

# An introduction to brainstorming using Inspiration



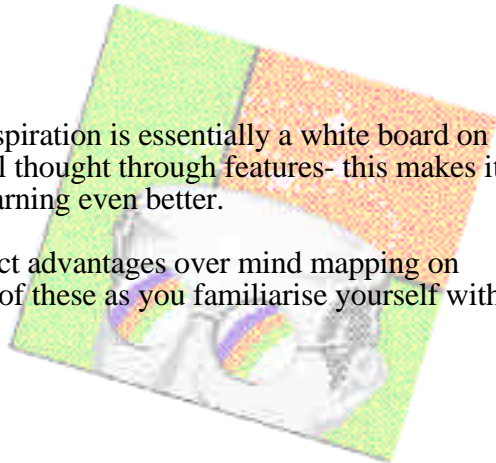
Rob Clarke  
Facilitator

[www.christchurchict.org.nz](http://www.christchurchict.org.nz)  
[robclarke@xtra.co.nz](mailto:robclarke@xtra.co.nz)

# Introduction

Inspiration is the best mind mapping tool available. Inspiration is essentially a white board on the screen. It is easy to use and has a simple set of well thought through features- this makes it powerful in terms of it's potential to help you make learning even better.

Mind mapping on the computer has a number of distinct advantages over mind mapping on paper or the white board. Take some time to list some of these as you familiarise yourself with this amazing programme:



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Facilitator  
Christchurch ITC Cluster

## Getting Started

When you start Inspiration, it will open up in **Diagram** view. The **Main Idea** symbol appears in the center of your screen.



Double-clicking each of the four corners of a symbol does something, spend time discovering what each drag handle does, and write a note to remind you beside each.

What do the diamonds do on each side of the symbol?

# Entering in information quickly...

## RapidFire

RapidFire allows you to get your ideas down quickly without worrying about their order. You add ideas right into the selected symbol, letting Inspiration create new symbols for your ideas.

1. Click the **RapidFire** button, or press **Enter** on the keyboard. You will see a lightening bolt appear which means RapidFire is on.
2. Type a number of ideas in succession, pressing **return** between each one.
3. Click the **RapidFire** button or click elsewhere in your diagram to turn RapidFire off.

## Linking ideas together...

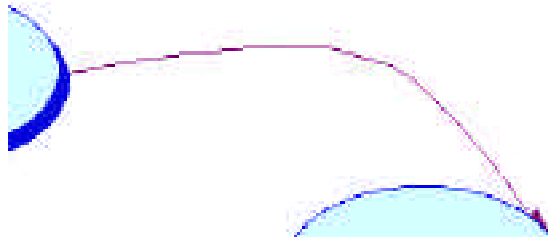
Ideas can be easily linked by dragging any of the diamonds that appear when you click on any particular symbol.



## Different types of links

In the Link menu, you will notice there are a number of different types of links, and also a variety of things you can do to customise your links- such as the types of arrow heads they have.

I like to use curved links to show a process:



*You will notice a drag handle on your curved links. Click and drag on this to adjust the curve.*

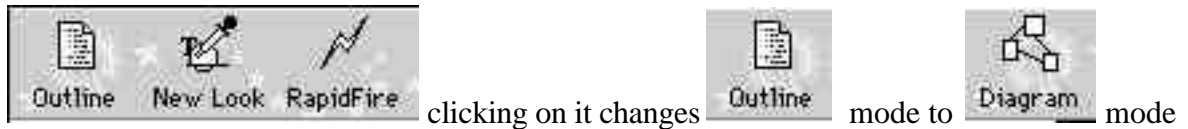
*You can have either a two or three-pointed link.*

# Different ways to brainstorm...

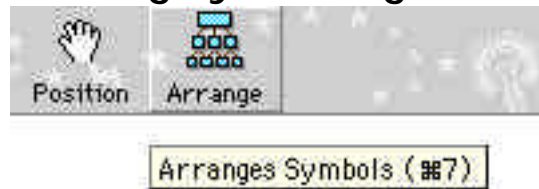
Inspiration has a number of useful tricks that help you brainstorm in a way that suits you or the students are working with.

## Outline View or Diagram View

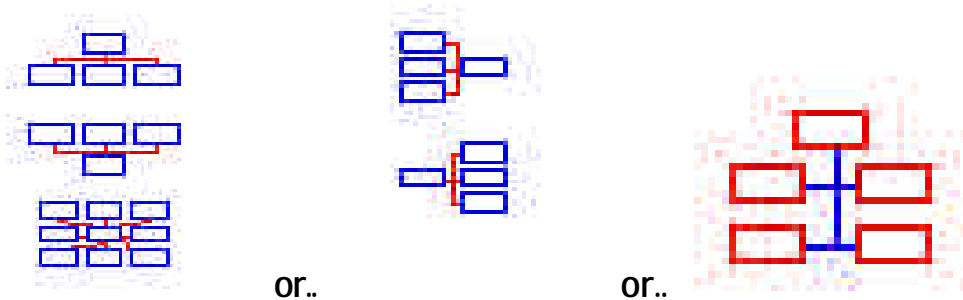
Inspiration has two main modes- **Diagram View** mode and **Outline View** mode. If you are in the diagram view, click on **Outline** on the Inspiration tool bar (found on the far left).



## Using Arrange to change your diagram



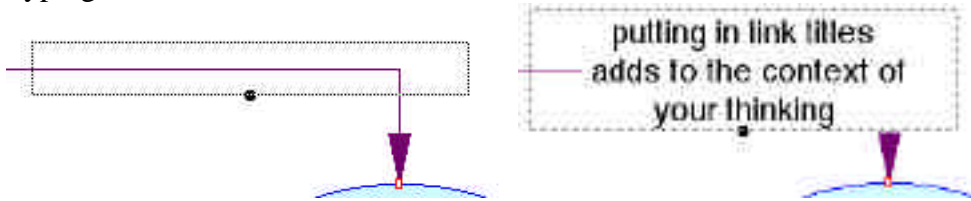
The Arrange button allows you to recreate your diagram in a variety of ways, click on it to explore what it can do to your brainstorm (*careful- you might or might not like what it does if your brainstorm is complex!*).



# Adding context to your thinking...

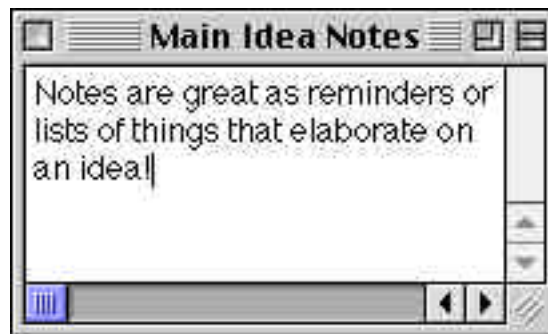
## Link titles

You can add text on a link to describe the relationship between two linked ideas. Here, you will add the word for so it's clear that the connection is that Dad wants to fish for marlin. When the link is selected, you see the outline of the text box area on the link. It's ready for you to begin typing.



## Notes

Adding notes text is a good way to elaborate upon your ideas. **Double click** on the upper left-hand drag handle of any symbol.

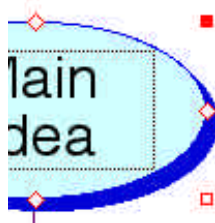


*Command Y is the keyboard shortcut.*

## Children and families of ideas

When you double-click on the upper right-hand corner drag handle, another brainstorm appears. This is not a new document, rather- it is a brainstorm coming off the idea whose drag handle you clicked. The analogy to use is a family of ideas.

When you have a child coming off any particular idea, the right hand upper drag handle is darkened out like so:



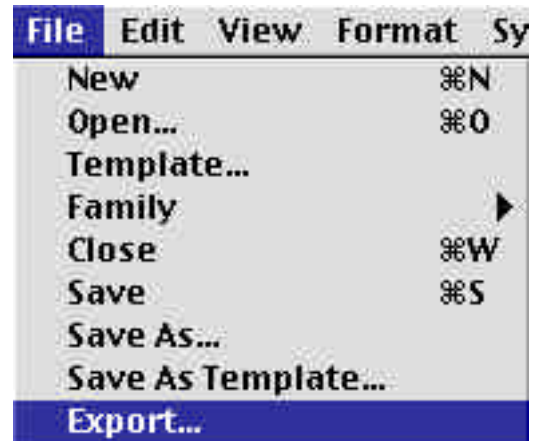
*This is really useful for complex diagrams.*

# Exporting brainstorm for other applications

Inspiration allows you to send your brainstorm out as an image, which can then be used in other applications.

Some examples include:

- as an image to include in a web page
- as an html file with the image already included
- as a PICT file to include in a printed document
- in a variety of other formats such as Word, RTF (Rich Text Format)



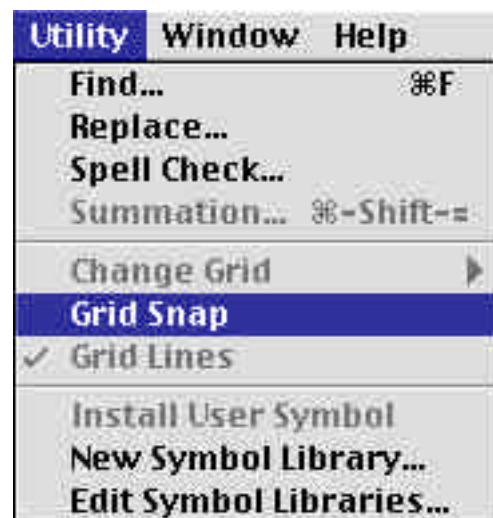
## Customising Inspiration

Inspiration can be customised in a variety of ways:

- saving a document as a template, so it will open in that style or format the next time you create a new file.

### Grid Snap

Grid snap is useful if you want your symbols to align automatically. I suggest you turn off this feature if you want to adjust the position of your symbols in small increments.



## Other features...

**Spell check**- in the Utility menu

**Summation**- also in the Utility menu, I honestly don't know what it does!!! If you find out email me and I'll buy you a chocolate fish!!!

**Symbol Palette- Command-8**. This allows you to change the symbols you use in your brainstorm.

**Using your own images as symbols**- you can copy and paste anything into Inspiration and it will come in as a new symbol! Try it with a digital picture and use it as a springboard to your brainstorming!

## Quick keys...

**Command- E** allows you to:

**Command- Y** allows you to:

**F8** allows you to:

**shift- Command- >** allows you to:

**shift- Command- >** allows you to:

**shift- right arrow** or **left arrow** allows you to:

## Coming up in Inspiration 6...

Much more web ready...

More symbol libraries...

More templates...