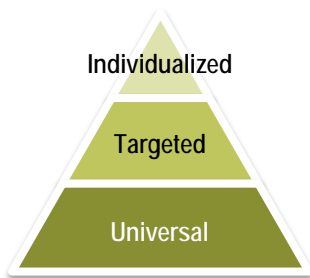


Compare & Contrast



Compare and contrast is the process of identifying how things are alike and how they are different. This strategy can be used to describe, define, and analyze concepts. Graphic organizers, such as Venn diagrams, can help students pay attention to details, organize information, and see relationships while using compare and contrast.



A teacher's understanding of their students' learning needs helps determine when to provide universal, targeted, or individualized instructional strategies. For some students, universal instructional strategies may be enough to meet their learning needs. For others, more targeted instructional strategies are the starting point for implementing the curriculum. The strategy described is a guideline that teachers can use depending on the learning context.

Why use this strategy in an inclusive learning environment

- Creates opportunities to identify key characteristics of ideas and concepts.
- Provides structure for classifying and organizing information.
- Improves comprehension by highlighting important details.
- Helps to activate prior knowledge supporting students in making connections to new information.

How this strategy could be used in an inclusive learning environment

1. Introduce the concept of compare and contrast with an example:

*“When we compare items, we look for their similarities—the things that make them the same.
For example:*

- *Blue jays and penguins are both birds.*
- *They both have feathers.*
- *Both have beaks.*
- *Both lay eggs.*



When you contrast items, you look at their differences. For example:

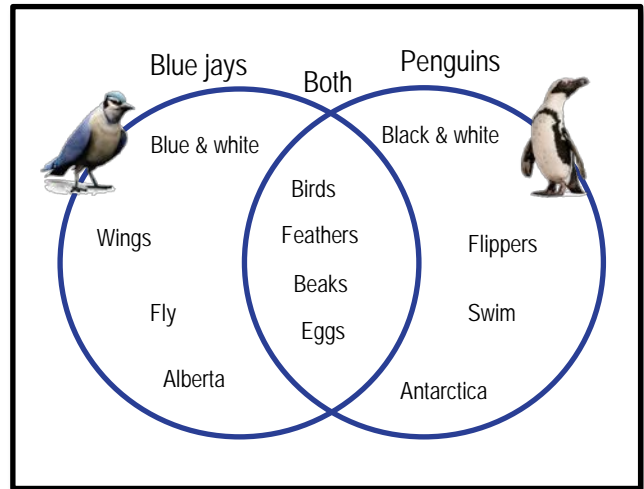
- Blue jays are blue and white. Penguins are black and white.
- While blue jays have wings for flying, penguins have flippers for swimming.
- Blue jays need a warmer place to live, like Alberta, while penguins live in colder climates, like Antarctica.”

The Venn diagram is useful for making comparisons and showing how things are different.

2. Create a Venn diagram. Discuss the attributes of both birds and record student responses on the diagram.
3. Model the compare-and-contrast process by showing students how some attributes are shared by both the blue jay and the penguin.

Discuss what makes them different and then have students identify all of the similarities and differences between the two concepts.

Record their ideas in the appropriate space.



4. Have students practice the process with two new concepts individually or in small groups. Have students share and discuss their responses.

Tips for individualized supports

- Use visuals so that students do not have to rely only on recall to participate.
- Introduce vocabulary and the context before the compare-and-contrast activity.
- Provide alternative reading passages about the same topic at various reading levels and group students so that they support each other in reading the text and organizing information.
- Students may represent their responses in a variety of ways; for example, by drawing or with concept mapping software.
- Use key words, visuals, or provide anticipation guides in a digital format and provide text-to-speech options.
- Provide commonly used language or sentence starters to English language learners to help them participate in compare-and-contrast discussions:
 - Same as, as well as, similar, alike, common, compare, equal
 - Different, in contrast, as opposed to, instead of, although, contrary
 - The _____ and the _____ are the same because they both _____.
 - They are different because the _____, but the _____ does not.

