

Lesson 20

Comparing and Contrasting Two Texts



Learning Target



Looking at how two texts on the same topic are alike and different can give you a better understanding of the topic.

- **Read** When you read two texts on the same topic, remember to compare and contrast their most **important points** and **key details**. When you **compare**, you look at how the texts are alike. When you **contrast**, you look at how they are different.

**Read the ad and the news story. How are they alike?
How are they different?**



Wish you could make a phone call anytime, anyplace? Now you can, with your own handheld cellular phone!

- Save favorite numbers.
- Talk for up to 60 minutes.

And at only 28 ounces, this phone can go anywhere you can.

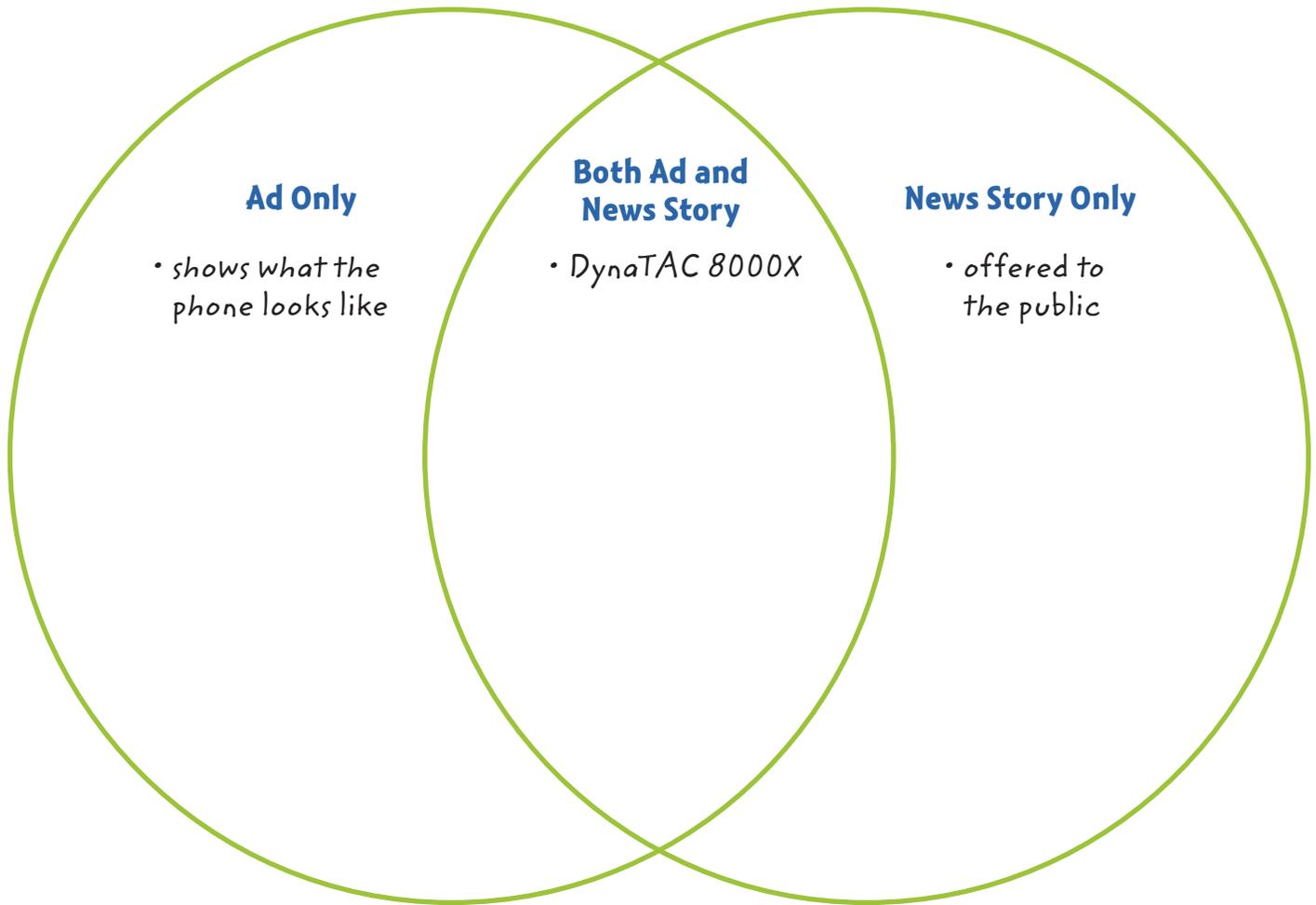
→ **Order yours today!**

Cellular Phones Approved for Sale

September 21, 1983

Today, a company received FCC approval to sell the DynaTAC 8000X. This phone will be the first handheld cellular phone to be offered to the public. It offers 60 minutes of talk time and weighs 28 ounces. The initial price will be \$3,995.

► **Think** Think about what you've learned so far about comparing and contrasting two texts on the same topic. How are they the same? How are they different? Use the *Venn diagram* below to organize your ideas.



► **Talk** Read the ad again and look at the details. Which details show that the ad is written for people who might want to buy the phone?



Academic Talk

Use these phrases and words to talk about the text.

- **important points**
- **compare**
- **contrast**
- **key details**

A Short History of Computers

by Spencer Kay



- 1 In 1833, a man named Charles Babbage came up with the idea of the modern computer. But there was one problem. He couldn't figure out how to make one.
- 2 A hundred years later, computers became a reality. In 1939, the first computers were invented to help countries fight wars. Then, around 1950, companies began using computers to help run their businesses. These computers were so huge that they filled large rooms.
- 3 In 1981, the first PC, or personal computer, was sold. It fit on a desktop and had a keyboard and a screen. Since then, computer use has exploded. Computers are everywhere today. Computers have become faster, smarter, and smaller. They are so small that we hold them in our hands!

Computers Today

by Aparna Singh



- 1 Fifty years ago, few people knew much about computers. For the most part, they were used by the government or in businesses. But today computers are everywhere!
- 2 You might be surprised to learn how many everyday items contain computers. Cell phones and digital cameras use computers. So do TVs and kitchen ovens. Computers are used to run cars and airplanes. They also keep traffic lights blinking and trains on schedule.

Close Reader Habits

Underline the key details in each passage. Which details in the passages are alike? Which are different?

Explore

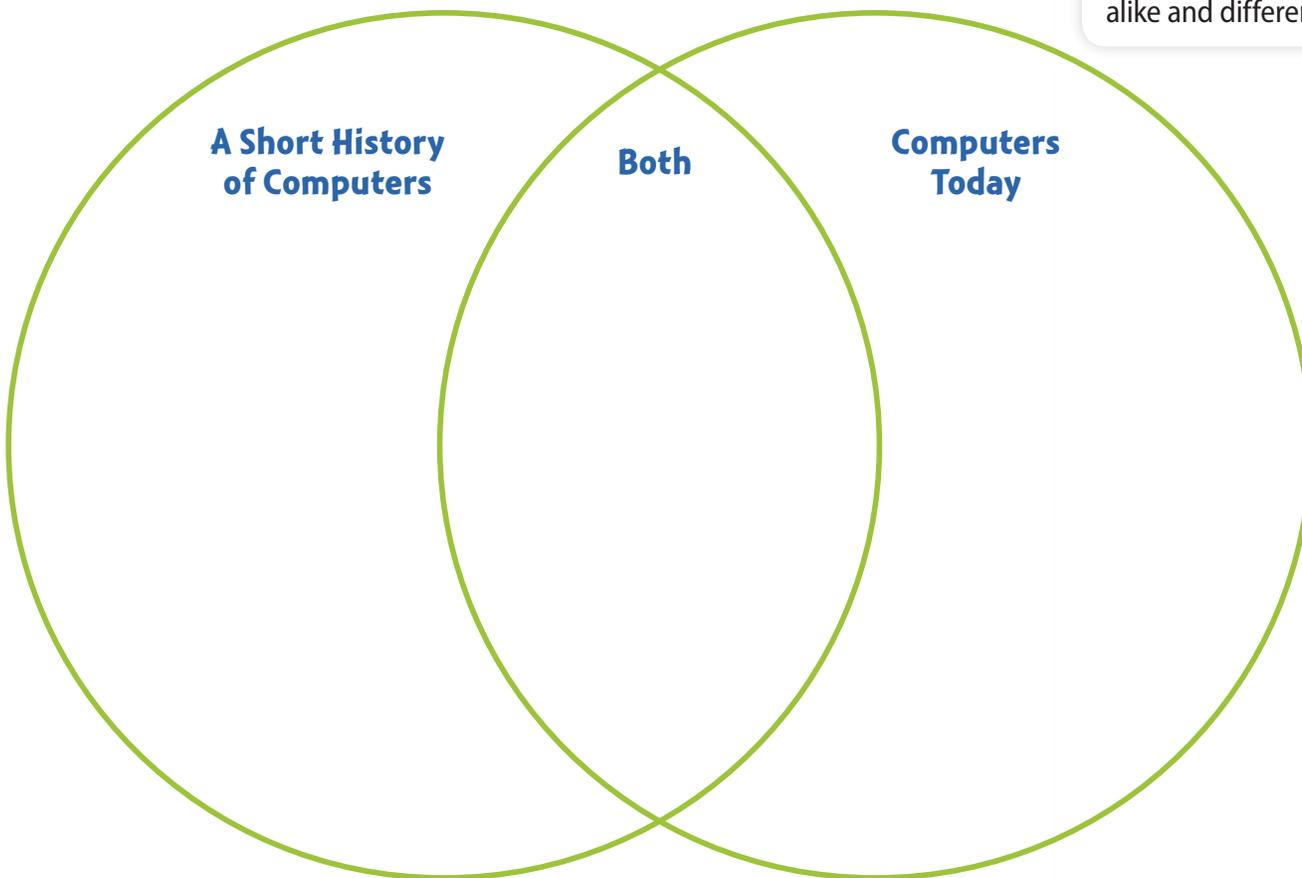
How are the two articles about computers alike and different?



Looking for key details in each text will help you find information that's alike and different.

Think

- 1 Complete the Venn diagram to show how the two articles give information about computers that is alike and different.



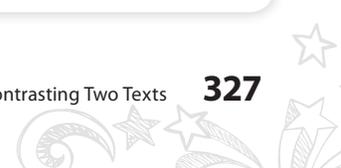
Talk

- 2 Get together with a partner and talk about how the information in each article is alike and different. What did you learn about computers by reading both articles?

Write

- 3 **Short Response** Why has the use of computers increased so much over the last fifty years? Find reasons in **both** articles. Use the space provided on page 332 to write your answer.

HINT Beginning in 1981, what changed about computers and how they were used?



History of TELEVISION

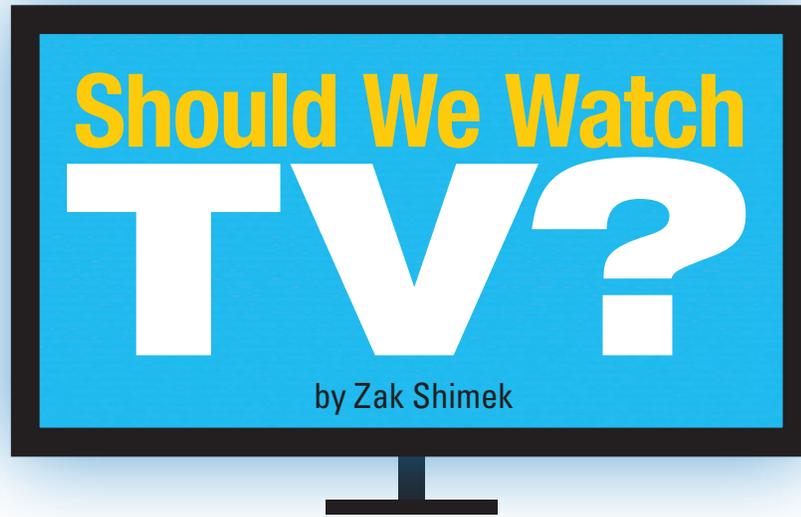
by Marcus Fink



- 1 David Sarnoff had an idea. If sound could travel over the radio, why couldn't pictures? In 1939, he showed the world it was possible. Broadcast television was born.
- 2 No one person can claim that he or she invented television. People in several countries were inventing it about the same time. But even though television was invented, there was a catch. No one knew what to do with it. Sarnoff did, and he knew where to introduce it.
- 3 In 1939, Sarnoff showed the first television broadcast at the New York World's Fair. People crowded around the tiny sets to watch the black-and-white pictures. The first show was of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who gave a speech. That same year, television sets went on sale. The first ones were small—only 5-inch by 12-inch screens.
- 4 Television companies began showing programs. In 1939, the first baseball game was put on television. Stations began to broadcast news shows, children's shows, comedies, and dramas. Today there are hundreds of channels and many more kinds of programs.
- 5 The number of TV sets in use also keeps growing. In 1946, there were about 6,000 televisions sets in use in the United States. In 1951, there were 12 million. As more people watched, more shows were added. By 1962, around 49 million U.S. households had televisions in the home. Today, 99 percent of homes have a television. Some even have three or more!

Close Reader Habits

Underline the most important idea in each paragraph. Then look for key details that support each idea.



- 1 What do you do in your free time? If you say, “watch television,” you are not alone. About 99 percent of American households own a television. The airwaves are flooded with all kinds of programs. There are hundreds of channels to choose from.
- 2 And there’s so much to see! You can watch a tiger hunt in the jungle—something you might never see in person. You can visit the bottom of the ocean or cruise in outer space from your sofa. You can learn how to do new things, such as cook. TV is also a good way to relax. Watching a funny show can be relaxing.
- 3 But do Americans watch too much television? One study said that the average person watches four hours each day. If that person lived to be 65 years old, he or she would have watched TV for nine years!
- 4 Watching television doesn’t require effort. All you have to do is sit and watch. When children watch TV, they are not playing and running. They aren’t playing games or solving problems. Also, children who watch a lot of TV tend to eat more junk food, including chips and soda. So watching a lot of TV can be bad for your health.
- 5 Watching a little television each day isn’t harmful. It might even make you smarter. But if you are watching four hours a day, think about doing something else!

Close Reader Habits

In “Should We Watch TV?,” **underline** important ideas that are like those in “History of Television.” **Draw a wavy** line under important ideas that are new.

Think

1 Which choice **best** describes why the author wrote “History of Television”?

- A** to tell why David Sarnoff was important to TV
- B** to show how television has grown since 1939
- C** to describe the types of programs available on TV
- D** to prove that people watch too much television

2 This question has two parts. Answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

What is one of the most important ideas of “Should We Watch TV?”

- A** Television shows will make you smarter.
- B** Watching too much TV can be harmful.
- C** The number of TVs in homes is increasing each year.
- D** A wide variety of programs is available on TV.

Part B

What are **two** details from “Should We Watch TV?” that support your answer to Part A?

- A** “The airwaves are flooded with all kinds of programs.”
- B** “About 99 percent of American households own a television.”
- C** “One study said that the average person watches four hours each day.”
- D** “Watching a little television each day isn’t harmful.”
- E** “Watching television doesn’t require effort.”
- F** “So watching a lot of TV can be bad for your health.”



When you compare two texts, think about each author’s reason for writing.

- 3** Which of the following ideas is found in **both** passages?
- A** Watching television might make you smarter.
 - B** Too many Americans watch too much television.
 - C** The first television screens were only 5 inches by 12 inches.
 - D** Most households in America have a television.
- 4** Which sentence **best** describes the difference between the two passages?
- A** The first passage shows the benefits of television; the second passage shows the problems with television.
 - B** The first passage describes the invention of television; the second passage explains why television is so popular.
 - C** The first passage explains the importance of TV; the second passage describes how TV can be used in education.
 - D** The first passage describes the history of television; the second passage explores whether watching TV is good or bad.

 **Talk**

- 5** In which passage would you find information about how TVs have changed? Which one would you use to learn how TV has affected us? Refer to details from each passage when talking about your answers.

 **Write**

- 6** **Short Response** What are two things you learned in “Should We Watch TV?” that you didn’t learn in “History of Television”? Use the space provided on page 333 to write your answer.

HINT Reread “Should We Watch TV?” Look again at the sentences you underlined or marked with a wavy line.



Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 327.

A Short History of Computers

Computers Today

3 Short Response Why has the use of computers increased so much over the last fifty years? Find reasons in **both** articles.

HINT Beginning in 1981, what changed about computers and how they were used?



Don't forget to check your writing.



Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 331.

History of TELEVISION

Should We Watch TV?

HINT Reread "Should We Watch TV?" Look again at the sentences you underlined or marked with a wavy line.

6 Short Response What are two things you learned in "Should We Watch TV?" that you didn't learn in "History of Television"?

Check Your Writing

- Did you read the prompt carefully?
- Did you put the prompt in your own words?
- Did you use the best evidence from the text to support your ideas?
- Are your ideas clearly organized?
- Did you write in clear and complete sentences?
- Did you check your spelling and punctuation?



WORDS TO KNOW

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- **skeptical**
- **access**

Goodbye, Books?

by Jamie Joyce,
Time for Kids

- 1 Cushing Academy used to have 20,000 books in its library. But over the summer, this small Massachusetts high school began to replace printed books with electronic books, or e-books. Why? “The school wanted to put its focus on 21st-century learning,” Tom Corbett, the library’s executive director, told TFK. Few students were using library books to do their school assignments. Most did their research online. Transforming the library seemed like the best way to meet students’ needs. Without a print collection to care for, Corbett says librarians can now concentrate on helping students use the online collection in new and better ways. They can also work with teachers to bring technology into the classroom.

More Books, More Reading

- 2 Teacher Nancy Boyle says her students still enjoy regular books. But they’re also testing out the Kindle, an electronic reader. So far, it’s been a success. “It’s great,” Boyle told TFK. “The kids are reading more.”

- 3 Sixteen-year-old Meghan Chenausky was skeptical at first. “I love the feeling of books,” she told TFK. “I really thought I was going to be missing out when I started using a Kindle. But now I absolutely love using it. It’s so convenient. You can have so many books right at your fingertips.”

Meet an E-Reader

- 4 Can your backpack fit 1,500 books? An e-reader can. Most e-readers are pencil-thin and weigh less than a pound. They can download an e-book in 60 seconds. Don’t understand the meaning of a word? Click on it to get the definition. Is the print too small? An e-reader can adjust the size.
- 5 E-readers aren’t cheap, but it costs the school just \$5 or \$10 to download an e-book on as many as six e-readers. “Now, students have access to a million titles,” Corbett says.
- 6 Still, regular books have one big advantage over e-readers: They don’t use electricity. E-readers have to be charged, like cell phones.



E-Readers: No Substitute for Books

by Linda Timm

WORDS TO KNOW

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- **device**
- **portable**



- 1 It's a cold, stormy day, and lightning has knocked out the power in your neighborhood. No problem! You'll just grab a snack, curl up with a good book, and read for hours. You pull out your e-reader, press the button . . . and the screen remains dark. The battery is dead. And since there's no electricity, there's no way to recharge the device. Guess you're out of luck.
- 2 This is just one example of how impractical e-readers are. Sure, an e-reader can store thousands of books. But what good is that if you can't use the reader whenever you need to? Running out of power is only one of the issues. E-readers can also break. Drop one, and the screen may crack or the reader may just stop functioning. You have to purchase a new book AND a new device. If you drop a printed book, though, you can just pick it up and keep reading.
- 3 E-readers also make reading itself more difficult. Sentences may break across lines in awkward ways. Or, one sentence may get stretched across a page, leaving huge spaces between words. It's also hard to find parts you want to reread. Even with search tools, it's difficult to "flip" back and forth as you would with a printed book. Note-taking can also take longer and be more frustrating.
- 4 Still, some schools are beginning to buy e-readers for students in place of books. School leaders feel they can get more books for less money that way. But e-readers are expensive, so how much money will schools have to spend to replace readers that students lose or break? Also, one research study showed that some people don't learn as well from e-readers. They don't understand as much, and they don't remember what they read. So are e-readers really good for students?
- 5 Sometimes the simplest choice is the best one. Printed books are inexpensive, recyclable, and portable. They are easy to distribute, easy to care for, and easy to replace. And the best part? Printed books will NEVER run out of power!

Think Use what you learned from reading the passages to respond to these questions.

- 1** This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

Which sentence **best** describes how the main ideas of these two passages are different?

- A** "Goodbye, Books?" is about the new library at Cushing Academy, while "E-Readers: No Substitute for Books" is about a library that uses only printed books.
- B** "Goodbye, Books?" tells how e-readers are good for students and schools, while "E-Readers: No Substitute for Books" tells why e-readers should not replace printed books.
- C** "Goodbye, Books?" explains why printed books are no longer useful, while "E-Readers: No Substitute for Books" explains why printed books are still good.
- D** "Goodbye, Books?" is about the low cost of e-readers, while "E-Readers: No Substitute for Books" is about the low cost of printed books.

Part B

Choose **one** detail from **each** passage that supports your answer to Part A.

- A** "Cushing Academy used to have 20,000 books in its library." ("Goodbye, Books?")
- B** "So far, it's been a success. 'It's great,' Boyle told TFK. 'The kids are reading more.'" ("Goodbye, Books?")
- C** "Still, regular books have one big advantage over e-readers: They don't use electricity." ("Goodbye, Books?")
- D** "Sure, an e-reader can store thousands of books." ("E-Readers: No Substitute for Books")
- E** "Still, some schools are beginning to buy e-readers for students in place of books." ("E-Readers: No Substitute for Books")
- F** "Also, one research study showed that some people don't learn as well from e-readers." ("E-Readers: No Substitute for Books")

- 2** Which **two** ideas can be found in **both** passages?
- A** E-books are inexpensive to use.
 - B** Printed books are inexpensive and recyclable.
 - C** Few students use library books to do assignments.
 - D** E-readers can store more than a thousand books.
 - E** E-readers can make the reading process more difficult.
 - F** Schools are buying e-readers for students to use.
- 3** Reread these sentences from paragraph 1 of “Goodbye, Books?”

Few students were using library books to do their school assignments. Most did their research online. Transforming the library seemed like the best way to meet students’ needs.

Given the context, what does *transforming* mean?

- A** changing
- B** closing
- C** rebuilding
- D** emptying



Write

Should schools use e-readers instead of printed books? Reread both passages. Put a plus sign (+) next to facts that support the use of e-readers. Put a minus sign (–) next to facts that describe problems with e-readers.

- 4 Plan Your Response** Make a two-column chart. Put facts that support e-readers in one column. Put facts that show problems with e-readers in the second column. Study your chart.
- 5 Write an Extended Response** Explain whether or not schools should use e-readers instead of printed books. Use details from both passages to support your ideas. Your chart can help you choose your evidence.



Learning Target

Now that you've compared and contrasted passages, explain how reading two or more texts on the same topic can help you understand the topic better. Use examples from some of the passages you read to make your point clear.
