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Compare and contrast how different genres approach similar topics

Language Objectives

- Identify text structure.
- Evaluate author's word choice.
- Use roots and base words to determine word meanings.
- Compare and contrast texts on related topics.

Building Literacy

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

- demonstrating knowledge of the distinguishing characteristics of fiction and nonfiction.
- identifying text structures and relationships between ideas.
- examining the author's choices related to plot, structure, and which viewpoints to represent.
- developing a position on the topic that agrees or disagrees with the author's point of view.

Focus on Language

Display the following vocabulary words that students will encounter in these texts. (A Spanish cognate is in parentheses.) If students see a word part they know, have them underline it and define it.

- spacesuits
- mankind
- sunshine
- teleport (teletransportar)
- skyline



ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

For English learners who struggle with pronunciation, make echo reading and repetition a regular part of the classroom routine. Increasing students' exposure to spoken vocabulary will reinforce correct pronunciation.

➤

show me

In this lesson, students will compare and contrast a nonfiction text about the Apollo 11 moon landing with a fictional story about teletransportation.

Say: Today, you are going to compare and contrast how similar topics are handled in two different genres. A **genre** is a category of writing that uses certain structures, styles, and subjects. Examples of genres include science fiction, biographies, and historical accounts. A **topic** is the main subject of a text.

Have students turn and talk to a partner about how fiction and nonfiction texts might approach related topics. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the group.

➤

guide me

Use the Venn diagram in **guide me** to help students practice comparing and contrasting genres. Remind students that when they **compare**, they tell how things are alike. Explain that the traits in the center part of the diagram are found in both fiction and nonfiction.

Then, have a student volunteer read the first phrase in the box. Discuss why made-up stories are only found in fiction and prompt students to write the phrase in the left part of the diagram.

Finally, have students work in pairs to write the remaining details in the correct parts of the diagram.

12

Compare and contrast how different genres approach similar topics

➤ show me

How does a genre affect the way a topic is presented?

➤ guide me

example

Use the phrases in the box to complete the Venn diagram below. Write **two** phrases in each section of the diagram.

tells a made-up story
usually excludes feelings

tells about real events
includes characters' feelings

Fiction

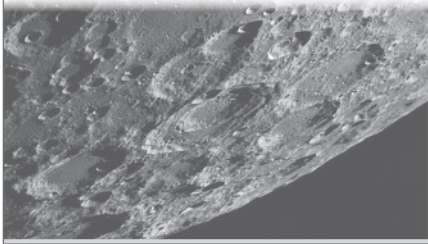
Both

Nonfiction

- tells a made-up story
- includes characters' feelings

- gives information
- includes facts and details

- tells about real events
- usually excludes feelings



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VISUAL LITERACY

Graphic organizers can help visual learners make sense of text details. Have students complete Sequence Charts after reading “Landing the Eagle” and “Another Giant Leap” to show how one event leads to the next. Then ask volunteers to share their Sequence Charts with the class. Discuss how the events described in the texts are similar and different.



work time

Introduce Vocabulary Write the following vocabulary words on the board: **spacesuits, mankind**. Have students write the words in the left column of a T-chart and circle any familiar roots or affixes. In the right column, have students list other words they know that have the same word part.

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

Have student pairs take turns reading “Landing the Eagle” aloud. After each student reads two paragraphs, have him or her write a note about what was just read.

On the board, write a few ideas that students can use for each note:

- an interesting fact
- an unfamiliar or confusing idea
- something they want to know more about
- a new vocabulary word

Analyze Author’s Craft and Style: Chronology Read aloud paragraph 1 and explain that *Columbia* and *Eagle* were spacecraft involved in the first moon landing in July 20, 1969. Then ask students to look for an indication of timing in paragraph 4 (“At 4:18 p.m.”). Discuss how the dates and times signal **chronology**, or time order.

Then, have partners scan the rest of the text for clues and signal words that show chronology. Have students tell why the author might have arranged the details in the text this way.

check for understanding by having students choose words to complete the sentence. (This text includes few opinions to describe events that are real.)

work time

from Landing the Eagle

by Gavin Nash

- 1 On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong and Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin open the hatch between *Columbia* and *Eagle*. They float into the craft and prepare it for its journey to the lunar surface. Later that day, the lunar module *Eagle* is ready to separate from the *Columbia*.
- 2 Armstrong and Aldrin slowly separate from the command module and, trapped in a standing position, begin their slow descent to the lunar surface.
- 3 The lunar module *Eagle* has four legs dangling awkwardly in all directions from its body. It resembles a giant, gangly insect. On *Eagle* are a variety of scientific instruments that they will place on the moon’s surface.
- 4 At 4:18 p.m., *Eagle* lands in the Sea of Tranquility, an area of the moon filled not with water but with dark solidified lava. Armstrong reports the welcome news to Mission Control: “Houston, Tranquility base here. The *Eagle* has landed.” Armstrong took control and piloted it to a safe landing location, avoiding a field of boulders and a large crater.
- 5 The two men are supposed to rest after landing, but they are too excited to sleep, so they decide to walk on the moon earlier than originally planned. However, it still takes hours to get ready—putting on their 180-pound spacesuits is extremely challenging without the pull of Earth’s gravity.
- 6 A little over six hours after landing, Armstrong slowly squeezes through the hatch. Strapped to his shoulders are systems for communication and life support. Slowly, he moves down the nine steps of the ladder, stopping on the last step before putting his left foot on the lunar surface. At that moment, he becomes the first human to walk on the moon. As he takes his first step, millions of people watching back on Earth hear him speak his now famous words: “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”

check for understanding This text includes few (facts / opinions) to describe events that are (real / not real).

CRITICAL LITERACY

To think critically, students must understand that the author has made specific decisions about the words and ideas he or she included in the text.

After students have finished reading, have them develop a list of questions they would like to ask the author about his background and experience with the topic. For example:

- Where did you find these facts about the first moon landing?
- How did you find out how that the two astronauts were too excited to sleep?
- What were some of the scientific instruments that were placed on the moon’s surface?

work time

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

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

Have student pairs take turns reading “Another Giant Leap” aloud. After each student reads a paragraph, pause and have the partner retell the plot, setting, and character details they just heard. Continue the process until the end of the text.

Analyze Author’s Craft and Style: Dialogue Explain that one way authors convey character traits is through **dialogue**, or the words they say. Point out the dialogue in paragraph 4. Have a volunteer explain who says the dialogue (Commander Yates), what it tells about the character (she has a sense of humor), and how it is important to the story (it adds humor to a plot that focuses on an event that is very important and possibly dangerous).

Then, have partners read paragraphs 3 and 5 and discuss what the dialogue reveals about Commander Yates and Jennings at Mission Control. (Commander Yates is easygoing. Jennings is strict.)

check for understanding by having students compare the topics of the texts. (Possible response: The story and the nonfiction article are both about a person doing something that no human has ever done before. Neil Armstrong is the first person to step on the moon, and Commander Yates is the first person to teleport from one place to another.)

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work time

Another Giant Leap
by Daphne Elizabeth

1 “Mission Control to Commander Yates,” the voice in my helmet said. “Fifteen seconds and counting. What is your status?”

2 From behind the massive window in front of me, I imagined families gathered around televisions, watching my every move. Should I say hi to my mom?

3 “Commander Yates, what is your status?” Mission Control shouted.

4 I snapped back to attention. In the Mission Control room, I spotted Jennings waving at me. I could see the dazzling California sunshine through the window behind him. “Ready,” I said firmly, “but I forgot my umbrella.”

5 “Very funny, Commander,” Jennings said. “Current conditions in New York are clear, sunny skies. Not that it matters. You’ll be inside for most of the mission.”

6 If I could still make silly jokes, then maybe instantly traveling three thousand miles from a lab in California to a lab in New York could somehow appear normal, too. But it wasn’t normal because it had never been done before. I was about to be the first person ever to teleport from one place to another.

7 I looked up and saw the round black chamber slowly descending over me, gradually blocking my view of Jennings and Mission Control. As the chamber sealed around my feet, I was plunged, alone, into darkness.

8 However, I didn’t have time to worry or even to think before a blinding flash of light exploded around me. I opened my eyes to see the chamber slowly rising, allowing me to peer through the window and catch my first glimpse of Mission Control. But it was a different Mission Control than the one I’d viewed mere seconds ago, and I glimpsed the New York City skyline in the distance.

9 I realized the world was waiting for me to utter my historic first words, but I hadn’t prepared anything, so I just smiled and said, “There wasn’t even a single step for a human, but we’ve made a giant leap for humankind!”

check for understanding How is the topic of this story similar to the nonfiction article you just read?

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VISUAL LITERACY

To examine how graphic features can reinforce the words of a text, have students work in small groups to identify an idea from the text that they would like to see in a photograph or illustration. Then ask them to discuss how adding this graphic feature would help readers better understand the author’s message.

➞

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 examine the significance of the narrator’s gender, use a Think Aloud to model how a critical thinker would approach the stories.

Think Aloud I think about why the author decided to make the narrator of “Another Giant Leap” a woman. There was a time when it was very unusual for women to be scientists or astronauts, but more women are in those jobs today than ever before. Furthermore, this story is science fiction, so it may take place in the future. By that time, even more women could lead scientific missions. So, it is not significant or surprising that the narrator is a female teleportation captain in the future, since women can already hold similar positions.

Compare and Contrast In order to decide which features are associated with “Landing the Eagle” and “Another Giant Leap,” students must first examine each text’s topic and the authors’ choices.

Write the following sentences on the board for students to consider as they identify the traits of the texts:

- Are the events in the text drawn from history?
- Does the text contain mostly factual information or mostly made-up events and dialogue?
- Does the text structure make you feel that you can’t wait to see what happens next?
- Are there many words or phrases that appeal to the reader’s emotions?

Have students review each text and find specific details that support their answers.

➞

reflect

Have students work in pairs to compare and contrast the information given in the texts. Prompt them them to choose which text did a better job of presenting information and why.

Use the following sentence frames to guide their discussions:

- I think that _____ did a better job of making the sequence of events sound like a “giant leap” for all people.
- I think that _____ did a better job of clearly showing the steps of the mission and making its goal clear.

➞

check for understanding

- 1 Do you think Armstrong’s words at the end of “Landing the Eagle” are appropriate? Explain why or why not.

Possible response: I think the comment was appropriate in terms of the technology that it took to get to the moon.

- 2 Do you think it is significant that the narrator in “Another Giant Leap” is a woman? Why or why not?

Possible response: No, it is not significant. Women are just as capable to be commanders, scientists, or teleporters as men are.

- 3 Based on “Landing the Eagle,” what is most likely the author’s point of view of space exploration? How do you know?

The author’s point of view is most likely that space exploration is a positive thing. The events portray the astronauts as heroes who achieved something great.

- 4 Does the humor in “Another Giant Leap” help or hurt the author’s purpose? Support your response with details.

Possible response: The humor helps the author’s purpose, which is to tell a fictional story about an exciting attempt to try something new.

- 5 Read each phrase below. Write *NF* if it applies to the nonfiction text “Landing the Eagle.” Write *F* if it applies to the fiction text “Another Giant Leap.” Write *B* if it applies to both texts.

F includes many thoughts and feelings associated with the topic

B builds tension when describing important events

F tells about something that has not happened in real life

NF focuses mainly on facts related to the topic

➞

reflect

With a partner, compare and contrast the information given in the texts. Discuss which text did a better job of presenting the information and explain why.

CRITICAL LITERACY

One way to help students critically evaluate a text is to compare and contrast the author’s viewpoint with their own. For example, ask students whether it’s a good idea for humans to travel to moons and other planets. Then have volunteers explain whether their viewpoint is similar to or different from each author’s perspective.

Compare and contrast how different genres approach similar topics

➤ show me

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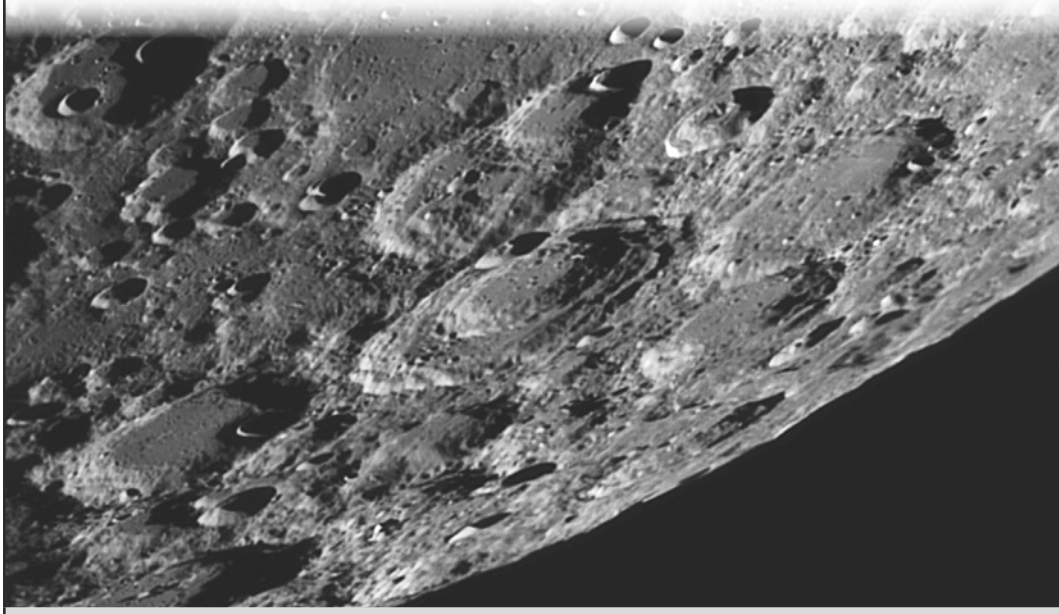
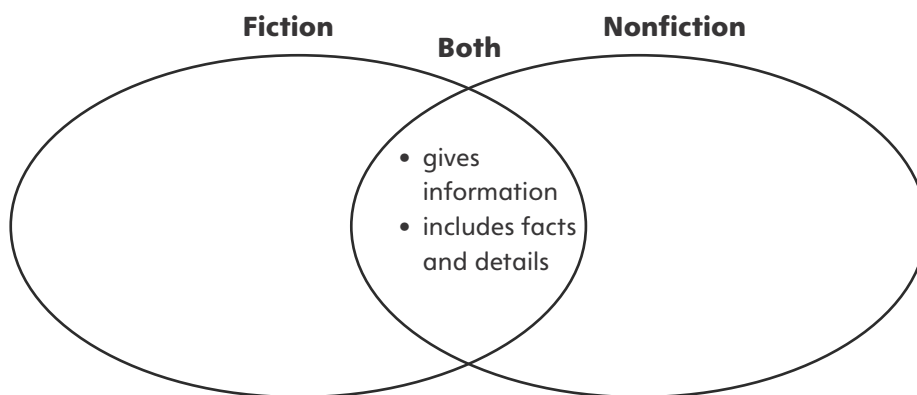
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➤ **check for understanding** How is the topic of this story similar to the nonfiction article you just read?

➤ check for understanding

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