

# Tools for Instruction

## Compare and Contrast

Comparing and contrasting relates in many ways to what students do when they classify objects. Extending that reasoning to literary and informational texts helps them to identify important similarities and differences among characters, places, details, and events. Yet unlike the concrete evidence provided by physical objects, similarities and differences are not always readily apparent in a text. To support students in seeing comparisons and contrasts in their reading, provide instruction that includes both concrete and text-based experiences. Build language for comparing and contrasting into discussions, and use questions to frame students' thinking.

### Step by Step 30–45 minutes

#### 1 Introduce and explain comparing and contrasting.

- Display two items that are clearly alike in some ways and different in others, such as an apple and an orange. Think aloud as you compare and contrast them.

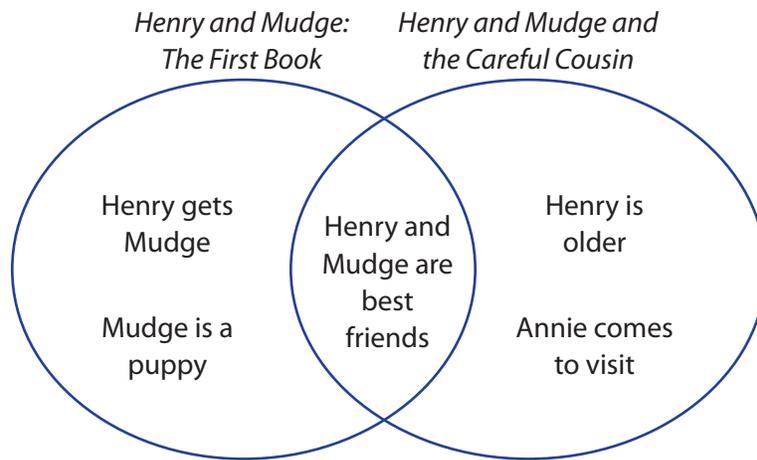
*What are some ways that an apple and an orange are alike? An apple is a fruit, and so is an orange. And they both grow on trees. What are some ways that an apple and an orange are different? This apple is red, but this orange is orange. Also, when I eat an apple, I eat the skin. But when I eat an orange, I peel the skin off.*

- Invite students to name other ways that the fruits are alike and different. Then say, *When we tell how things are alike and different, we compare them and contrast them. Compare means telling how things are alike. Contrast means telling how they are different.*
- Emphasize that good readers think about how characters and events are alike and different.

#### 2 Teach and model comparing and contrasting text.

- Hold up a book from a familiar series that students have read, such as *Henry and Mudge*, by Cynthia Rylant. Briefly review what students know about the main characters and some of their adventures. Then introduce a new title in that series.
- Say, *We are going to read another story about these characters. As I read, I want you to look and listen for ways that this story is like and not like the other books that we have read about these characters.*
- As you read, pause to compare and contrast characters and events. Display **Venn Diagram** (page 3), and record your ideas. The following example compares *Henry and Mudge: The First Book* to *Henry and Mudge and the Careful Cousin*.

*How are the books in this series alike? Well, I can tell one thing from this picture. Henry is flopped over Mudge, and it looks like Mudge is hugging Henry. Just like in the other books, these characters are best friends.*



**4 Provide guided practice.**

- As you continue reading, ask questions to guide students in comparing and contrasting the two titles.

**Question** *How are the books in this series alike? What do you notice about Mudge here that is still the same?*

- Choices**
- Henry doesn't let Mudge on his bed.
  - Mudge still sleeps on Henry's bed.

**Answer** *(Mudge still sleeps on Henry's bed.)*

- Revisit the words or pictures in the text that support students' answers.
- Record new information on the Venn diagram.

**5 Provide independent practice.**

**Connect to Writing** Have students divide a sheet of drawing paper in half, and label the left side *Alike* and the right side *Different*. Have them draw a picture to show one way that two books in the series are alike and different. They should write or dictate a sentence about each picture.

**Check for Understanding**

If you observe...	Then try...
difficulty recognizing how objects are alike and different	using sentence stems to scaffold comparing and contrasting. [Subject 1] has the same _____ as [Subject 2]. [Subject 1] has different _____ than [Subject 2]. Brainstorm many ways that the objects are alike and different.
difficulty recognizing how things are alike and different in text	activating or providing background knowledge. Make an effort to select texts that relate to students' interests and experiences to utilize their understanding of the things being compared and contrasted.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Venn Diagram

\_\_\_\_\_

Title

