ACADEMIC SKILLS

Worksheet

Brainstorm

C21 ENGLISH FOR THE 21st CENTURY
Levels 3 and 4

Student name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

Discussion methods: Brainstorming

- is a form of discussion
- produces a lot of ideas
- all opinions are equal
- produces creative solutions to problems

The group looks at a topic or problem. They decide on some open-ended questions to help solve the problem.

The group chooses one person to manage the brainstorming session (a facilitator) and someone to write down all the ideas (a writer).

The facilitator begins the session by asking the questions. The group decides on a time limit.

The session begins. Everyone in the group gives their ideas.The writer writes down each idea. Nobody comments on the ideas at this stage. The session ends when the time limit is reached.

The group looks at the ideas and organizes and prioritizes them. At this stage people can comment on ideas and ask for clarification.

- produces a lot of new ideas
- encourages creativity
- all members of the group are equal
- everyone works together

You learned the skill of group brainstorming Unit 7 of *C21 English for the 21st Century*, Level 3. In an academic setting, brainstorming is a key skill for generating and organizing ideas and arguments before you write an essay or assignment.

Practice

1 **In pairs, look at the task below and think of four things you need to do before you write an essay.**

> You are going to prepare to write an essay with the following title:
> *Is social media good or bad for young people?*

2 **Take a piece of paper and divide it down the middle. Put a plus (+) symbol on one side and a minus (-) symbol on the other. Write *social media* in the middle of the paper.**

3 **In ten minutes, write down all your ideas about the effects of social media on young people.**

> **TIP**
> The first stage of brainstorming is to get all your ideas out on paper. Write them down as fast as you can! Don't try to organize them at first – this will slow you down. If you don't know the English word, use your own language, and find the English later.

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4 **In pairs, compare your brainstorms from Exercise 3.**

- Were there any phrases that you didn't know the English for? Does your partner know? Use a dictionary or ask your teacher for any phrases you need.
- Where there any ideas that you both had?
- Did you think of more positive or negative things?

5 **Before you begin your mind map, decide:**

How big will your mind map be?
How will you use the following?

- lettering
- lines
- arrows
- shapes
- colour

6 **Using your ideas from Exercise 2, create your mind map on a clean piece of paper.**

> **TIP**
> Mind mapping can also help us think of more ideas. Try to place connected ideas close to each other on the page, and link them with lines or arrows. But remember to leave space for new ideas that you might have as you go through the process. Be creative! Remember – there is no right or wrong way to mind map!

Reflect

7 **Think about the brainstorming and mind mapping processes. Answer the following questions, and make notes.**

- What's easy?
- What's difficult?
- How much does mind mapping help you think of new ideas?
- How much does mind mapping help you connect your ideas?
- Do you feel more confident about writing your essay on social media?

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