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FIGURE 2.1   A simple conceptual cluster

Symptom or cause

Conflicting research

Regulatory agencies: FCC, etc.

School shootings?

Freedom of speech issue: right to sing, right to listen

Changes?

Music lyrics and issue of censorship

Evidence that lyrics have led to teen murder, suicide, devil worship?

Lyrics have always seemed "bad" to older generations.

Music industry's role and responsibilities

Control?
Compliance?

Music rating system

Greater parental supervision

FIGURE 2.2   A simple tree diagram

Students could participate in "real" ethical situations.

Biology: Replace films with VR.

Ethics

Kids could "manipulate" a world and learn consequences.

Military plans could be simulated for evaluation.

Education

Clients could "walk through" a proposed building.

Military

Architecture

Architects could "see" their plans.

Flight school

Movie industry

Psychotherapy

Movies could submerge the viewer into the world of the movie.

Therapy could involve lifelike simulations.

Home video could involve VR equipment.

The Uses of Virtual Reality

Chen's diagram became a "chunk" in his paper on virtual reality. (See Figure 2.2.)

Time sequences. If your project involves chronology, use a time sequence. Frame each event along a line, noting dates, ages, or other time markers. If you wish, add thick connecting lines to mark pivotal events that led to others and thin lines to show simple time links. For example, in planning a museum tour, James Cole drew a time sequence detailing Andy Warhol's artistic life.

Problem-solution grids. Position papers, business reports, and other persuasive pieces often follow a problem-solution sequence, outlining a problem, offering workable solutions, or advocating one solution rather than another. To create a problem-solution grid, first state the problem. Underneath, in boxes or columns, identify possible solutions. Below these, identify problems each solution might create and then their solutions. Generate as many
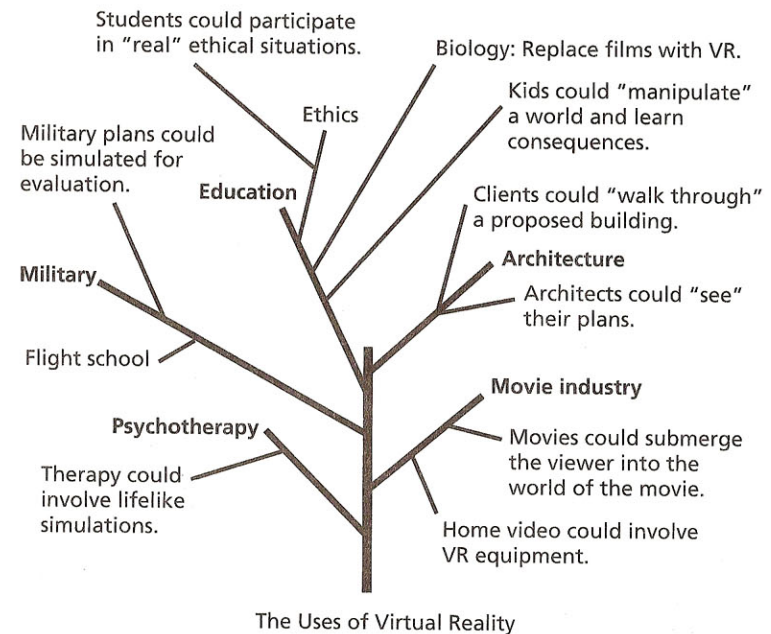
layers as you wish. Paula Masek used such a grid to plan her editorial on temporary solutions to the problem of feeding the homeless. Later she discussed each boxed item in a section of her draft. (See Figure 2.3 on p. 10.)

Outlines. The best-known planning technique is the trusty outline, complete with Roman numerals. The traditional outline may help you to label or arrange ideas but doesn't do much to help *generate* them. A **working outline**, however, can help you generate information or identify missing pieces. As you arrange ideas in an outline (or outline a draft to check its logic), consider whether your higher-level generalizations, interpretations, or conclusions are followed by enough supporting details and specifics to inform or persuade a reader. If you spot gaps or unbalanced coverage, consider breaking up a large topic, combining smaller points, expanding ideas, or adding more details or examples.

With a simple topic as your main heading, commit yourself to three second-level headings by writing A, B, and C underneath. (Leave a lot of space in between.) Then fill in the subheadings. Now develop third-level headings by writing 1, 2, and 3 beneath *each* letter. Fill them in, too.

Mitch Weber used a working outline to plan a brief history of the nonprofit organization where he had a summer internship.