

Open Compare and Contrast

This strategy takes students beyond a simple list of similarities and differences. It requires students to find similarities and differences and then to:

- Categorize them
- Assess their significance
- Look for patterns among them
- Interpret, evaluate, and draw conclusions

Students select their own factors to consider. As a result, class-wide sharing results in many factors being considered and discussed. The completed graphic organizer can be used as a planner for writing.

Teacher Preparation:

1. Select the items to be compared, OR prepare a list of several pairs to allow for student choice.
2. Prepare an overhead, poster, or other display of the Open Compare and Contrast questions (6-1-2) OR make a copy for each student.
3. Make a copy of the graphic organizer (6-1-3) for each student.

Special Note: Modeling the Skill

Before introducing the lesson in which students will use this strategy, prepare a sample lesson and model the use of the graphic organizer all the way through.

Lesson Plan:

1. Introduce, discuss, review, etc., the material from which students will draw their information.
2. Review the Open Compare and Contrast questions.
3. Review the graphic organizer, emphasizing the importance of the following:
 - a. "With regard to"
 - b. Patterns
 - c. Conclusion
4. If students are inexperienced in using this strategy, suggest some of the factors they might consider for the similarities and differences.
5. Students work their way through the graphic organizer either individually, in small groups, or as a large group.
6. In a class-wide discussion, students share the similarities and differences, specifying the factor ("with regard to") in each case.
7. Teacher assists students to identify the most significant factors and to draw over-all conclusions.

Based on materials by Robert J. Swartz

Open Compare and Contrast

1. How are they similar?
2. How are they different?
3. What similarities and differences seem significant?
4. What categories or pattern(s) do you see in the significant similarities and differences?
5. What interpretation or conclusion is suggested by the significant similarities and differences?

Swartz, Robert. *Infusing the Teaching of Critical and Creative Thinking into Content Instruction*, 1995.

Compare and Contrast

Benefits:

- Requires students to categorize and assess the significance of similarities and differences
- Requires students to interpret, evaluate, and draw conclusions
- Very engaging

| Applications in the Classroom | Meeting the Diverse Needs of Students |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhances metacognition - Content area similarities and differences - Formative assessment - Applying real-world concepts and knowledge - Develop critical thinking - Springboard for Paideia seminar - Completed organizer can be used to support students in class discussions - Organizer can be used as a prewriting exercise for a writing assignment - Review for test/ exam/ EOC/ EOG by examining 2 key concepts at a time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tiering with different aspects of the content - Flexible grouping - Complexity and challenge with higher-order thinking - Scaffolded support - Learning center activity as enrichment - Independent study (for higher level, comparing elements of different works) - Open-ended activity - Student self assessment - Opportunity for varied texts and materials |
| Content-Area Examples Collected from Workshop Participants | |
| <p>English:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students read different novels on the same topic (example: the Holocaust). Students are paired with one who read a different novel and complete the graphic organizer together. - Suggest words and phrases to use in the conclusion - Compare and contrast proverbs to facilitate interpretation and comprehension - Focus on characters to review novel <p>Science:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mitosis/meiosis - asexual/sexual reproduction <p>CTE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating a story board with PowerPoint vs. pencil and paper | <p>Math:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use with LCM and GCF - Honors Algebra II: conic sections (formulas and how we use the variables, graphs, etc.) - Discrete Math: test review of fair division utilizing 5-8 strategies - Domain and Range: repeat during year as students learn more - Advanced Functions and Modeling: decide different methods to use to find the best fit of a line - Pre-calculus: hyperbolas and ellipses <p>Social Studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare 2 city states, Athens and Sparta, after reading "The Spartan Way" and "Athenian Life." - Branches of Government (factors: qualifications, methods of election/appointing, term lengths, process for removal) |