



wasatch range writing project

By Katy Wilson

Lesson Title: Using Compare & Contrast to Summarize Informational Text and Develop Arguments

Burning Question: How do students summarize information and develop an argument using compare & contrast strategies?

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts (RST 6-8.1).
- Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions (RST 6-8.2).
- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to an understanding of the topic (RST 6-8.5).
- Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources (WHST 6-8.1b).

Context:

Students use compare and contrast strategies to summarize information and form arguments. This lesson would be used with middle school students; however, it could be adapted to any level. This lesson could be used any time of year with any content area.

Materials:

- Paper, writing utensil, reading material, computer (optional) for research and organizing information.
- Diku/Triku worksheet
- Sketch-n-Write worksheet
- Two voice poem
- You Tube example of the two voice poem (linked below).

Time Span: 1 class period-1 week depending on the length/depth of assignment

Procedures:

- 1 Introduce students to the compare/contrast strategy and model an example using content area reading material. The strategies are listed below:
 - a. [Diku/Triku](#): Venn diagrams with two and three circles
 - b. [Sketch-n-Write](#): students draw to connect two topics
 - c. [Poem for Two Voices](#): students create a poem with a voice for each topic;

follow the demo link below:

[You Tube Demo of Two Voice Poem](#)

2. Introduce students to the reading material from Step 1.
3. Read it with them modeling reading strategies or let them read on their own depending on the level of the students.
4. Instruct them to use the compare/contrast strategy as they read. (More scaffolding may or may not be needed here, it is up to you as the educator to determine what your students need).
5. Give the students time to read and complete their compare/contrast worksheet then have them share with a partner. Students can nominate the best examples to be shared with the whole class.
6. If the students are using computers, the best examples can be shown from a shared Google doc. If the students are using paper/pencil, the best examples can be shown from a document camera. The teacher can point out the strengths of these “elegant examples.” If this lesson is being used to summarize the information only, this is the endpoint. However, the teacher can then demonstrate how this tool can be used to form arguments (see extensions).

Extensions:

- 1 Students can be given cards with statements that compare or contrast the topics and then stand in parts of the room which designate each. This could be used as a review strategy for particularly important/difficult concepts.
- 2 Students can use one strategy to write an argument. The students need to identify the CLAIM, the EVIDENCE, and the WARRANT for each side.
- 3 Students can pick a side and debate it using the CLAIM, the EVIDENCE, and the WARRANT to articulate their position.

Rationale:

Students need strategies to summarize information and form arguments. They can employ compare and contrast strategies as a tool to be able to do this.

Resources:

Curtis Jensen: English teacher at South Davis Jr. High

Katy Wilson: kgwilson@dsgmail.net

WritingFix: http://writingfix.com/WAC/Comparison_Contrast.htm