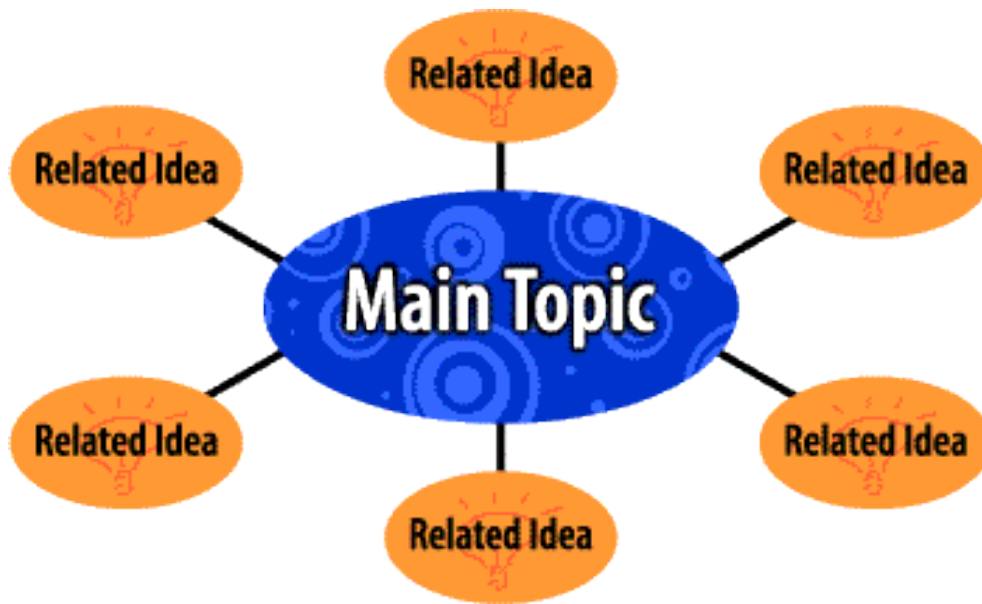


Gale Resources Tip Sheet

Gale In Context Toolbox—How to Create a Concept Web

The *Gale In Context* toolbox tip sheets are designed to help middle school and high school researchers prepare a written report. This document will explain how to **create a concept** to jump-start your report.

Making a concept web is a great way to get your research project going. Concept webs help you organize your thoughts and ideas about the topic you're studying. When you make a concept web about your topic, you'll soon be able to find the information you need to write a grade-A report. The picture below shows what a simple concept web looks like:



Main Topic

The main topic is a short statement that describes what you're studying. Two or three words are usually all you need. For example, if you're supposed to write a report about the world's tropical rain forests, you could use **rain forests** as your main topic.

Related Idea

Related ideas are concepts, thoughts, and ideas that relate to the main topic. Whenever you study a topic, you'll start to uncover important details about it. Every time you find out something meaningful about your topic, put it in your concept web as a related idea. Two or three words are usually enough to describe the idea.

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A Simple Concept Web Example

Let's say you have to write a report on tropical rain forests and decide to make a concept web. Here's how you do it:

1. Write **rain forests** in the center circle as the main topic.
2. If you already know some related ideas (like **tropics** or **ecology**), write them in the circles attached to the center circle.
3. Use one of the *Gale In Context* resources (e.g., *Science*, *Global Issues*, *High School*) or another library resource and do a search on the words in your main topic circle, "rain forests."
4. Find some articles about rain forests that you think are good.
5. Read the articles thoroughly and discover some related ideas about your topic. Think of a way to describe each related idea in as few words as possible. Then write these words in one of the circles attached to the center circle.
6. Do a new search, this time using the words in one of your related idea circles as the search words.
7. Keep filling in the small circles with related ideas until you've covered everything that's important about rain forests.

After you've done some research and found related ideas, your concept web might look like this:



A Great Hint

If you're having trouble finding related ideas for your concept web, the *Gale In Context* databases can find some for you! It works like this: Every time you find a good article about your topic using this product, look for the **More Like This** or **Related Subjects** area. You should see links for other articles and topics. Chances are those topics you see are ideas that are closely related to your main topic. Take advantage of them and click to find more articles on those topics.

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Complex Concept Webs

In the rain forest concept web, every related idea in the small circles is an interesting research topic in itself. Let's do some research using the related idea words as our search words. As we do this, we'll discover more concepts worth exploring. For example, if we search **biological diversity** and **endangered species**, we can find a few more meaningful ideas related to this topic. Here's how our concept web looks now:



Got the idea? Good—now you're ready to make your own concept webs!

You can download worksheets to help create a simple web:

https://support.gale.com/doc/conceptwebsimple_ws

or a complex web:

https://support.gale.com/doc/conceptwebcomplex_ws

Need more help? Ask your librarian!