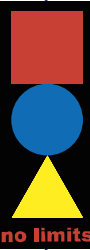
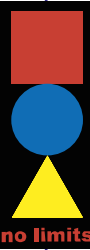


## THEME TREE FOR KS4 AND 6<sup>TH</sup> FORMERS

- Introduce a picture of a brain
- Inform students about the two sides of the brain and that the Left brain is primarily concerned with making sense of things – thinking in linear ways and making systems and that the Right side of the brain is more concerned with imagination, pictures and thinking in concepts.
- Tell them that there is extensive proof that suggests that when the two sides of the brain are being used effectively and simultaneously, memory capacity will go up. As evidence, show them a picture of Hastings Direct advert and ask them to remember the telephone number. Most of them will remember the 0800 00 1066 number song. Tell them that in advertising these concepts are used very often – colour, rhythm, imagination and jingles. Imagine if the information needed for exam recall was that easy to access.
- Tell the students about neurons and how they make connections across the brain and that they need to be encouraged to think logically as well as well as creatively (slide 4 and 5)
- An example of ways of taking notes in that way is by using a Theme Tree where the information is organised in a very logical way, but drawn in a creative and imaginative fashion.
- The connections between the two sides of the brain must happen at the same time, not shift from one to the other. Therefore the importance of WRITING ON THE LINES and not at the



end of a line – that means that the two sides of the brain are activated simultaneously. When writing at the end of the line, the problem is that the right side will look at the arrow or line, then the left will recognise the word, then the right will look at the arrow etc. Writing ON THE LINES and linking the lines, means that the brain sees the information as one image, thus making it easier for the brain to remember and cope with all the information.



## RULES OF MAKING A THEME TREE

- 1) Organise information into Theme, sub themes (and possible sub themes of sub themes) and Details
- 2) Organise this information with the theme in the middle, on thick branches spreading out, write the sub themes and on thinner branches at the end of the sub themes, make a branch for each detail, each example of the sub detail.
- 3) Make sure all the branches are connected like branches on a tree
- 4) Use colour to code the information, not just to make it creative
- 5) Use as many relevant pictures as possible.
- 6) Write all the information along the branches NEVER at the end of a branch
  - Show them an example of a Theme Tree



## DIFFERENT WAYS OF WORKING WITH A GROUP

- A way of making it interactive is by having the students working on big pieces of paper and having them working in groups with lots of colour.
- Also try having them evaluate each other's theme trees and making suggestions as to how to improve them and take ideas from each other.
- Try using a mixture of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Have them working in groups – each start out a Theme Tree with a different Theme, then they rotate to another paper with someone else's theme, now they add as many sub themes as possible on large branches, rotate to next group, now it's time for details and adding branches if they feel information is lacking. Continue rotating the groups until all Theme Trees are full of information. This exercise can be used before revision starts towards exams. Each subject can be divided into several Theme Trees – so that within History, you can do a Theme Tree on Second World War, The Treaty of Versailles, First World War, The Cold War, The Industrial Revolution etc. This allows the students to share their knowledge and in turn each student should feel empowered by remembering at least a few things. Possibly have some students “tidy up” the information by re-writing the Theme Trees to make them visually uniform and easier to read. These can be used in the class room as a visual revision tool.