

Bright Horizons Academy

Grade 5: Language Arts

Comparing and Contrasting Themes in Texts

Objective:

Students will learn to *identify* themes in different texts and *compare* or *contrast* these themes to understand similarities and differences in the messages authors convey.

Core Content:

A **theme** is the main message or idea an author wants to share.

When **comparing** themes, you look for *similarities* between the themes of the two texts. Are they both teaching a similar lesson?

When **contrasting** themes, you identify how the themes are *different*. Do the authors focus on different lessons or ideas?

Understanding how themes relate to each other can help you better appreciate different stories and their lessons.

Examples:

1. Example 1:

- Texts: Two stories with the theme “friendship is valuable.”

- Compare: Both stories highlight the importance of having good friends, but they may show this through different situations or characters.

2. Example 2:

- Texts: One story with the theme “hard work leads to success” and another with “luck can influence your life.”
- Contrast: One story emphasizes effort and determination, while the other highlights the role of chance in achieving success.

3. Example 3:

- Texts: Two poems, one with “respecting nature is important” and the other with “helping others is valuable.”
- Compare: These themes differ because one focuses on nature, while the other emphasizes community and kindness.

Practice Questions:

Try these questions to practice comparing themes in different texts. Think about what each theme teaches and how they are similar or different:

1. If one story’s theme is “bravery can come in many forms” and another’s theme is “kindness changes the world,” how would you compare these themes?
2. If two texts both have the theme “never give up,” what do they share in common?
3. How would you contrast a story with the theme “teamwork leads to success” against one with the theme “independence makes you strong”?

4. If one poem's theme is "hope overcomes sadness" and another's is "nature inspires hope," can you find something similar?
5. Why is it important to compare and contrast themes in different texts?

Answers to Practice Questions:

1. Comparison: The themes are different because one focuses on courage ("bravery") and the other on kindness.
2. Comparison: Both emphasize the importance of persistence by teaching "never give up."
3. Contrast: One values working together ("teamwork"), while the other values relying on yourself ("independence").
4. Similarity: Both themes mention "hope" as important, showing a connection between the two ideas.
5. Why it's important: Comparing and contrasting themes helps you understand different lessons and ideas in literature, which deepens your understanding of what authors want to communicate.