

Creating Study Guides

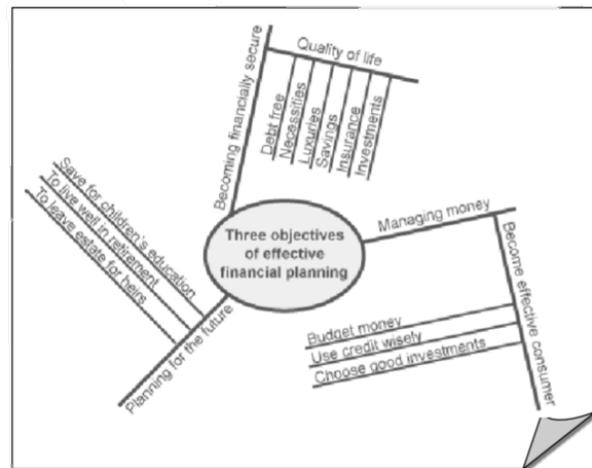
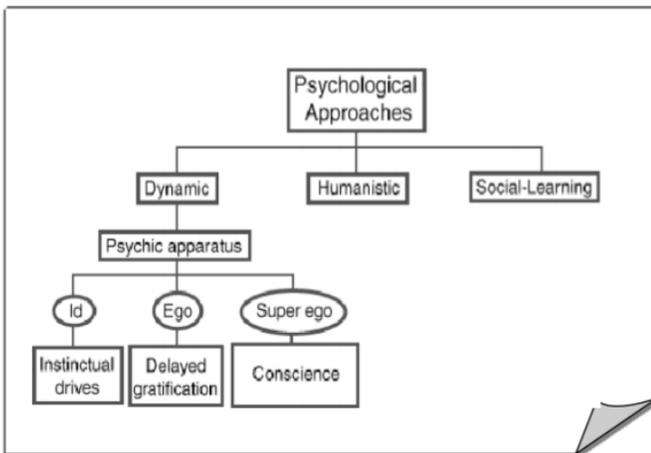
THE PURPOSE OF STUDY GUIDES is to organize lecture notes and text book material so that you can increase your comprehension and memory of substantial amounts of information. Preparing study guides that are visual is even more effective, as the visual organization helps you see related concepts and make meaningful connections with the material, thus acquiring the higher levels of learning expected by many of your professors.

STUDY GUIDES AND LEARNING LEVELS

Preparing for tests often involves more than knowing facts, figures, formulas, and definitions. Many professors expect you to demonstrate critical thinking, which involves more than rote memorization. Therefore, you must organize and process course materials so that you can increase your comprehension and ability to think critically.

Types of Study Guides

1. **Concept map and branching diagram:** Many students benefit when information is presented visually. Concept maps and branching diagrams allow you to organize information spatially versus in a linear outline format. However, you still organize information from the general to the specific. You can then add details and exam



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2. **Comparison chart:** A comparison chart allows you to organize information visually so that you can see relationships among categories or characteristics. It is a very effective format when you need to be able to understand the differences or similarities among facts, theories, theorists, processes, etc.

HOW TO CREATE A COMPARISON CHART

Information you are comparing	Characteristics you are comparing		
	Transmission	Vaccine	Symptoms
Hepatitis A			
Hepatitis A			
Hepatitis A			

EXAMPLE (from Psychology class)

Type of memory	Information stored	Capacity	Duration of info.	Format
sensory	temporary; senses	high	<1 sec. (vision) few seconds (hearing)	literal
short-term	brief; info. currently being used	limited	<20 seconds	auditory & verbal
long-term	relatively permanent	unlimited (?)	long or perm. (?)	semantic

3. **Concept card:** Concept cards are “flash cards on steroids”, and you create them using index cards that are 3x5 or larger.
- On the **FRONT OF THE CARD**, you write the:
 - key idea or concept you want to learn
 - organizing term or phrase (upper right-hand corner). This is the category or term that allows you to see how your key ideas or concepts are organized.
 - source of the information (textbook page, date of lecture, etc.)
 - BACK OF THE CARD**, you write
 - what is most important to know and learn about the concept, in your own words. To
 - ensure you do more than just memorize the information, include examples, summaries, and synthesis of main points as well as definitions.
 - Include diagrams, time lines, or other visuals that will help you understand the information

FRONT	BACK	
Concept, term, or problem	Essential characteristics,	Non-essential characteristics, your own words, definition
	Examples, diagrams, applications	Non-examples, exceptions,