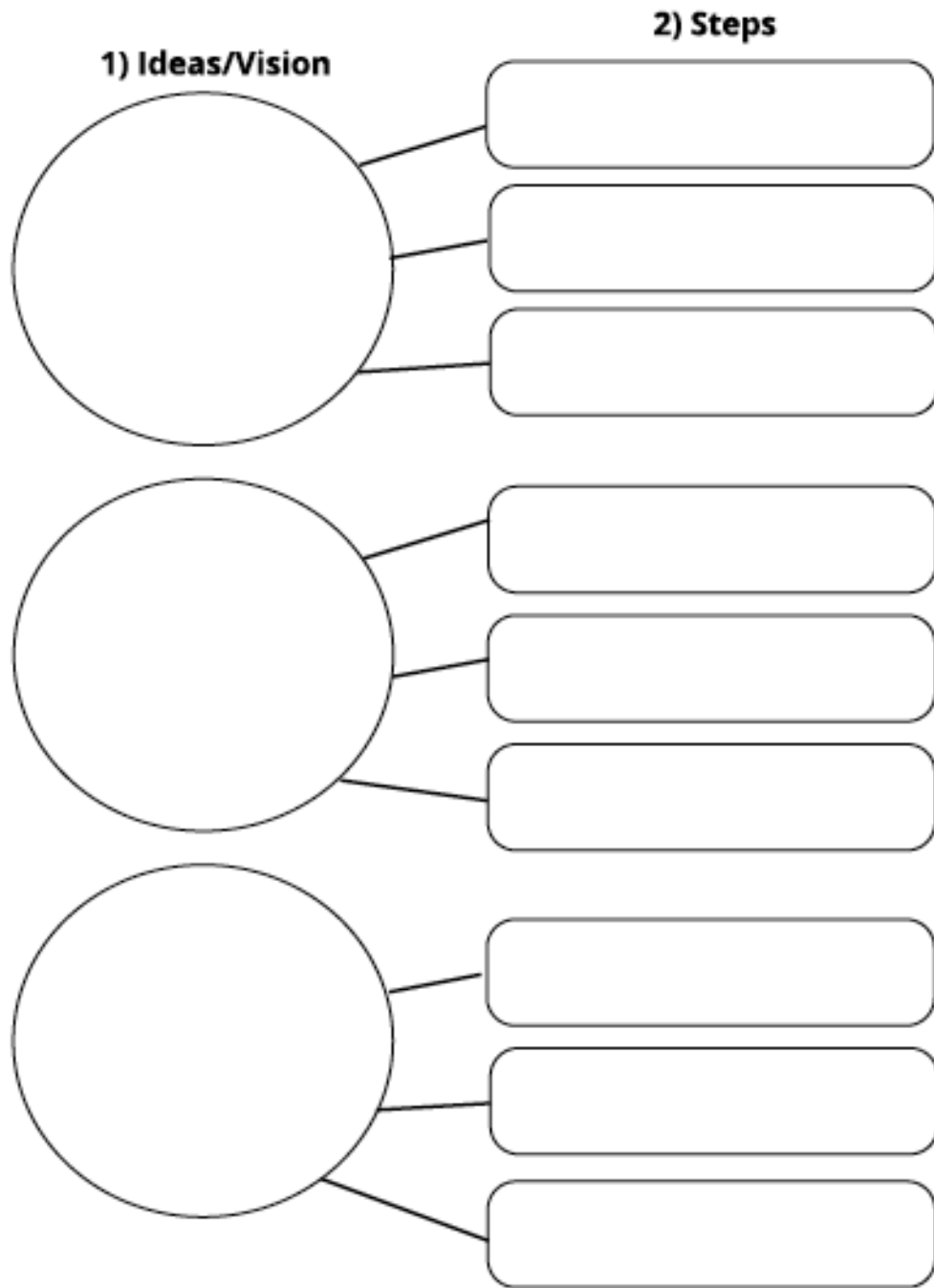## Idea Map Example:

Project Conceptualization Process

Project: Habitat wall

Then, steps:

Start with: Ideas/Vision

First, I get an **image** in my head of what it will look like.

Image thoughts are informed by: simplicity, resources, and time*

Large, simplistic shapes (hills, circles, squares.) Different colors

Then, I think about **materials**

Habitat: Colored construction or butcher paper, glue, staplers, images of animals, scissors

Work space

After, I start to pool **resources/funds**

Funds: out of pocket, what can the school offer? Free materials?

Help: students in class, parents, families, friends, staff? Coordinate scheduling

Available time...?

Idea Map Example #2

Ideas/ Vision

1) Mental visualization of project. (Storytelling event)

-share with team, release of responsibility.

-what am I capable of doing?

-want: aesthetics, engaging attendees --> visuals, presentation, short but sweet etc, audience interaction.

Audience Interaction

-mad libs
-game
-open mic

Idea Map Template #1

2) Steps

1) Ideas/Vision

Idea Map Template #2

Ideas/ Vision

Start with a project idea and your process.

What comes to mind first? Use the template however you'd like.

Idea Map Uses Reference Sheet (Handout)
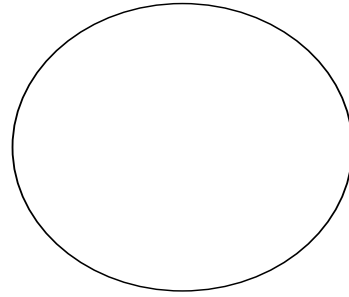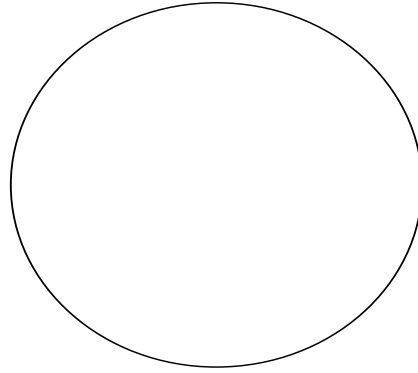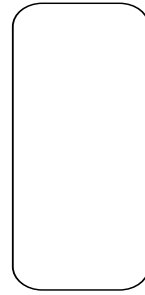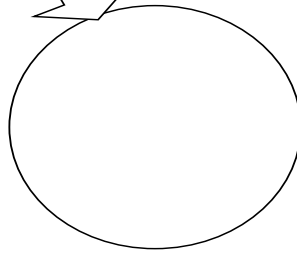
Using Idea Maps in the Field of Education

Teaching:

-Conceptualizing Projects
-Designing thematic units; habitat wall, historical period, etc.
-Co-teaching, seeing how other educators plan and think

Lesson Planning:

-Can't think of an activity for a target concept goal? Quick reference guide of other educators' planning processes. Print, bind, reference.
-Share idea maps with colleagues, "brain bank."
-Looking at designing lessons in a new way.

Professional Presentations:

-See how people execute and plan presentations. Different process and methods for audience engagement and information retention.
-What steps should one take to make an engaging presentation?
        Ex: Not enough experience to know, need guidance.

Reflective Practice:

-Reflecting on one's own thinking could help develop broader cognitive abilities over time (Nast, 2006).
-Hearing other people's ideas and seeing their thought processes can help broaden your notions of potential and possibility.

Design:

-Seeing other teachers design projects, watching their design process. Brainstorming, collaboration.
-Habitat Wall Example

Reflection Hand Out (Half Sheet)

Idea Mapping Workshop Reflection Questions

Directions: Reflect on your experience with this workshop. Write down some bullet point notes for the questions below. After, discuss your ideas with a neighbor.

1) Did you notice any differences between doing the introductory activity *without* the idea map, then later *with* the idea map? If yes, what were they?

2) Did you learn something from someone else's idea map/ process?
If so, what was it?

3) What is one way you could see using idea maps in your professional practice?

<u>Workshop Feedback Form</u>

1) **Was this workshop helpful? Please leave comments:**
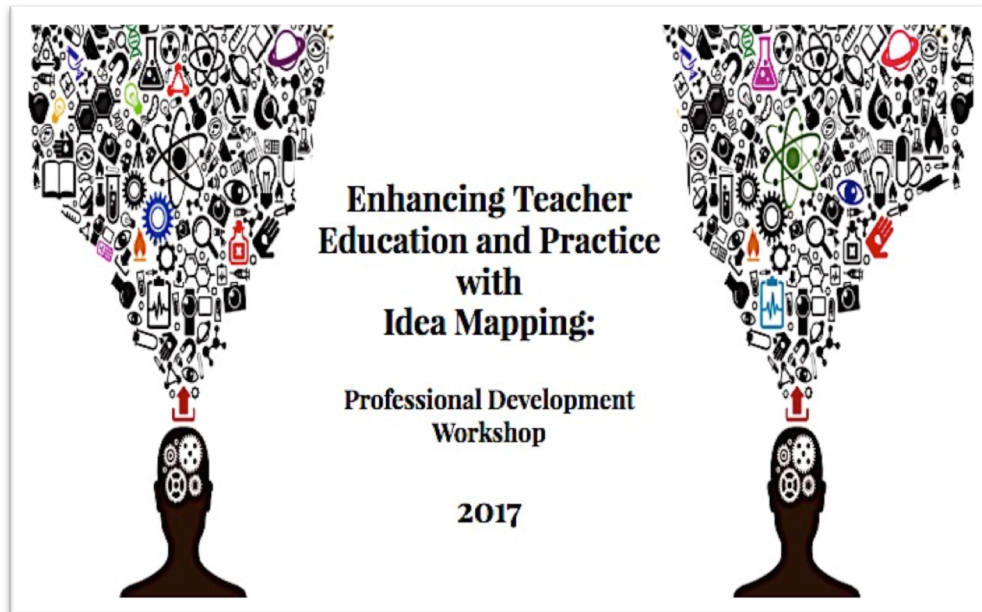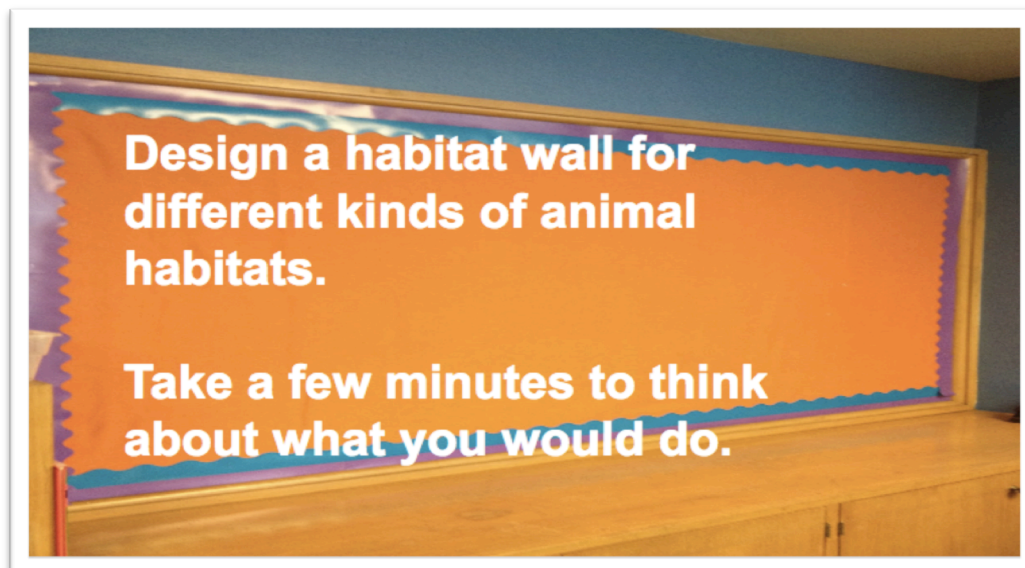
2) **What did this workshop do well?**

3) **What could be improved upon with this workshop?**

4) **On a scale of 1-5 (5=excellent 1=needs improvement), how engaging were the activities and subjects in this workshop? Please give some comments to help us improve.**

5) **Do you think you will try using idea mapping in your professional practice? Yes/No, Why?**
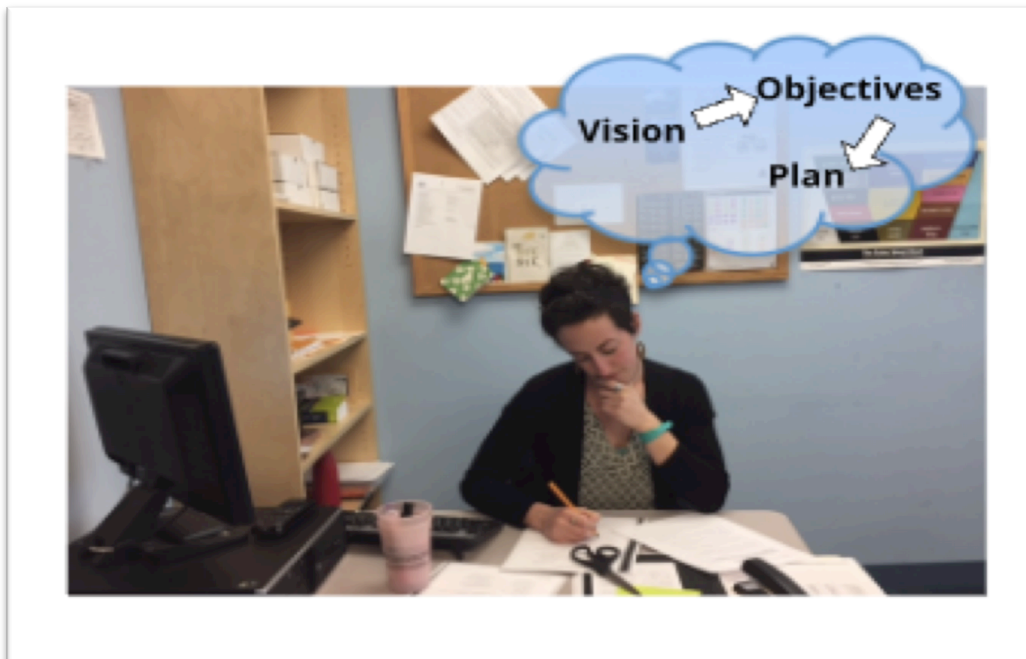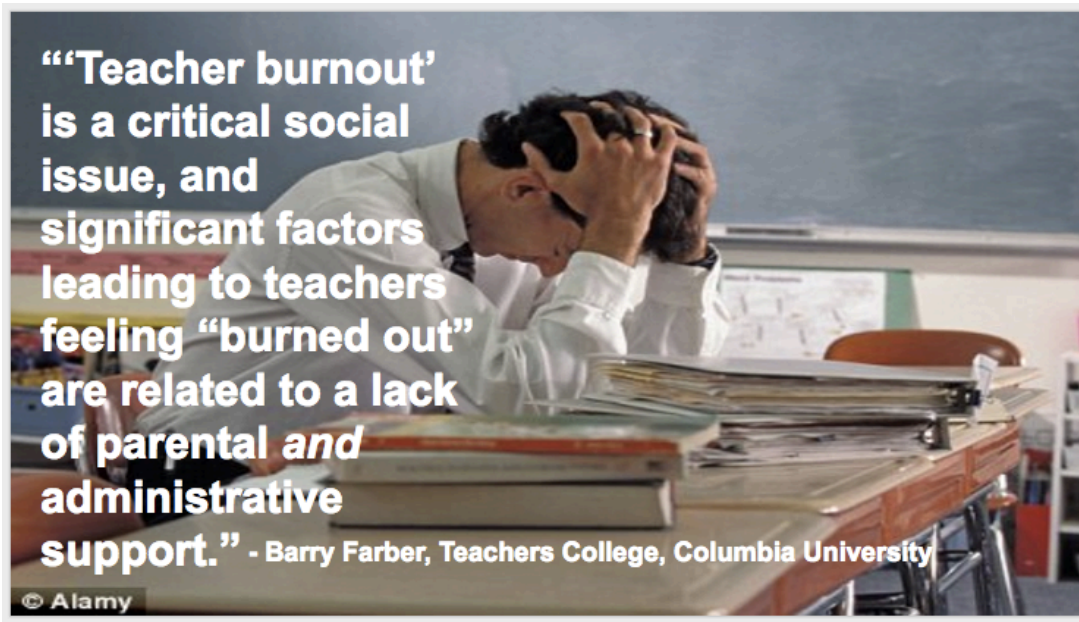
Thank you!

PowerPoint Slides

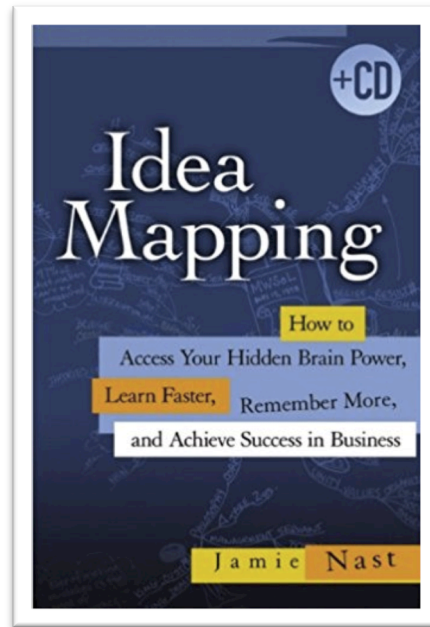**Slide One:**

Slide Two:

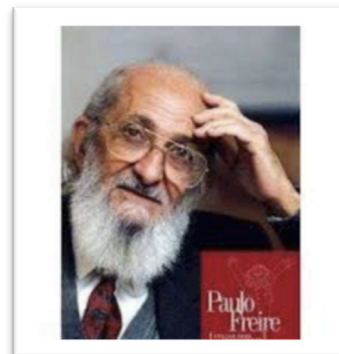**Slide Three:**

Slide Four:

Slide Five:

Slide Six:

Slide Seven:

Slide Eight:

Slide Nine:

Idea Map Example:

Project Conceptualization Process

Project: Habitat wall

Then, steps:

Start with: Ideas/Vision

First, I get an **image** in my head of what it will look like.

Image thoughts are informed by: simplicity, resources, and time*

Large, simplistic shapes (hills, circles, squares.) Different colors

Then, I think about **materials**

Habitat: Colored construction or butcher paper, glue, staplers, images of animals, scissors

Work space

After, I start to pool **resources/funds**

Funds: out of pocket, what can the school offer? Free materials?

Help: students in class, parents, families, friends, staff? Coordinate scheduling

Available time...?

Slide Ten:

Idea Map Example #2

Ideas/ Vision

1) Mental visualization of project. (Storytelling event)

-share with team, release of responsibility.

-what am I capable of doing?

-want: aesthetics, engaging attendees --> visuals, presentation, short but sweet etc, audience interaction.

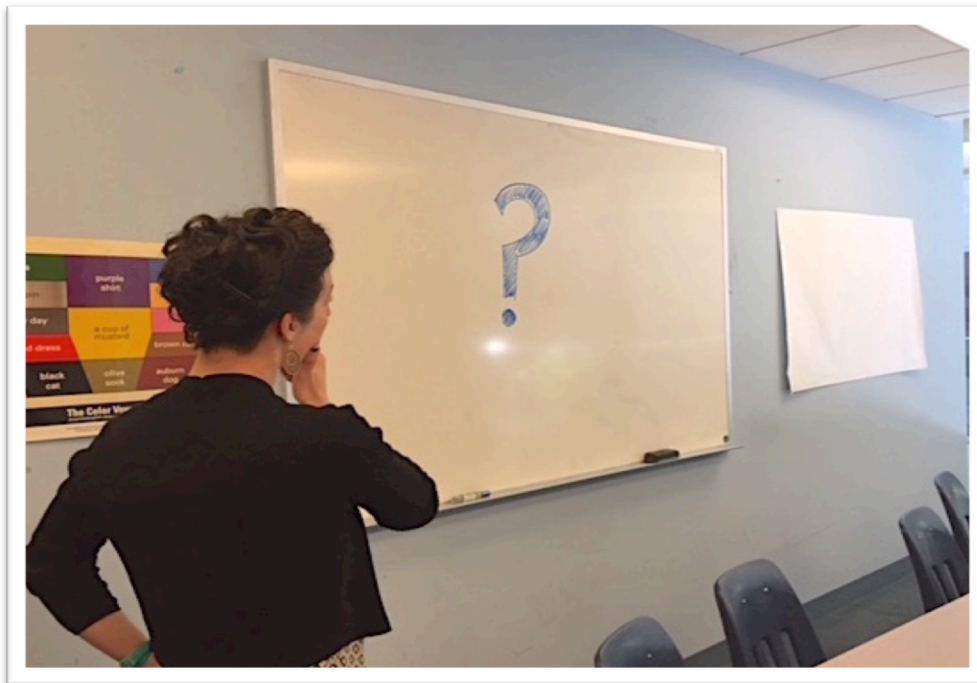**Audience Interaction**

-mad libs
-game
-open mic
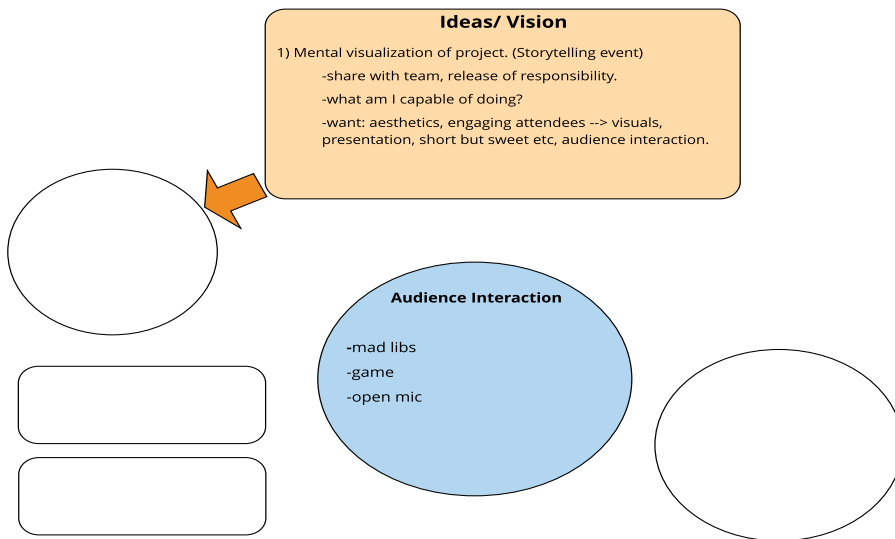
Slide Eleven:
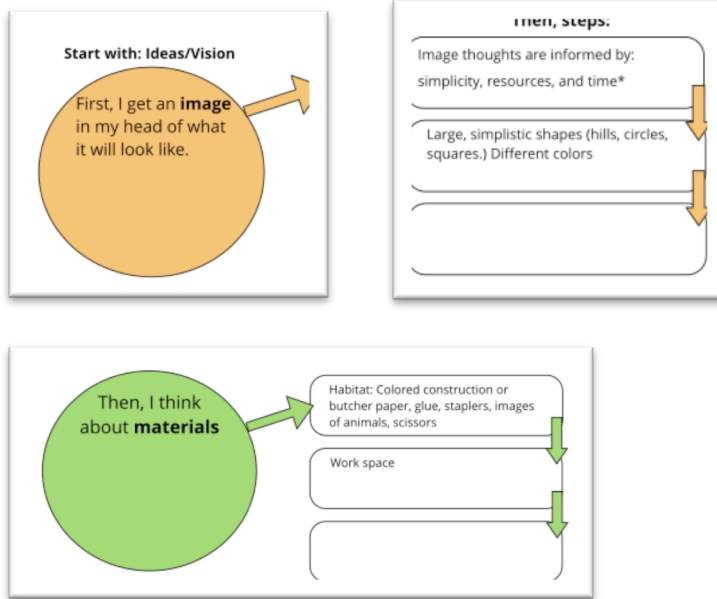
Slide Twelve:

Slide Thirteen:

Slide Fourteen:

Idea Map Workshop Reflection Questions

Directions: Reflect on your experience with this workshop. Write down some bullet point notes for the questions below. After, discuss your ideas with a neighbor.

1) What differences did you notice between doing the introductory activity without the idea map, then later with the idea map?

2) Did you learn something from someone else's idea map/ process? If so, what was it?

3) What is one way you could see using idea maps in your professional practice?

4) Did you find this workshop helpful? Please let us know how we can improve:

Slide Fifteen:

Slide Sixteen:

Slide Seventeen:

References:

Hausfather, S. J. (1996). Vygotsky and Schooling: Creating a Social Context for Learning. *Action in Teacher Education, 18*(2), 1–10.

Gardner, H. (2011). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. Basic Books.

Nast, J. (2006). *Idea Mapping : How to Access Your Hidden Brain Power, Learn Faster, Remember More, and Achieve Success in Business*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley. Retrieved from http://0-search.ebscohost.com.ignacio.usfca.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=172526&site=eds-live&scope=site

Image Credits:

1) Title slide image:
https://media.licdn.com/mpr/mpr/AAEAAQAAAAAAAkMAAAAJDkyOGRkNzc
zLWQ3OTYtNGNhOC05YjNiLWFiMTMxZDUxYTg1YQ.png

2) Classroom wall image:
https://bbogdovitz.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/photo-2.jpg

3) Puzzlepiece professionals image:
http://www.mbassett.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/puzzle.jpg

4) Visual world/eye image:
http://www.clicmark.com/hs-
fs/hubfs/Nuevas_im%C3%A1genes_Julia/clicmark_14.png?t=1484860449302&widt
h=470&name=clicmark_14.png

5) Teacher burnout image:
http://i.dailymail.co.uk/i/pix/2011/11/01/article-2056248-01E93DB500000578-
789_468x342.jpg

6) Jamie Nast images:
http://ideamappingsuccess.com/images/jamienast.jpg

7) Learning theorists images:
        a) Howard Gardner:
        https://www.gse.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/faculty/images/howard-
        gardner-316.jpg
        b) Lev Vygotsky: http://vygotsky.afraid.org/Image5.gif
        c) Paulo Freire: http://novoeducar2013.blogspot.com/2012/12/educacao.html

8) Book, sky, reflection image:
http://sarasotashoppingnetwork.com/uploads/3/4/9/8/34986025/bigstock-creative-
concept-pages-of-book-50043077.jpg?284

9) Tackle thought bubble image:
http://www.zlabs.com/images/photo_img1.jpg

10) Feedback Form Image:
http://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/30421/file-25640156-jpg/images/imagescahqf9v6-
resized-600.jpg

All other photographs are originals and were taken by the creator of this guidebook.