

Paired Texts Powerpoint Companion

Prompt #1 (Video Games)

Read the following texts. Compare and contrast the two texts. Plan an explanatory essay that tells how the two texts are alike, and how they are different. Then, write an essay using details from the text to support your statements.

to tell how
2 or more
things are

← **compare and contrast** →

to tell how
2 or more
things are

Do your parents set limits on the amount of time you are allowed to play video games? The majority of doctors agree that it is wise for parents to do so. Research shows that children who spend more than 10 hours a week sitting in front of an electronic screen do not perform as well in school as their classmates who spend less time in front of a screen. In addition, children who spend many hours sitting and playing video games are not exercising, which can lead to long-term health problems. Finally, studies indicate that children who play video games with violent plots are more likely to show aggressive behaviors. Clearly, parents who set video game time limits are making a wise decision that will benefit their children as they grow.

Carter's dad looked at his watch. "Your time is up, Carter. Turn off the video game."

"Aw, Dad! Can't I have just a couple more minutes to finish my game?" Carter pleaded.

"I know *you*, and a couple more minutes will turn into at least half an hour. No, turn it off now," Dad ordered.

"This isn't fair," Carter grumbled. "Alex's parents don't set limits on the time *he* gets to play video games."

"Maybe Alex's parents don't realize how harmful it can be for kids your age to play hours and hours of video games. C'mon. Let's go outside- after sitting at my desk all day, I could use some exercise, too. Grab the basketball and we'll play some 1-on-1."

Draw a Venn diagram here:

Prompt #1 (Video Games): Example Essays

Imagine you were these students' teacher. Would you be pleased with the following essays? Write some comments below.

Passage A and Passage B were a lot alike, but they also had some major differences. The most obvious similarity was that the authors of both texts shared the same perspective: parents should set limits on the time their children should be allowed to play video games.

There were major differences between the two passages, however. First, Passage A was a persuasive essay, filled with reasons to support the author's opinions. In contrast, Passage B was a narrative text, consisting of a conversation between a father and his son. Another difference was the evidence provided. In Passage A, the author referred to scientific research to support his or her argument. In Passage B, however, the author made a general statement about video games being harmful for kids, but did not refer to any specific research. Clearly, these two passages were alike in some ways, but different in other ways.

Regina's Essay

Passage A and Passage B were a lot alike. The authors of both passages had the same perspective about video games: that parents should limit the amount of time their children play video games.

I have a different opinion that contrasts with their belief. First, I have video games that require me to get up and moving. Therefore, I get exercise when I play some video games. Also, In Passage A, the author states that children who play violent video games are more aggressive. I play a lot of video games, and I have never found this to be true. Finally, Passage A mentions that kids who play video games don't do as well in school, but my grades are fine. My parents make me finish my homework before I play any games. I believe that as long as homework is done, kids should be allowed to play as many video games as they want. In conclusion, I disagree with these authors. Parents do not need to set time limits on video game usage.

Ruben's Essay

There were significant differences between Passage A and Passage B. First, Passage A was a persuasive essay. It contained reasons and examples to support the author's opinions. In contrast, Passage B was a narrative text. The author created characters and included dialogue. Secondly, the evidence provided in the two passages was different. In Passage A, the author referred to scientific research to support his argument. In Passage B, however, the author made a general statement about video games being harmful for kids, but no specific research was mentioned. Finally, the authors' purposes were different. Passage A was mainly written to persuade parents to limit video game usage, while Passage B was mainly written to entertain readers. Clearly, these two passages were different in several ways.

Olivia's Essay

Prompt #2 (First Practice)

After reading the following two passages, compare and contrast them. Plan an explanatory essay that tells how the two texts are alike, and how they are different. Then, write an essay using details from the text to support your statements. Be sure to include statements about the characters, themes, and settings of each text.

"Thanks for the ride!" Brianna called to Mrs. Carter as they were pulling out of the driveway. She entered her house and dropped her softball bag on the floor.

Dad entered the kitchen and greeted her. "Hey, how was your first softball practice?"

"It was okay, but Coach told us some worrisome news," Brianna replied.

"Oh yeah? What did he tell you?" Dad asked.

"He just found out that he's being transferred to another town for his job, so he can't coach us this year," Brianna said.

"That's too bad," Dad commented.

"It gets worse. Since Emma is his daughter, we're losing her, too! We're losing our coach *and* our star pitcher before the season even begins," explained Brianna.

"Is Mr. Nelson going to step up and be the new head coach?" Dad asked.

"Yep. And I decided that I'm going to try pitching this year," announced Brianna.

Dad looked shocked. "Really? I didn't think you'd ever give up first base! That's your favorite!"

"I need to do what's best for my team, and I think we really need a dependable pitcher more than anything else. It's easier to replace a first baseman than a pitcher," said Brianna. "Will you practice pitching with me, Dad? I'm going to need a lot of practice in order to be ready for the first game."

"Sure, I will," Dad replied. "I'm proud of you for stepping outside your comfort zone and taking on this new role!"

A month later, Brianna left the dugout and gave her dad a high-five after the first game.

"Awesome pitching, Bri! You struck out five batters tonight!" exclaimed Dad.

"I couldn't have done it without you spending all those hours practicing with me. Thanks, Dad!"

As soon as Brady walked into the house and slammed the door, Mom could tell something was wrong. He dropped his duffel bag on the floor, and opened the cupboard door, looking for something to eat.

"How was your first day of football practice?" Mom cautiously asked.

"I'm quitting," Brady abruptly growled.

"Why? What happened?" asked Mom. "I thought you were looking forward to football this year."

"There's a new kid, and he plays quarterback, too. I can already tell that the coaches love him, and he's going to get all of the playing time. I'm not going to waste my time going to practice just to get to sit on the bench," replied Brady, fuming.

"Now, Brady, it was the *first* day of practice. You can't jump to conclusions and assume you know how the entire season is going to turn out based on one practice," said Mom.

"Don't bother trying to change my mind, Mom. I've made my decision," snarled Brady. He turned and walked into his bedroom and shut the door.

A month later, Brady was walking through the hallway at school. His friends were all wearing their football jerseys because they had a game that afternoon following school. He would never admit it to his mom, but he was regretting his decision to quit football. More than anything, he missed hanging out with his friends and being part of the team.

His friend Tony closed his locker and walked across the hall to where Brady was gathering his books.

"Brady, I sure wish you were still on the team. Our offensive line could use your help."

"Yeah, well, it's too late now," he replied, slamming his locker shut.

Plan and write your response.

Prompt #2 (First Practice): Example Essays

Imagine you were these students' teacher. Would you be pleased with the following essays? Write some comments below.

Passage A and Passage B are alike in some ways, but different in other ways. Both narratives consist mainly of conversations that take place at home between a child and a parent following the child's first day of an athletic practice.

The conversations, however, are very different. Brianna, the main character in Passage A, tells her dad that her softball coach and the star pitcher have to leave the team due to a job transfer. Brianna exhibits a positive attitude in spite of the bad news. She puts the needs of her team before her own, and decides that she is going to learn to pitch so that she can take Emma's place. Brady, the main character in Passage B, also has bad news to share. He tells his mom that a new quarterback has joined the football team, and he has decided to quit the team rather than fight for his position. Brady exhibits a negative attitude when he assumes the worst will happen. In contrast to Brianna, who selflessly thinks of the needs of her team, Brady displays a selfish attitude. He is only worried about himself.

Both passages shared the same theme: perseverance. However, the authors of the passages approach the theme from opposite directions. In the face of adversity, Brianna decides to work harder, and she is rewarded in the end. Brady, on the other hand, immediately decides to give up when things get tough, and ends up regretting his decision.

April's Essay

These two passages share many similarities. First of all, they both take place after the first day of practice. Both of the passages include conversations between a parent and a child. The children in both passages tell their parents about some bad news they learned while at practice.

These two passages are different in several other ways. Brianna, the main character in Passage A, plays softball, while Brady, the main character in Passage B, plays football. Brianna has a positive attitude, in spite of the bad news she received at practice. Brady, on the other hand, has a negative attitude throughout his passage. The bad news makes Brianna decide to work harder and practice for many extra hours. In contrast, the bad news Brady receives makes him decide to give up. Brianna thinks of her team, but Brady thinks only of himself.

Clearly, these two passages share certain similarities, like the similar settings. The characters in each passage are very different, though.

Laken's Essay

Prompt #3 (Harriet Tubman)

Harriet Tubman believed that liberty and freedom were basic human rights. After reading the following texts, write an explanatory essay that tells how her words and actions supported that belief. Plan and write an essay using details from the text to support your statements.

Two Famous Quotes by Harriet Tubman

"I had reasoned this out in my mind, there was one of two things I had a right to, liberty or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other."

"I was the conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most conductors can't say; I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger."

Harriet Tubman was born into slavery in Maryland around 1820. Growing up, she dreamt of freedom. When she was 29 years old, she learned that she was going to be sold to another master. Unwilling to accept that fate, she decided to risk her life by running away. If she could reach Pennsylvania, she knew that she would no longer be a piece of property that could be owned and sold.

One night, Harriet snuck away from the plantation and began walking North. She recalled a conversation several months earlier with a white woman. The woman had said she wished she could do something to help Harriet. This conversation made Harriet wonder if the woman was one of the people who secretly helped slaves escape to freedom. When she arrived at the woman's house, the woman hid Harriet. From there, she was led from one house to another, until she reached Pennsylvania, where slavery was against the law.

Harriet was not content with her own freedom, though. She risked her life by becoming a conductor on the Underground Railroad. There was no actual railroad, but the people involved in the secret organization that moved escaped slaves toward freedom used railroad terms. Houses where slaves were hidden were called stations, and the house owners were called station masters. The guides, like Harriet Tubman, were called conductors, and the runaway slaves were called passengers.

Harriet Tubman traveled only during the winter months, when nights were longer, and she disguised herself by dressing in men's clothing. She was good at fooling slave catchers. Sometimes she ordered her passengers to wade in swamps or rivers in order to confuse the slave catchers' dogs who were following their scent. Other times, she ordered her passengers to march south. She correctly assumed that no slave catcher would believe that escaped slaves would travel in a southerly direction. She was such a good conductor that slave owners offered a \$40,000 reward for her capture. During her nineteen trips, she freed about three hundred slaves.

Prompt #3 (Harriet Tubman)

Introduction

Big Idea #1-

Big Idea #2-

Big Idea #3-

Conclusion

Harriet Tubman will always be seen as an American hero. She was a fearless leader who believed that liberty and freedom were basic rights that all humans should be allowed to experience. Harriet Tubman did many important things during her life that supported her belief in freedom for all.

First, Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery herself when she was 29 years old. She risked severe punishment when she ran away from her master, but she decided the risk was worth it.

After reaching freedom, Harriet realized that her own freedom was not enough to satisfy her. She became a conductor on the Underground Railroad, and risked her life over and over again in order to help others escape slavery. According to the passage, she made 19 trips and rescued about 300 people. Incredibly, she succeeded every single time.

Finally, we also know freedom was important to her because of the things she said. Harriet Tubman once said, "I had reasoned this out in my mind, there was one of two things I had a right to, liberty or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other." It is obvious that her own freedom and the freedom of others was so important to her that she was willing to risk death.

In conclusion, Harriet Tubman was clearly a person who greatly valued freedom. Her words and actions throughout her life supported her belief.

Prompt #4 (One-Room Schools)

After reading Passage A and Passage B, do you think you would have liked attending a one-room school in the 1800s? After stating your position, write an essay explaining your answer. Provide text evidence to support your reasoning.

Text A: One-Room Schools

American schools have changed a lot over the years. The one-room schools that dotted our country's landscape in the 1800s were operated in a way very different than today's schools.

The school consisted of one large room, with separate entrances for girls and boys. Likewise, girls sat on one side of the room, while boys sat on the opposite side. The youngest children sat in the front. A wood stove attempted to heat the classroom, but it was usually pretty cold in the school on winter days.

One teacher taught all of the students, and there were as many as eight grade levels to teach during a day. Most teachers were men. Female teachers were not allowed to be married, so there were few of them. Teachers usually only had time to teach the three R's- reading, writing, and arithmetic- or "reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic."

There wasn't much money for books, paper, and supplies. In fact, since most of the settlers were Christians, the Bible was used frequently during school. Students had to memorize and recite Bible verses frequently. The McGuffey Readers were first published in 1836. This was a set of six readers that students used. They progressed through the readers at their own pace, as each volume increased in difficulty.

A typical school day began with the ringing of the teacher's bell. As children entered the school, they "made their manners" by curtsying or bowing to the teacher. Opening exercises included a roll call, Bible readings, and the Lord's Prayer. Reading and writing took place first, followed by math. Students brought lunch from home and ate it around noon. They also had a morning recess and an afternoon recess.

The teacher and the students had to take care of the school, because there was no janitor. The teacher assigned chores like starting the fire, sweeping the floors, cleaning the blackboards, fetching drinking water, and washing the windows. Sometimes, chores were assigned as punishment.

The one-room schools may be long gone, but they are an important aspect of American history. Several generations of Americans were educated inside these schoolhouses, and therefore helped to shape the America we know today.

Text B: Punishment

Joseph and his brother, Abel, were walking home from school. Joseph was in a bad mood because he had been punished by the schoolmaster yet again. It was the third time he had been punished that week.

"That punishment was much too severe," complained Joseph. "Making me sit on the girls' side of the room wearing a bonnet was humiliating."

"Did it work? Will it stop you from playing any pranks in the future?" asked Abel.

"No way. Pranks are the only thing that makes school interesting. You have to admit, hearing John yell when he sat down after finishing his recitations with Mr. Smith was the most exciting thing that all day. Plus, it was fun to watch him sit in the water, and then jump up with his wet pants.

"It might have been funny for you, but I don't think it was funny for John," Abel pointed out.

"John likes a good prank. Besides, his pants were nearly dry by the time school let out," Joseph said.

They walked in silence for a while, before Joseph spoke up again. "You know, sometimes I wish Mr. Mason was still our schoolmaster. His punishments weren't nearly as bad as Mr. Smith's."

Abel stared wide-eyed at his brother. "Are you *serious*? Mr. Mason made you go outside and find your own hickory switch, and then bring it back inside so he could strike you with it."

"Aw, it didn't hurt *that* bad... and that wasn't nearly as humiliating as wearing a dunce cap or a bonnet!" argued Joseph. "Remember when Nellie got 'the peg'?"

"Are you talking about the time that Mr. Mason made her stand on her tiptoes and then fastened her hair to a clip which was pegged into the wall? He made her stand on her tiptoes for about ten minutes, didn't he?"

"Yes, good old Mr. Mason," said Joseph fondly. "I'd take him over Mr. Smith any day."

Plan and write your response.

Prompt #4 (One-Room Schools): Example Essays

Imagine you were these students' teacher. Would you be pleased with the following essays? Write some comments below.

I would not like living during the 1800s and attending a one-room school. There are three main reasons why I feel this way.

First of all, attending school in the 1800s sounds boring. According to the text, students in the 1800s spent a lot of time memorizing and reciting Bible verses. I know I would fall asleep or get into trouble if I had to spend most of my day sitting at a desk memorizing verses.

The second reason I wouldn't want to attend a one-room school is because students in the 1800s had to do chores like cleaning windows and sweeping the floor. I don't like to do chores at home, so I know I wouldn't enjoy doing them at school.

Finally, I would not want to attend a one-room school in the 1800s because of the way teachers used to punish their students. According to the text, it was common for one-room school teachers in the 1800s to punish children by pegging their hair to a wall or hitting them with a hickory stick. Sometimes they even embarrassed students by forcing boys to wear bonnets or making students wear dunce caps.

All in all, attending a one-room school in the 1800s does not sound enjoyable to me. In fact, reading about these historic schools makes me appreciate the school I attend today!

Tristan's Essay

One-room schools in the 1800s were very different than our schools today. In some ways, I think I would enjoy attending a one-room school, but there are other things I would not have liked about these schools.

One thing I would have liked about attending a one-room school is that students of all ages gathered in the same classroom. I think I would have enjoyed listening to the older kids' lessons. Also, I would have enjoyed attending school with my older sister and younger brother.

One thing I would NOT have liked about attending a one-room school is the teacher's punishments when students misbehaved. According to the text, teachers used to punish students by hitting them with a stick. Even if I didn't receive this punishment myself, I would not like seeing other kids punished in this way.

Another reason why one-room schools don't sound enjoyable is because they would be cold most of the time. According to the text, the schools were quite cold in the winter because the wood stove couldn't heat the large room very well. Also, I know that they didn't have air conditioning in schools in the 1800s, so I bet there were days in the fall when it was quite hot inside the school.

All in all, there would have been both positive and negative aspects about attending a one-room school in the 1800s.

Monica's Essay

Prompt #5 (Cell Phones)

Cell phones are popular devices, and many people believe that the invention of the cell phone has improved their quality of life. Some people, on the other hand, believe that cell phones have made life more complicated for humans.

Write an essay for your teacher in which you take a position: do you agree or disagree that the invention of the cell phone has improved life on Earth? Use facts, definitions, quotations, and examples from the passages to write about the subject knowledgeably.

Text A: Cell Phone Sorrows

Cell phones have changed human behavior... and not always for the better. Since the invention of the cell phone, life has become more complicated. The invention of the cell phone has resulted in many new problems that didn't exist twenty years ago.

Even though they know that it's not a safe thing to do, many drivers use their cell phone while driving. They talk, text a friend, or look up information on their phone while operating their vehicle. Many car accidents (sometimes deadly ones!) are caused by drivers who are distracted by their phones. In 2013, a woman was reading a text message and drove into a lake! Recent studies show that texting while driving makes a driver 23 times more likely to crash, and this concerning behavior kills eleven teenagers each day.

There is a fairly new medical problem known as cell phone addiction. Many people check their cell phones first thing in the morning, and last thing at night. Sadly, cell phone addictions are consuming the lives of young people. One-third of teens send more than 100 text messages a day, and many teens say they would rather live without chocolate and TV than their cell phone. Two-thirds of teens sleep with their phones nearby. This behavior affects sleep patterns, as the light given off by a cell phone can trick your body into thinking it's daytime. Thus, many teens are not getting adequate amounts of sleep, a concern for bodies that are still growing, and brains that are still developing.

Finally, the presence of cell phones have changed the way people interact with one another. Enter a restaurant, and you're sure to see families sitting together in silence, each person's eyes glued to their cell phone. In a recent survey in the United States, four out of ten people admitted that when they encounter someone they know on the street, they sometimes looked at their phone to avoid starting a conversation.

Clearly, the invention of the cell phone has led to negative consequences for humans. Thanks to these small devices, our lives are more complicated than ever before.

Text B: Cell Phone Celebrations

The first mobile phone, the DynaTAC, went on sale in 1983. It was nicknamed "the brick" because it was so huge. Those first mobile phones made talking on the phone while traveling possible. However, that's about all they did. It is amazing to consider the abilities of today's cell phone in comparison.

When we think of the benefits of today's cell phones, we tend to think of its capabilities, such as sending text messages, looking up information on the Internet, checking email, and playing games and music. None of these tasks were possible a half-century ago. While these are all helpful inventions that have made our life easier and perhaps more enjoyable, have you ever considered how a cell phone makes it possible to save lives?

Cell phones have been used many times to rescue stranded people lost in remote areas. Thanks to Global Positioning System (GPS), phones can send signals to rescue teams that tell them the location of the stranded person. In 2011, a skier was trapped on a mountain in Italy. She phoned her father who was 800 miles away, and he was able to contact Italian emergency services. They were able to rescue his daughter.

Cell phones can also be used to send important warning messages. The National Weather Service can send out text messages to notify citizens of tornado warnings, flash flood warnings, and other serious weather alerts. Amber Alerts can also be sent out via text message. If a child has been taken without their parent or guardian's permission, an Amber Alert can be sent telling everyone in the area to watch for a certain vehicle that is believed to have been used when taking the child.

Deadly disease outbreaks can be prevented with the help of cell phone data. A devastating earthquake hit Haiti in 2010. Ten months later, relief agencies began to deal with an outbreak of cholera, a deadly disease. Scientists were able to collect cell phone data from the time of the earthquake. They studied maps that showed where people went after the disaster. This information helped prevent the cholera from spreading even further.

Clearly, cell phones have improved the lives of humans in many ways. Along with providing several day-to-day conveniences, they have also provided information that has saved the lives of many humans.

Prompt #5 (Cell Phones): Example Essays

Imagine you were these students' teacher. Would you be pleased with the following essays? Write some comments below.

New gadgets or devices are often invented to improve a current situation or to solve a problem. Cell phones fit that description well. Since they were invented in 1983, they have solved many problems and have improved the quality of life for people all over the Earth.

First of all, communication with people in all parts of the world has never been easier. Thanks to cell phones, you can call, text a message, or send a photo almost instantly, regardless of where you are located.

Cell phones have also made the world a safer place. The National Weather Service can send out a text message to citizens who are in the path of dangerous weather. This simple action can save lives because people are alerted soon enough to seek shelter providing protection during the storm.

Finally, cell phones can be used in times of emergency to rescue stranded people. GPS can show rescue teams exactly where a stranded person is. For example, in 2011, a skier was trapped on a mountain in Italy. She called her dad, who alerted the Italian emergency services. They were able to use cell phone information to locate and rescue the woman.

In conclusion, cell phones have definitely improved our quality of life. The world is a safer place now because of the information and abilities that cell phones provide.

Autumn's Essay

Cell phones have been a good invention. They have helped people in many ways.

First of all, we can use cell phones to communicate. My mom makes me use my cell phone to call her when I get home from school. Since she is still at work, she knows I am safe when I call.

Secondly, cell phones provide people with information. When I am doing my homework and I need a piece of information, I can look it up on my cell phone and find it right away.

The only bad thing about cell phones is that some people use them while driving. That's not safe. In fact, texting while driving can cause serious car accidents. You should never text while driving.

All in all, the invention of cell phones have improved our lives, especially if you are ever lost or need help from emergency responders.

Misty's Essay

Introduction

Big Idea #1-

Big Idea #2-

Big Idea #3-

Conclusion

Introduction

Big Idea #1-

Big Idea #2-

Big Idea #3-

Conclusion