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Compare and contrast conflicting information from two texts on the same topic

Language Objectives

- Identify the author's purpose.
- Evaluate how the author supports his or her claim.
- Analyze how the author's view affects the presentation of information.
- Compare and contrast information from 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.
- interpreting the author's message.
- analyzing an author's choices related to language, reasons, and evidence.
- evaluating two texts to identify conflicting information.

Focus on Language

Display the following verbs that students will encounter in these texts. Then, have students make a T-chart to write the verb and the noun that can be formed from it. For example, *demonstrate* / *demonstration*. (Spanish cognates are in parentheses.)

- demonstrate (demostrar)
- speculate (especular)
- encourage
- consume (consumir)
- dominate (dominar)
- consult (consultar)



ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Become familiar with common cognates in English and students' primary languages. Cognates are words that share origins and appear in similar forms in different languages. For example, the English word *school* is of Greek origin and it is similar to the Spanish *escuela*. For speakers of languages that share word origins with English, the study of cognates can be a powerful vocabulary-building tool.

➤ show me

In this lesson, students will read two texts that provide different views about video games. Then, they will compare and contrast the information each author presents.

Say: Today, you are going to read two texts about video games. When you read texts on the same topic, some information may be the same, and some information may be very different. Each author presents facts and opinions that fit his or her purpose and main idea or claim. You can compare and contrast the information, evaluate how each author presents it, and determine which ideas are best supported by evidence.

Have partners turn and talk about different claims people might make about video games. Ask them to discuss facts and opinions people might use to support those claims. Call on volunteers to share their ideas with the class.

➤ guide me

Use the claims in guide me to help students evaluate different information and how they might use it to support their views. Read aloud the directions. Point out that students are looking for the claim they could use to justify, or defend, playing video games.

Ask a volunteer to read aloud Claim 1 and say whether the claim presents a positive or negative view of video games. Then, have another volunteer read aloud Claim 2 and say whether the claim presents a positive or negative view of video games.

Finally, have partners turn and talk about which claim they could use to justify playing a video game and why. Have them underline the claim.

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➤ show me
How do we interpret information when authors disagree?


➤ guide me

example

Read the claims below. Underline the claim you would use to justify playing a video game.

Claim 1: Excessive screen time, such as playing video games, contributes to eye strain.

Claim 2: Studies have shown that playing video games can significantly improve hand-eye coordination.



COMPARING TEXTS 93

VISUAL LITERACY

Use the photo on page 93 to help students develop an understanding of how text and graphic features can work together. Have students discuss the details in the photo and consider how the author of each claim could use the picture to support his or her view. Tell students to draw a box around a word or phrase in each claim and connect it to a detail in the photo. Ask volunteers to share their connections with the group.



work time

Introduce Vocabulary Write the following vocabulary words on the board: **demonstrate**, **speculate**, **encourage**. Point out the Spanish cognates for *demonstrate* and *speculate*. Then, have students identify synonyms for each word.

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

Have partners make predictions about “The Hidden Benefits of Video Games” 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: Reasons and Evidence

Discuss with students that the author’s purpose in the text is to convince readers that there are benefits to playing video games. Review that in a persuasive text, an author makes a **claim** and supports it with **reasons** and **evidence**.

Reiterate the author’s claim that playing video games has benefits. Then, ask a volunteer to read aloud paragraph 4. Point out the reason that video games “can be beneficial to player’s emotional and general sense of well-being.” Discuss that the next sentences then provide evidence. (Games that have bright colors and are easy to play can help players calm down and improve their mood. Researchers think such games help people deal with stress.)

Then, have partners read paragraph 5 and identify the reason and evidence the author presents. (Video games can help with social skills. Many games have online communities and players can talk and help each other achieve goals in the game.)

check for understanding by having students complete the sentence about online gaming. (Possible response: Online gaming can improve a person’s mood and help players learn to work in groups.)

work time

The Hidden Benefits of Video Games

by Peter Mummert

- Welcome to the world of video games! Most young people in the United States play video games, as do many adults. However, many people are also concerned that video games are potentially harmful to young people.
- Scientists have studied the effects of video gaming on young people for many years, and a number of studies show that playing video games may actually confer some benefits.
- Some parents, for example, worry that kids who play violent video games may act out violently in real life, but many studies have demonstrated that violent content in video games does not appear to cause people to behave violently. In fact, researchers have discovered that some violent games help players improve their overall grades because the games train players to concentrate and solve problems quickly.
- Other studies also demonstrate that video games can be beneficial to a player’s emotional and general sense of well-being. Games that encourage this benefit tend to be brightly colored and easy to play, resulting in a calming effect that improves a player’s mood. Researchers speculate that engaging in these games can help relieve stress.
- In addition, video games may help with social skills. Many games have online communities that include players from all over the world. These communities encourage players to talk with each other and, on occasion, assist each other in accomplishing challenging tasks. This experience can help young people learn how to work in groups.
- Despite these potential benefits, it’s important to monitor your own gaming. If a game feels too violent, don’t play it. Be sure to take plenty of breaks from gaming, and don’t let gaming take you away from other activities you enjoy, such as playing sports with friends. Make time to start an art project or read a book, because video games are just one way to have fun!

check for understanding Online gaming can improve _____ and help players learn to _____.

CRITICAL LITERACY

Students become good critical thinkers when they are able to look beyond the words on a page to make connections and examine the author’s possible bias.

Have students practice thinking critically by reflecting on these questions:

- Do you think the author likes to play video games? How might his possible enjoyment of video games affect his presentation of information?
- What opposing views does the author include in the text? How does he refute, or disprove, them?
- Do you think the author is effective in presenting his argument? Why or why not?



work time

Introduce Vocabulary Write the following vocabulary words on the board: **consume, dominate, consult.** Point out the Spanish cognates for each word. Then, have students draw a picture to show the meaning of each word.

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

Have student pairs take turns reading “Video Games: The Limits of Fun” 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
- an idea that conflicts with information in “The Hidden Benefits of Video Games”
- strong language used to appeal to readers’ emotions

Analyze Author’s Craft and Style: Loaded Words Have a student volunteer read the introduction aloud, then point out the author’s claim that playing video games can lead to many problems. Discuss that the author presents a negative view of video games, so to support this view, he uses **loaded words** to emphasize negative ideas about the games.

Ask a volunteer to read paragraph 2. Emphasize negative phrases, such as “damage a player’s eyesight,” “hand and thumb strain,” and “unhealthy snack foods.” Discuss how these phrases affect a reader’s sense of fear that playing video games could cause them physical problems.

Then, have partners review paragraphs 3 and 4 and identify other negative words and phrases (“threaten to dominate,” “ignore homework,” “become violent,” “fights in real life”). Guide them to discuss how the language might affect readers’ emotions and change their views about video games. Ask volunteers to share their ideas with the class.

check for understanding by having students compare the recommendations in both texts. (Both authors recommend that players set limits on the amount of time they spend playing video games, so players can also take time to enjoy physical activities.)

Compare and contrast conflicting information from two texts on the same topic **24**

work time

Video Games: The Limits of Fun
by Gerold Porter

1 Video games have been a popular form of entertainment with kids and adults since the early 1980s. Becoming lost in an action-packed video game adventure can be fun. However, many adults worry about the effects of video games on the physical and mental well-being of young people. Researchers who have studied these concerns have found that overindulgence in playing video games can lead to a number of problems.

2 For example, studies have shown that excessive game play can result in physical problems. Looking at a screen for hours can damage a player’s eyesight and playing for too long can result in hand and thumb strain. Similarly, sitting in the same position for long periods can cause backaches. In addition, some players have a tendency to consume large amounts of unhealthy snack foods as they play.

3 Video games threaten to dominate kids’ free time because some kids play games for hours without stopping, causing them to ignore homework and spend less time with friends and family.

4 Many parents also worry about the violence in some video games, and a few studies have demonstrated that kids who play violent games may become violent themselves. They may get into fights in real life and show less concern for others. As a result, some adults want to place restrictions on who has access to these games. For example, many adults want rules about how old you have to be to play or purchase such games, while others want a tax placed on violent games.

5 Studies suggest that limiting playing time or access to video games can help with these issues. Parents can consult a game’s rating to see the suggested age range for its intended audience to determine if it is too violent for their child. Setting specific time limits on gaming will also encourage kids to spend time engaging in more physically oriented activities. Simple limits can keep video games fun without letting them become a health problem.

check for understanding What recommendation is made by both authors?

VISUAL LITERACY

To examine how graphic features can reinforce the words and tone of a text, have students work in small groups to identify ideas in the text the author could support with illustrations, photographs, charts, or graphs. Ask students to discuss how adding these graphic features would affect readers’ emotions and add to the persuasiveness of the author’s argument.

➔

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 contrast arguments, use a Think Aloud to model how a critical thinker would approach the texts.

Think Aloud I need to find an argument in “Video Games: The Limits of Fun” that is not included in “The Hidden Benefits of Video Games.” I will look back at each text and compare and contrast the information to find what is different. Both texts address ideas related to violent video games, how much time people spend playing games, and how video games affect players’ well-being. The one idea “Video Games: The Limits of Fun” includes that the other text does not is how video games can negatively affect players’ bodies and physical health.

Conflicting Information Students who struggle in completing the T-chart will benefit from breaking down the task into manageable steps. First, have students read each listed idea from “The Hidden Benefits of Video Games” and circle key words or phrases. Then, prompt students to look for related words and phrases in “Video Games: The Limits of Fun” and underline those details. Students should write one detail next to each listed detail.

Emphasize that the top details should include conflicting information, or a point of contrast, while the bottom details should reflect a comparison, or a similarity.

➔

reflect

Have partners discuss the texts and whether the conflicting information in them is based on fact or misinterpretation. Encourage them to consider how each author’s claim affects the conflicting information. Remind students to support their opinions with text evidence.

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➔ check for understanding

1 Which author’s argument best relates to your own gaming experiences? Explain your answer.
Possible response: I relate to Peter Mummert’s social benefit of online games. I live in New York but play with my cousin in Texas every weekend.

2 What surprised you most in the passage “The Hidden Benefits of Video Games”? Why were you surprised?
Possible response: I was surprised to read that violent games have benefits. I have only heard that violent games lead to violent activity.

3 How would you describe the overall text structure of “Video Games: The Limits of Fun”? How does this structure suit the author’s purpose?
Possible response: The author uses a cause-and-effect structure to show the negative effects of video game playing which is very effective.

4 Which argument does the author of “Video Games: The Limits of Fun” make that is not addressed in “The Hidden Benefits of Video Games”?
Possible response: The author details how video games negatively affect physical health in terms of eye and hand strain and backaches.

5 Complete the T-chart to compare and contrast conflicting information. *Possible responses:*

The Hidden Benefits of Video Games	Video Games: The Limits of Fun
Violent games train players to become quick problem solvers.	<i>Violent games may cause players to engage in fights in real life.</i>
Monitor your gaming so it doesn’t take time away for other activities, such as sports with friends.	<i>Set time limits on gaming to encourage kids to spend time engaging in more physical activities.</i>

➔ reflect

With a partner, discuss whether the conflicting information is based on fact or is based on misinterpretation.

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CRITICAL LITERACY

One way to help students critically analyze a text is to compare and contrast the author’s viewpoint with their own. For example, ask students to evaluate their own opinions about video games and whether they think gaming has more positive or negative effects on children and teens. Encourage them to consider whether either author persuaded them to change any of their views.

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➤ show me

How do we interpret information when authors disagree?

➤ guide me

example

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work time

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by Peter Mummert

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- 5 In addition, video games may help with social skills. Many games have online communities that include players from all over the world. These communities encourage players to talk with each other and, on occasion, assist each other in accomplishing challenging tasks. This experience can help young people learn how to work in groups.
- 6 Despite these potential benefits, it's important to monitor your own gaming. If a game feels too violent, don't play it. Be sure to take plenty of breaks from gaming, and don't let gaming take you away from other activities you enjoy, such as playing sports with friends. Make time to start an art project or read a book, because video games are just one way to have fun!

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check for understanding Online gaming can improve _____ and help players learn to _____.

➤ **work time**

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➤ **check for understanding** What recommendation is made by both authors?

➤ check for understanding

- 1 Which author's argument best relates to your own gaming experiences?
Explain your answer.
- 2 What surprised you most in the passage "The Hidden Benefits of Video Games"? Why were you surprised?
- 3 How would you describe the overall text structure of "Video Games: The Limits of Fun"? How does this structure suit the author's purpose?
- 4 Which argument does the author of "Video Games: The Limits of Fun" make that is not addressed in "The Hidden Benefits of Video Games"?
- 5 Complete the T-chart to compare and contrast conflicting information.

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Violent games train players to become quick problem solvers.	
Monitor your gaming so it doesn't take time away for other activities, such as sports with friends.	

➤ reflect

With a partner, discuss whether the conflicting information is based on fact or is based on misinterpretation.