

*Original Research Article*

# The Application of Mind Map in High School English Reading

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**Abstract:** Mind maps were initially used to help students with learning difficulty overcome learning obstacles, which were then widely used in the education industry. It is a learning method that Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard students must master. Meanwhile, as a world-class thinking training tool, it is highly recommended and used by the world's top 500 corporate executives and has also been introduced into more than 500 subject experimental schools across the country as a "knowledge building strategy based on systematic thinking". If this method is applied to high school English reading classes, it will definitely make reading more efficient, students' sporadic thinking can be more exercised, and teachers' teaching tasks will be reduced to a certain extent. This article compares the traditional English reading teaching method with the mind mapping teaching method, which more clearly reflects the superiority of mind mapping in subject teaching.

**Keywords:** Mind Map; High School English Reading; Traditional Teaching

## 1. An analysis of the present situation of traditional English reading teaching

### 1.1 Characteristics of traditional English reading teaching method

The main characteristics of traditional reading teaching are the single teaching mode and outdated teaching concepts, all of these will make students have a stereotyped impression on reading and even the classroom to a large extent as tedious, thus losing interest in reading and classroom, resulting in low efficiency in classroom and students' acceptance of knowledge is not obvious. Secondly, most of the traditional English reading teaching is currently shackled in traditional thinking methods, which is very unfavorable for students to develop and improve their critical thinking and logical reasoning skills and leads students lack of the ability to collect, analyze, organize, and summarize information during the process of reading articles.

Teaching is a complicated art. In order to enable students to master systematic and precise knowledge, teachers must carefully prepare lessons, thoroughly understand the key points and difficulties of the textbooks, determine the purpose and tasks of teaching, and do a good job of teaching design so that the system can be carried out efficiently and systematically. But the classroom situation is complex and full of variables, if the teacher ignores the changes in the actual situation, stubbornly grasps the established lesson plans, and implements without flexibility, it will definitely make the classroom passive, dull, and inefficient<sup>[1]</sup>.

### 1.2 The current situation of high school English reading

#### 1.2.1 Preparation before class

Under the pressure of exam-oriented education and the limitation of the school's collective lesson preparation, many teachers have the following two characteristics before the new class: First, ignore the students' knowledge of the language background and cultural knowledge of the article, and go directly to the text; second, the teacher directly inculcates the relevant knowledge of the text. These practices have great disadvantages in the context of the new curriculum reform. The former allows students to read without clear purpose, relevant background knowledge and psychological preparation. It is difficult to achieve a deep understanding and grasp of reading materials; the latter is not conducive to the development of students' personality and disseminated thinking.

#### 1.2.2 During the course

Effective teaching refers to the teaching behavior that teachers achieve success or perform well in achieving both the teaching purpose and the development needs of students<sup>[2]</sup>. But in the traditional classroom teaching, most of classroom teaching activities are carried out by teachers as the dominant subject, which basically ignores the self-development of the students as the developmental subject does not achieve effective teaching. For reading English articles, the teacher focuses more on one-sided teaching of excessive vocabulary, grammar and language knowledge, but does not consider the problem as a whole. If the teacher only focuses on explaining the vocabulary and grammar of a single article, the students will only have a superficial cognition of the article in the end, and the effect of drawing inferences from one to other cannot be achieved. And in a deeper level, it also fails

to enable students to develop an ability to actively and quickly acquire the key knowledge and analysis of the problem in reading, so that they lack the overall understanding of the article and their comprehensive reading ability is weak.

### 1.2.3 Feedback after class

After the classroom, the teacher did not review the article in time, and the knowledge acquired by students under this teaching method was fragmented. According to The Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve, these pieces of knowledge will be forgotten at a faster rate. In terms of the overall effect, this teaching method is not effective.

## 2. Mind map teaching method

### 2.1 The concept and principle of mind mapping

Mind map is a tool for expressing emissive thinking. It uses the technique of attaching equal importance to pictures and texts to express the relationship of the theme at all levels with affiliation and related hierarchical graphics, establishes a memory connection among theme keywords, images, colors, etc, and fully use the functions of the left and right brain and the laws of memory, reading, and thinking to help people balance the development of logic and imagination<sup>[3]</sup>.

Mind maps are divided into Thinking Map (visualization tools) and Mind Map (memory tools). The two use graphics technology to help students build knowledge, improve learning efficiency, and display divergent thinking as a visual expression.

According to the principles of psychology, this method is more suitable for students who are not outstanding in the text learning method but are good at the graphic learning method than the traditional English reading teaching method. It is also very beneficial in improving memory, combing knowledge points, and taking notes.

### 2.2 The practical application of mind mapping in English reading teaching

#### 2.2.1 Core import before reading, grasp the classroom

In the lead-in section before reading, teachers can first publish the core objects in the reading article in advance, let the students search for relevant materials based on this topic. Then mobilize the enthusiasm of the students in the form of small group work, so that they can all participate in class planning and use mind map for divergent thinking based on keywords. In this way, students not only understand the theme background of the classroom through the core words, but also lay a solid foundation for their good absorption of reading content.

For example, before starting the reading teaching of the People's Education version of Unit1 Festivals around the World, which is the third compulsory English course in high school, teachers can discuss topics with class students about festivals that exist in various countries of the world. At the same time, some common festivals in some countries are shown in PPT or video with multimedia technology. Due to the mutual spread and integration of world cultures, some festivals and customs from abroad have also poured in. The most common is the influx of Western countries into Christmas Eve, Christmas, April Fools' Day, etc. Almost all students have known and experienced those festivals, so they are definitely familiar with their customs and characteristics. These experiences can be discussed in the classroom, and teachers can also invite individual students to share on the stage, which leads to the reading teaching of this class. A map about the festivals of China and Western countries is as follows:

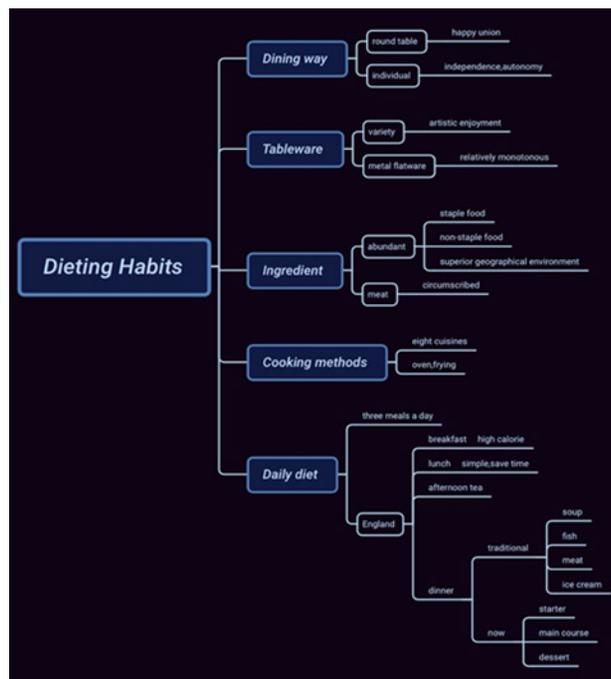


By discussing the vocabulary related to the festivals and customs of different countries, students can arouse their initial interest in reading articles and associative memory of knowledge. Students through independent learning, the reading class to achieve a preliminary basic exploration, so that students actively participate in the classroom preparation activities. After the students have a general understanding of the content of the article, not only the teaching tasks of the teacher can be reduced, but also the learning efficiency of the students has been greatly improved in quality.

### 2.3 Sort out the knowledge framework in the reading and understand the content

One of the biggest advantages of mind mapping is that it can condense and abstract knowledge. In high school, although students have gradually had a considerable ability to summarize abstract thinking, they are still in an immature stage. The use of mind map can help students to build a knowledge framework, divergent thinking, and form a clear knowledge context, so that high school students can link to the whole content through keywords.

For example, to explain The Dieting Habits of China and England, you can first give a few keywords such as dining way, tableware, ingredient, cooking methods, daily diet, and design a general framework during the class to let students know the arrangement of this class, so as to interact with the teacher and participate in the classroom. Then after each knowledge point is taught, the mind map is used to summarize and deepen the impression. Finally, the overall thinking map is as follows:



Through the link of the symbols of the mind map, the knowledge points are no longer scattered, but become a system, so that the students' memory will be more profound and the degree of forgetting will be lower.

### 2.4 Review in time after class, sublimate to understand

At the end of the class, the teacher should propose some topics that can reflect the connotation of the article well, and allow students to think deeply. In this process, students are required to think for themselves and form a group for discussion. Through the discussion, the article can be understood in depth, and then let students further improve their mind maps<sup>[4]</sup>. In the process of discussion, the group is actually in the process of absorption and construction. In this process, first of all, students can explore and study more deeply and think about the thoughts and connotations in the article, and students' emotional experience can be stimulated and inner world can be enriched; secondly, in group discussions, students can express their own opinions and speak freely, which is a subtle response to the idea of brainstorming extended from mind maps. The so-called brain-storming was the earliest term in psychopathology, referring to the state of mental disorder of mental patients, and now it is turned into unlimited free association and discussion, the purpose of which is to produce new ideas or inspiring innovative ideas. In group decision-making, due to the psychological interaction of group members, it is easy to succumb to authority or the opinions of most people, forming the so-called group thinking. Group thinking weakens the critical spirit and creativity of the group and damages the quality of decision. In order to ensure the creativity of group decision-making and improve the quality of decision-making, a series of methods for improving group decision-making have been developed in management. The brainstorming method is a more typical one<sup>[5]</sup>.

### 3. Conclusion

The application of mind mapping in English teaching can not only improve students' English reading ability, but also have great benefits for the development of students in all aspects of their lives.

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