Compare and contrast fictional and historical accounts of the same time and place

15

Language Objectives

- Analyze historical setting.
- Identify point of view.
- Understand word relationships.
- Compare and contrast a fictional and historical account on the same topic.

Building Literacy

Comparing and contrasting texts will help students move beyond what is stated by an author by:

- making connections to personal experiences.
- considering alternate versions of the text.
- examining the author's choices about which details are based on historical facts.
- understanding the relationship between reader and author.

Focus on Language

Display the following adjectives that students will encounter in these texts. Then have students work in small groups to create a four-quadrant chart for each word that lists synonyms, antonyms, examples, and nonexamples. (Spanish cognates are in parentheses.)

- bespectacled
- bubbling
- fateful (fatídico)
- coded (codificado)
- following

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Show your English learners photographs and video clips related to historical events encountered in classroom reading. Visual references help students make connections between English vocabulary and familiar words from their native language.

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show me

In this lesson, students will compare and contrast an informational text and historical fiction about the invention of the telephone to understand how authors can approach the same topic in different genres.

Say: Today, you are going to compare and contrast two texts on the same historical topic. One text is **informational**. It gives facts and details about people who once lived, events that really happened, and places that existed.

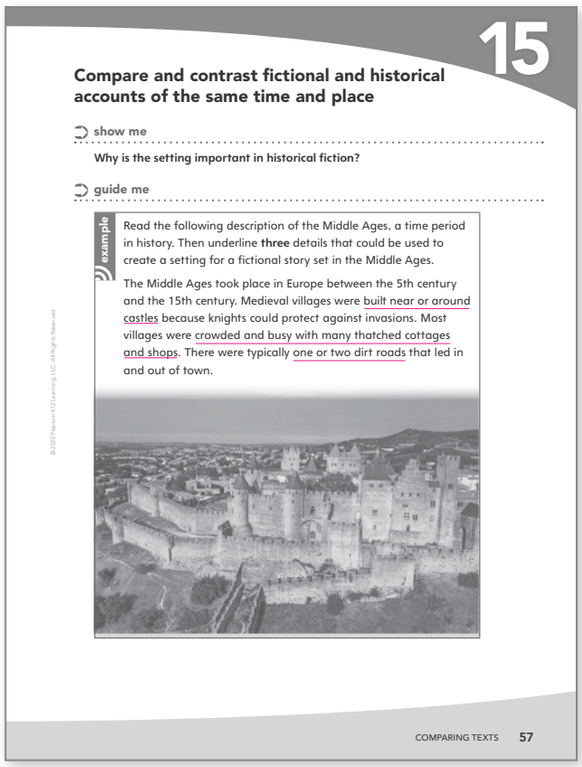
The other text is an example of **historical fiction**. Authors of historical fiction often include historical facts and details in the settings of their stories, but other parts of the story come from their imagination. For example, the main characters may have been real people from history who lived in the setting the author describes, but their actions, motivations, and dialogue are made up by the author.

Have students turn and talk to a partner about examples of historical fiction they have read or watched. Ask them to identify which parts of the stories are historically accurate and which were made up by the authors. Invite volunteers to share their ideas.

guide me

Use the **guide me** paragraph to help students practice comparing and contrasting fictional and historical accounts. Read aloud the directions, then have a student volunteer read aloud the paragraph. Ask another volunteer to summarize the paragraph in his or her own words.

Then, have student pairs identify three details that could be used to create a setting for a fictional story set in the middle ages. (Possible responses: "built near or around castles," "crowded and busy with many thatched cottages and shops," "one or two dirt roads")



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Compare and contrast fictional and historical accounts of the same time and place

show me

Why is the setting important in historical fiction?

guide me

example

Read the following description of the Middle Ages, a time period in history. Then underline **three** details that could be used to create a setting for a fictional story set in the Middle Ages.

The Middle Ages took place in Europe between the 5th century and the 15th century. Medieval villages were built near or around castles because knights could protect against invasions. Most villages were crowded and busy with many thatched cottages and shops. There were typically one or two dirt roads that led in and out of town.

COMPARING TEXTS 57

VISUAL LITERACY

Visual learners will benefit from demonstrating their understanding of text details through drawing. Have students work in small groups to draw an illustration of a Medieval European village as described in the paragraph. Then, have volunteers present and discuss their drawings with the whole class, noting how their illustrations are similar to and different from the photograph on page 57.

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work time

Introduce Vocabulary Write the following vocabulary words on the board: **bespectacled, bubbling**. Have students draw a picture to show the meaning of each word.

Read—Pause—Make Connections Use the following interactive strategy to promote a strategic reading of the text.

Have student pairs take turns reading "Inventors at Work" aloud. After each student reads a paragraph, have him or her pause and share a personal connection.

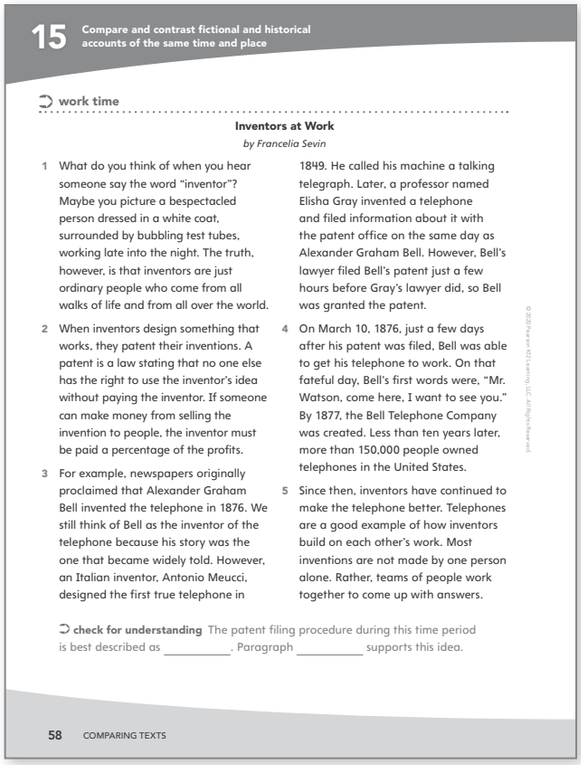
On the board, write a few sentence frames to help guide the conversation, such as:

- This reminds me of _____.
- I remember reading about the invention of _____.
- I think being an inventor must be _____ because _____.

Analyze Author's Craft and Style: Introduction Have a student volunteer read aloud paragraph 1. Point out that the first sentence is a question, and ask volunteers why the author likely began the text this way (to get readers' attention). Discuss that using a question in the **introduction** gets readers thinking about the topic of the text and helps them connect the topic to what they already know.

Then, have partners review the rest of the paragraph for other techniques that the author uses to engage their audience (descriptive language, surprising fact). Encourage them to discuss whether or not this introduction is effective.

check for understanding by having students complete the sentence frames about patents. (The patent filing procedure during this time period is best described as competitive. Paragraph 3 supports this idea.)



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work time

Inventors at Work

by Francelia Sevin

1 What do you think of when you hear someone say the word "inventor"? Maybe you picture a bespectacled person dressed in a white coat, surrounded by bubbling test tubes, working late into the night. The truth, however, is that inventors are just ordinary people who come from all walks of life and from all over the world.

2 When inventors design something that works, they patent their inventions. A patent is a law stating that no one else has the right to use the inventor's idea without paying the inventor. If someone can make money from selling the invention to people, the inventor must be paid a percentage of the profits.

3 For example, newspapers originally proclaimed that Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876. We still think of Bell as the inventor of the telephone because his story was the one that became widely told. However, an Italian inventor, Antonio Meucci, designed the first true telephone in 1849. He called his machine a talking telegraph. Later, a professor named Elisha Gray invented a telephone and filed information about it with the patent office on the same day as Alexander Graham Bell. However, Bell's lawyer filed Bell's patent just a few hours before Gray's lawyer did, so Bell was granted the patent.

4 On March 10, 1876, just a few days after his patent was filed, Bell was able to get his telephone to work. On that fateful day, Bell's first words were, "Mr. Watson, come here, I want to see you." By 1877, the Bell Telephone Company was created. Less than ten years later, more than 150,000 people owned telephones in the United States.

5 Since then, inventors have continued to make the telephone better. Telephones are a good example of how inventors build on each other's work. Most inventions are not made by one person alone. Rather, teams of people work together to come up with answers.

check for understanding The patent filing procedure during this time period is best described as _____. Paragraph _____ supports this idea.

58 COMPARING TEXTS

CRITICAL LITERACY

Students become good critical thinkers when they are able to look beyond the words on a page in order to examine the relationship between the author and his or her readers.

Have students practice thinking critically by reflecting on these questions after reading:

- Why does the author include background information on patents?
- What surprised you most about the invention of the telephone?
- Who is the author's intended audience? Who do you think should read this text?

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work time

Introduce Vocabulary Write the following vocabulary words on the board: **fateful, coded, following.** Point out the Spanish cognates for *fateful* and *coded*. Then, have students list words with similar meanings and use a graphic organizer to put the words in order from weakest to strongest or least descriptive to most descriptive.

Read—Pause—Retell Use the following interactive strategy to promote a strategic reading of the text.

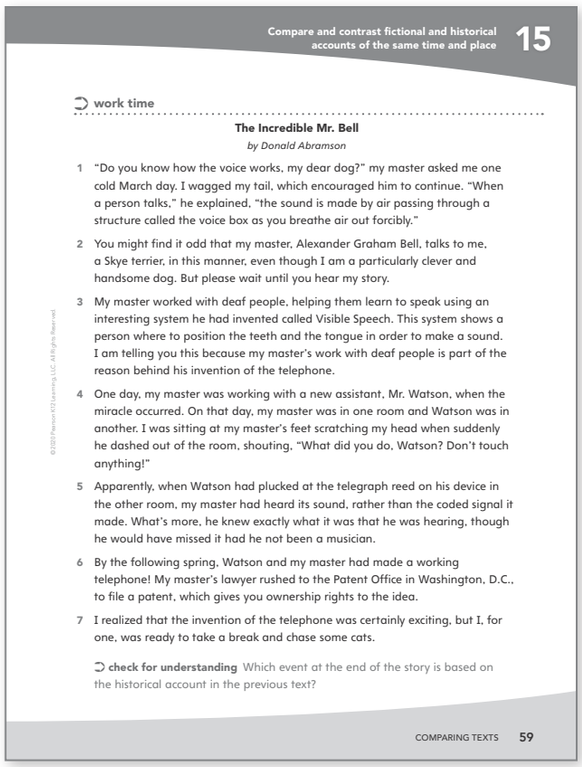
Have student pairs take turns reading "The Incredible Mr. Bell" aloud. After each student reads a paragraph, pause and have the partner retell the events they just heard. Continue the process until the end of the text.

Analyze Author's Craft and Style: Point of View In a fiction text, **point of view** describes who is telling the story. Authors choose narrators based on the purpose for writing and which details they want readers to know.

Have a volunteer read aloud paragraph 1. Point out that the words *my, me,* and *I* indicate a **first-person point of view**. Then have students identify which details reveal that the narrator is a dog ("my dear dog," "my master," "wagged my tail").

Then, have students work in pairs to identify details in the passage that express the narrator's thoughts and feelings about the events in the story. Prompt students to discuss why the author has likely chosen to tell the story from Bell's dog's point of view.

check for understanding by having students identify the event from the story that is also described in "Inventors at Work." (Alexander Graham Bell's lawyer filed Bell's patent with the patent office.)



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work time

The Incredible Mr. Bell

by Donald Abramson

1 "Do you know how the voice works, my dear dog?" my master asked me one cold March day. I wagged my tail, which encouraged him to continue. "When a person talks," he explained, "the sound is made by air passing through a structure called the voice box as you breathe air out forcibly."

2 You might find it odd that my master, Alexander Graham Bell, talks to me, a Skye terrier, in this manner, even though I am a particularly clever and handsome dog. But please wait until you hear my story.

3 My master worked with deaf people, helping them learn to speak using an interesting system he had invented called Visible Speech. This system shows a person where to position the teeth and the tongue in order to make a sound. I am telling you this because my master's work with deaf people is part of the reason behind his invention of the telephone.

4 One day, my master was working with a new assistant, Mr. Watson, when the miracle occurred. On that day, my master was in one room and Watson was in another. I was sitting at my master's feet scratching my head when suddenly he dashed out of the room, shouting, "What did you do, Watson? Don't touch anything!"

5 Apparently, when Watson had plucked at the telegraph reed on his device in the other room, my master had heard its sound, rather than the coded signal it made. What's more, he knew exactly what it was that he was hearing, though he would have missed it had he not been a musician.

6 By the following spring, Watson and my master had made a working telephone! My master's lawyer rushed to the Patent Office in Washington, D.C., to file a patent, which gives you ownership rights to the idea.

7 I realized that the invention of the telephone was certainly exciting, but I, for one, was ready to take a break and chase some cats.

check for understanding Which event at the end of the story is based on the historical account in the previous text?

COMPARING TEXTS 59

VISUAL LITERACY

Venn diagrams can help students compare and contrast information in related texts. Have students complete a Venn diagram with details from "Inventors at Work" and "The Incredible Mr. Bell." Ask volunteers to share their diagrams, and create a class diagram on the board.

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check for understanding

Analyze Author's Craft and Style Have students work with a partner to answer the **check for understanding** questions.

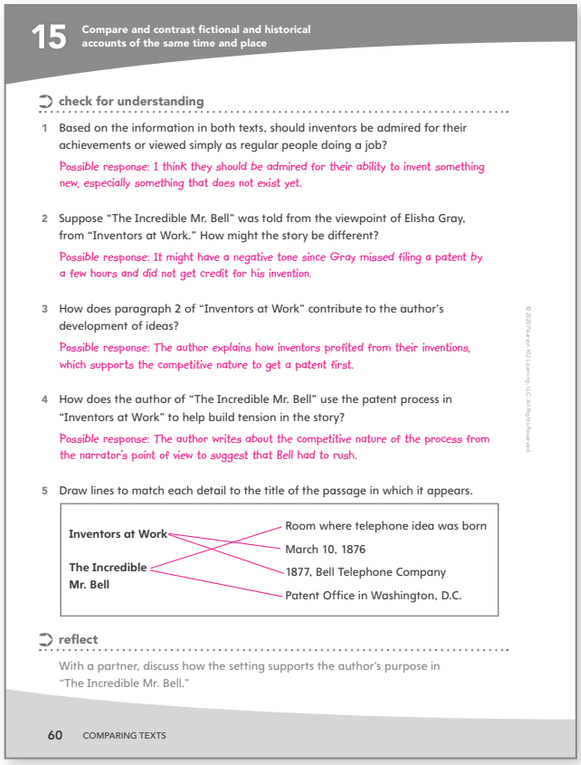
If students struggle to understand how the point of view would change in an alternate version of the story, use a Think Aloud to model how a critical thinker would approach the text.

Think Aloud Before I think about the point of view in a different version of the story, first let me think about the point of view in this version. The author of "The Incredible Mr. Bell" tells the story from Bell's dog's point of view. The dog respects his master and thinks the invention of the telephone is exciting. Elisha Gray would probably tell the story differently, though. He did not get the patent for the telephone even though he filed on the same day as Bell. If Gray were the narrator, he would probably express negative feelings toward Bell and would not show excitement for Bell's success.

Contrast: Setting Remind students that **setting** involves both time and place, and texts can have multiple settings. Have students read through each of the setting details in the right column and circle key words or a date. Then, have students scan each text for the words they circled in order to match the detail to the correct title.

reflect

Have students work in pairs to discuss how the setting of "The Incredible Mr. Bell" supports the author's purpose. Encourage students to cite specific text details in their discussions.



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check for understanding

1 Based on the information in both texts, should inventors be admired for their achievements or viewed simply as regular people doing a job?

Possible response: I think they should be admired for their ability to invent something new, especially something that does not exist yet.

2 Suppose "The Incredible Mr. Bell" was told from the viewpoint of Elisha Gray, from "Inventors at Work." How might the story be different?

Possible response: It might have a negative tone since Gray missed filing a patent by a few hours and did not get credit for his invention.

3 How does paragraph 2 of "Inventors at Work" contribute to the author's development of ideas?

Possible response: The author explains how inventors profited from their inventions, which supports the competitive nature to get a patent first.

4 How does the author of "The Incredible Mr. Bell" use the patent process in "Inventors at Work" to help build tension in the story?

Possible response: The author writes about the competitive nature of the process from the narrator's point of view to suggest that Bell had to rush.

5 Draw lines to match each detail to the title of the passage in which it appears.

Inventors at Work	Room where telephone idea was born
	March 10, 1876
The Incredible Mr. Bell	1877, Bell Telephone Company
	Patent Office in Washington, D.C.

reflect

With a partner, discuss how the setting supports the author's purpose in "The Incredible Mr. Bell."

60 COMPARING TEXTS

CRITICAL LITERACY

One way to help students think critically is to question which details are missing from the text. For example, the author does not describe the steps Bell and Watson took between transmitting a single sound and inventing a complete working telephone. Ask students to discuss why the author may have left out this background and how the readers' understanding of historical events might change if it were included.

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