

Compare and contrast how two authors present evidence on the same topic

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Language Objectives

- Identify facts and evidence that support a claim.
- Explain how the author connects ideas.
- Determine which meaning of a multiple-meaning word the author intended.
- Compare two texts on the same topic.

Building Literacy

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

- making, confirming, and correcting predictions.
- identifying information that should be clarified or further explored.
- evaluating how well authors support their claims with evidence.
- developing a position on the topic that agrees or disagrees with the author's point of view.

Focus on Language

Display the following multiple-meaning words that students will encounter in these texts. Have students use a three-column chart to list the words and identify two possible meanings for each. (Spanish cognates are in parentheses.)

- wind
- crops
- waste
- scraps
- convert (convertir)
- cells (células)



ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Some English learners will struggle to identify the syllables in multisyllabic words. Speakers of monosyllabic languages such as Cantonese, Hmong, Khmer, Korean, and Vietnamese may pronounce a two-syllable word as two separate words. Review how to pronounce syllables by clapping or tapping one time for each syllable as you slowly pronounce the word. Have students repeat the word and action with you several times. Speed up the pronunciation each time to emphasize that the syllables are part of one word.



show me

In this lesson, students will compare and contrast informational texts about ways to protect the environment in order to evaluate how authors present different evidence on the same topic.

Say: Today, you are going to compare and contrast evidence from two texts on the same topic. **Evidence** includes the facts, examples, and data an author uses to support a **claim**, or a statement of his or her viewpoint on the topic of the text. Strong evidence can help the author persuade readers to agree with his or her claims.

Have students turn and talk to a partner about how they can determine whether an author's evidence is supportive and trustworthy (checking facts in another source, making sure the claim follows logically from the details provided, and so on). Ask for volunteers to share their ideas with the group.



guide me

Use the activity in **guide me** to help students practice identifying evidence that supports a claim. Read aloud the directions. Then, have a student volunteer read aloud the claim and say something to the class about which kinds of evidence could support the claim. Remind students that strong evidence shows why the author's claim is valid, or reasonable.

Finally, have student pairs read each piece of evidence and circle the sentence that best supports the claim. (In 2015, fossil fuels made up the lowest U.S. fossil fuel share of energy in history.)

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show me
What are some ways to present facts and evidence?


guide me

example Read the claim below. Then circle the evidence an author would most likely use to support the claim.

CLAIM: Fossil fuels are slowly being replaced with alternative energy sources.

In 2015, fossil fuels made up the lowest U.S. fossil fuel share of energy in history.

Petroleum, natural gas, and coal are the three most popular fossil fuels in the United States.



COMPARING TEXTS 73

VISUAL LITERACY

To examine how graphic features can reinforce the words of a text, have students work in small groups to identify a photograph or illustration that would support the evidence they selected. Then ask them to discuss how adding this graphic feature would help readers better understand the author's claim.



work time

Introduce Vocabulary Write the following vocabulary words on the board: **wind, crops, waste, scraps**. Then, have students name real-world examples for each of the vocabulary words. For instance, students may list types of weather that involve high winds and kinds of food scraps used in composting.

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

Have partners make predictions about “Greener Living” based on the title of the text and a quick scan for key words. Then have student pairs take turns reading the text aloud. After each student reads two paragraphs, have him or her pause to confirm or revise predictions and make predictions about the next section. Have partners continue this process until they finish reading.

Analyze Author’s Craft and Style: Cause and Effect

Discuss that authors of informational texts may explain scientific ideas in terms of cause and effect. An **effect** is something that happens and a **cause** is the reason why it happened.

Have a student volunteer read paragraph 2 aloud. Point out that the author describes “Switching to solar power” and “Making sure that window are tightly sealed” as causes. Then ask volunteers to identify the effects (“lower carbon dioxide emissions”; “prevent heat from escaping”).

Prompt partners to read through the rest of the text and find other cause-and-effect relationships. Have students identify signal words that connect ideas and explain why the author likely presented the ideas in this way.

check for understanding by having students complete the sentence frame about the author’s argument. (The argument that the author makes is that a greener world is possible to achieve by making small changes in our own homes.)

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work time

Greener Living by Kathy Furgang

- 1 Researchers are developing renewable forms of energy, such as solar energy, wind power, and biomass, or fuel developed from material such as crops. Renewable energy sources will reduce our need for harmful fossil fuels. But instead of simply waiting for the world’s energy use to change, people can also do many things to live a more environmentally friendly life.
- 2 When you look around your home, for example, you may be able to find places where you can cut down on waste or pollutants. Switching to solar power, or power from the sun, can help lower carbon dioxide emissions. Making sure that windows are tightly sealed can prevent heat from escaping through tiny gaps.
- 3 Conserving water is also recommended. Although water is a renewable resource, it is often wasted. For example, a dripping faucet can waste more than a thousand gallons of water per year. Even turning off the tap while you’re brushing your teeth can save hundreds of gallons of water per year.
- 4 Composting is another way to help the environment and save resources. When composting, food scraps are mixed with soil, leaves, and water instead of being thrown away. As the food decomposes, it creates nutrients that can later be added to the soil to grow more food. Composting food scraps also means less waste ends up in landfills.
- 5 In addition, many cleaning products we use every day in our homes are made with chemicals that are hazardous to the environment and human health, but homemade remedies and cleaners can easily be made. For example, baking soda can be used to get rid of odors and to clean drains, toilet bowls, ovens, and even laundry. Vinegar is also a useful substance, which can be used to clean surfaces, get rid of soap scum, and remove wallpaper.
- 6 If we want a greener world, we must start with changes in our own homes. It requires some effort, but saving the planet is worth it.

➔ **check for understanding** The argument that the author makes is that a greener world _____.

74 COMPARING TEXTS

CRITICAL LITERACY

One way to help students critically evaluate a text is to compare and contrast the author’s viewpoint with their own. Guide students’ thinking with the following questions:

- Do you agree with the author’s statement that “people can do many things to live a more environmentally friendly life”?
- Can we really help the environment through small, individual actions, or would it be more effective for governments and large corporations to reduce their impact on the environment?
- Are the author’s suggestions practical for everyone? For example, could someone who lives in a city apartment building easily create a compost pile to reduce their landfill waste?



work time

Introduce Vocabulary Write the following vocabulary words on the board: **convert**, **cells**, **wind**. Point out the Spanish cognates for *convert* and *cells*. Then, have students use each word in a sentence to demonstrate their understanding of its meaning as used in the text.

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

Have student pairs take turns reading “Green Power” aloud. After each student reads two paragraphs, have him or her complete a sticky 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 connection to “Greener Living”

Analyze Author’s Craft and Style: Introduction Have a student volunteer read aloud paragraph 1. Point out that the first sentence provides a statistic that readers may find surprising, and ask volunteers why the author likely began the text this way (to get readers’ attention).

Discuss that authors carefully construct their introductions to get readers thinking about the topic of the text, help them connect the topic to what they already know, and encourage them to read on. Authors of informational texts often present the **main idea** in the introduction, so readers know what they can expect to read about.

Have partners review the rest of the paragraph to identify the main idea. (People are developing “green power” to prevent fossil fuel damage.) Then ask them to discuss how the introduction helps them anticipate what kinds of information the author is likely to include in the rest of the text.

check for understanding by having students identify the purpose of the PV description in paragraphs 2 and 3. (The purpose of the description is to provide evidence of a type of green power.)

Compare and contrast how two authors present evidence on the same topic **19**

work time

Green Power
 by Marika Jeffery

1 In the United States today, about 80% of our energy is produced from fossil fuels. Heavy use of fossil fuels damages Earth. However, many people and companies are developing renewable energy options, or “green power.”

2 For example, scientists have found ways to convert the sun’s energy into electricity. This process is known as photovoltaics, or PV for short. Chances are you’ve seen photovoltaics in action already on a solar-powered calculator. The small PV cells on the calculator collect light and convert it into electricity to run it.

3 People can also use PV cells to generate electricity for homes and businesses. These PV cells are often attached to roofs or placed in sunny areas. Using these cells does not pollute the environment or create any carbon emissions, making photovoltaics a cleaner, greener way to produce electricity. Solar panels also use heat from the sun to warm up water, which can then be stored in an insulated tank until it is needed for bathing, dishwashing, or laundry.

4 Wind power is another form of renewable energy that doesn’t pollute the air or lead to negative environmental consequences. An area of land with many wind turbines working all at once is called a wind farm. Some wind farms produce enough electricity to power several city buildings.

5 A third form of renewable energy is biomass, which is any plant or animal material that can be used for energy, such as wood. Scientists are searching for biomass products that will not harm Earth. Already, they have developed transportation fuels made from corn, sugar, vegetable oils, and animal fats. The search is still on for biomass options that are easier to make, safer for the environment, and low on carbon emissions.

6 As pollution and climate change threaten our planet, we can turn to Earth’s endless supply of renewable energy. As concerned citizens, all of us can make smarter, earth-friendly decisions and energy choices.

➤ **check for understanding** What is the purpose of the description of PV in paragraphs 2 and 3?

COMPARING TEXTS 75

VISUAL LITERACY

Graphic organizers can help students make sense of claims and supporting evidence in informational texts. Have students complete a web to show the relationship between the author’s claim in “Green Power” and the examples she provides. Ask volunteers to share their webs, and record their ideas in a class web on the board.

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 author's word choice contributes to purpose, use a Think Aloud to model how a critical thinker would approach the text.

Think Aloud In paragraph 6 of "Greener Living," the author uses the phrase "threaten our planet" to describe pollution and climate change as negative and "endless supply of renewable energy" to describe a proposed solution in a positive, hopeful way. The phrases "concerned citizens" and "smarter, earth-friendly decisions" suggest that readers have a responsibility to protect the environment. This word choice indicates that the author's purpose is to persuade readers to change the kinds of energy they use from fossil fuels to more sustainable resources.

Evidence Before students reread the text for each kind of evidence, review the following definitions:

- A **fact** is a piece of information that can be proved to be true. It can be checked using other sources.
- An **example** is an instance or case that shows why an idea is true.
- An **opinion** is a statement of personal belief. It cannot be proved true or false.

reflect

Have students work in pairs to compare and contrast how the authors incorporate evidence into their arguments and evaluate whether they are successful. Encourage students to use the following content area terms in their discussions: **claim, position, viewpoint, fact, example, opinion, structure, purpose, support, word choice.**

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check for understanding

- 1 What prior knowledge does the reader need to have when reading "Greener Living"? Explain your answer.
Possible response: The reader needs to know what fossil fuels are and how they are harmful.
- 2 What does "Green Power" suggest about modern society through its discussion of renewable energy? Why do you think so?
Possible response: It suggests that we are able to develop new innovations to solve energy problems, such as PV cells to collect solar energy.
- 3 How does the word choice in paragraph 6 of "Greener Living" contribute to the author's purpose?
Possible response: It sets a tone of responsibility on the readers' part to make these changes and not just view them as options.
- 4 How does the author of "Greener Living" distinguish her position from the author of "Green Power"? Give one example from the text.
Possible response: The author of "Greener Living" focuses on real-world examples of things a reader can do to help the environment.
- 5 Use the T-chart below to cite three kinds of evidence the author of "Green Power" uses to support her claim.

Evidence	Example
Fact	In the United States today, about 80% of our energy is produced from fossil fuels.
Example	Scientists have developed transportation fuels made from corn, sugar, vegetable oils, and animal fats.
Opinion	Chances are you've seen photovoltaics in action already on a solar-powered calculator.

reflect

With a partner, compare and contrast how both authors incorporate evidence in their arguments. Are they successful?

76 COMPARING TEXTS

CRITICAL LITERACY

To encourage inquiry and service, have students work in small groups to further research the strategies for green living presented in these texts. Then, ask them to write letters to school leaders persuading them to "go green." For example, students could recommend starting a compost pile on the school grounds to reduce landfill trash or installing solar panels on the roof to reduce the school's reliance on fossil fuels.

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➤ show me

What are some ways to present facts and evidence?

➤ guide me

example

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Fact	
Example	
Opinion	

➞ reflect
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