In Microsoft Word you just click on the Table and drag out a table with the number of columns and rows you want. Grids are particularly easy to use if you are working on a computer, taking advantage of your word-processor's table creating facility. Having created a grid and given headings to columns and rows, you can either work with it onscreen or print it off and write on it by hand. Alternatively, you can just create columns with headings.

> I have four columns headed Key themes, Key words, Key writers, Key examples. As I work through a topic I add things to the lists, so that at the end I have organised information to hold on to.

6.4.2 Making connections

A grid offers the power of schematic structure. However there are other ways to organise knowledge that encourage you to make creative links between ideas. 'Mind mapping' is one such technique. Figure 6.10 shows a mind map for Layard's article.
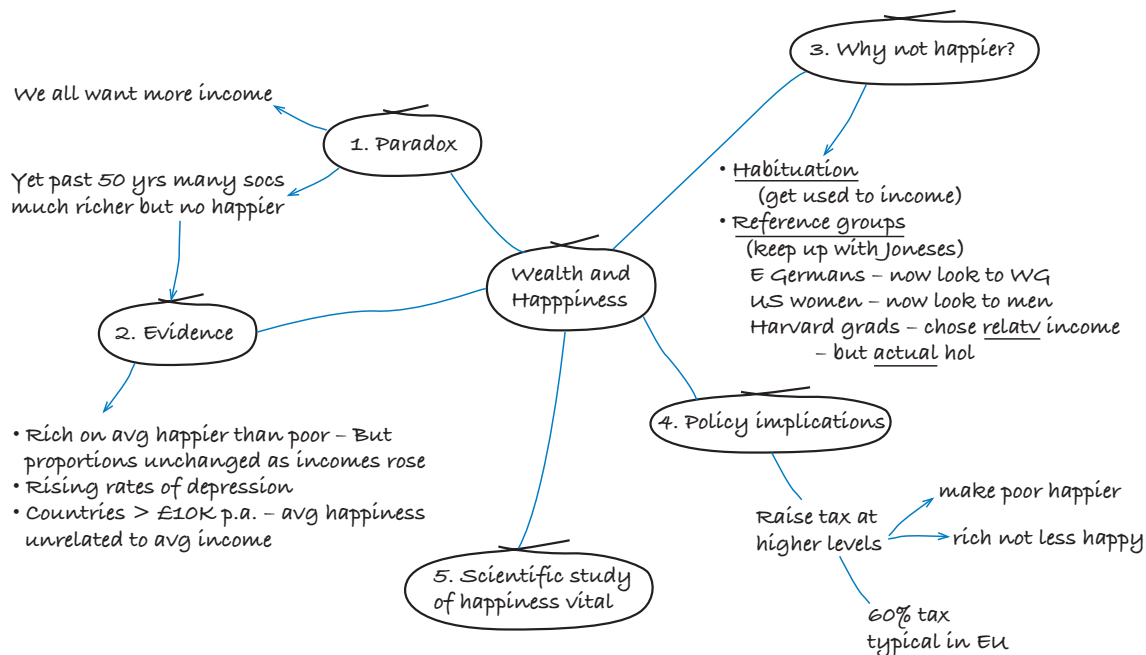

Figure 6.10   A mind map for Layard's article

The bubble in the middle of Figure 6.10 states the topic. Then the numbered bubbles around it contain main themes, each being linked to the main topic. Some of the main themes have notes linked to them. Notice that the note for '4. Policy Implications: Raise tax at higher levels' has further notes of its own. An arrow links the note for '1. Paradox': 'Yet past 50 yrs: ... ', to '2. Evidence', to show the relationship between them. You can mark in as many connections between elements of a diagram as you find useful.