



NEWSPAPER CONNECTION

DESCRIPTION

In this activity, inspired by Burke's *The English Teacher's Companion* (1998), students will bring in articles (newspaper, magazine, blog posts) that relate to issues or ideas in the unit of study. Students will work in groups to compare and contrast their articles. The purpose of this activity is to push students to examine content in greater detail. When students compare and contrast information they are able to draw conclusions and identify distinctions that will help them develop a deeper understanding and stronger retention of the information. This activity is appropriate for all content areas.

LEARNING STRATEGIES Connecting

LESSON PLAN STAGE Reflection, Synthesis

SKILLS Building Background, Comparing and Contrasting, Text-Self/
Text-Text/Text-World Connections

PREPARATION

- Have students bring in an article. They should read and summarize their article prior to this activity.
- Create student work groups based on the article summaries. Purposeful group assignments are ideal here because they ensure that students do not have the same articles and the teacher can group articles together that are strong examples for compare-and-contrast.
- Create two summary samples from articles to use in a model of compare-and-contrast.

ACTIVITY STEPS

TEACHER NOTES

1	Introduce Newspaper Connection.	Share the purpose of the activity with students.
2	Conduct whole-class read-aloud.	The class reads the two model summaries.
3	Model compare-and-contrast.	Think aloud as you model compare-and-contrast using the two sample summaries. Model any new learning that emerged from the compare-and-contrast.
4	Share out article summaries in groups.	Each student will share the summary of their article with their group. This can be through a read-aloud or copies can be made for each group member.



ACTIVITY STEPS

TEACHER NOTES

5	Compare articles.	Using a graphic organizer, students compare all of the articles in their group. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What similarities do you see?• Why might those similarities be important? <p>It is essential here that the comparison ties to the unit of study. Articles may have similarities that do not relate to the unit</p>
6	Identify new learning.	After completing the compare-and-contrast exercise, students step back and identify any new learning. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did the compare-and-contrast reinforce your thinking about this unit or did you learn something new?
7	Conduct group share-out.	Each group will share one or two examples for each compare-and-contrast and any new learning.
8	Reflect	Students reflect independently. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How did this activity give you a deeper understanding of the topic under study?• How could you apply the use of compare-and-contrast to your life inside or outside of school?• When could this skill be useful? Why?

ADAPTATION FOR THE MATH CLASSROOM

There are a variety of math topics that connect to news stories, including graphs, large numbers, rates of change, proportions, averages, rational numbers, and probability. In every case, having students find and discuss these connections reinforces the importance of the ideas and provides more opportunities for students to make meaning of the concepts.