



Comparing texts teacher notes

Comprehension: Interpreting implied information 120-129

The ACER Reading team have taken the original PAT Teaching Resources Centre teaching activity, *Comparing texts (Interpreting implied information, 120-129)* and have adapted it so that it can be used for remote learning.

You may use the resources we have provided directly with your own students, or you could use them as a model to create your own remote learning resources. You could furthermore adapt other PAT Teaching Resource Centre teaching activities in the same way.

Accompanying components for this teaching activity:

- Student Comparing Texts [Video 1](#) and [Video 2](#) (with accompanying script below)
- Two texts on *Multitasking in the modern age* (in student worksheet and teacher notes)
- [Student Comparing Texts Worksheet](#)

Script for [Comparing Texts Video 1](#)

Today we're doing an activity about comparing different texts. Sometimes we need to compare texts to identify points of similarity, or points of difference between them. This is easy to do when the information in the text is explicit and clear. Sometimes, with these types of texts, making comparisons of similarities and differences between two texts isn't much harder than scanning the text for similar words and phrases.

But sometimes the ideas in a text are quite subtly implied, or at least not obvious, and we need to read closely, and to interpret the ideas in order to understand what the text is about. With these less explicit texts, making comparisons involves more than just scanning for key words and phrases.

I now want you to read the two texts provided in your worksheet, titled *Multi-tasking in the modern age*. These texts contain two opinions by two different people on the same topic.

Please read through the texts twice.



If there are any points of confusion, you can always ask an adult, or send a question through to your teacher.

After you've read them twice, write down a summary of the main argument being made by each author. What is each author trying to say? What's the main point they are making?

Once you've done this, please click on Comparing Texts Video 2.

Multitasking in the modern age

Text 1: Mikhala

Every school night students spread out their homework in front of them while they listen to music, channel-surf on the TV and text friends, and constantly check Facebook or Twitter. They argue that all this distraction is helping them to concentrate on their homework. All it is really doing is providing camouflage so they can look like they are doing their homework while they are actually putting all their brain power into socialising. They know what they are doing. They are just more interested in their social lives than school work. It is the parents who are being fooled.

Text 2: Sebastian

We now know our brains are incredibly plastic and adaptable. We are constantly teaching our brains how to work by the way we use them. Young people, raised in stimulating environments with constant music, TV, phones and texting and books, argue that they have learned how to attend to different tasks at the same time. In fact, they say they need this extra stimulation in order to concentrate. They claim that isolating them to one task at a time reduces their brain functionality. But the research does not support their claims. Research shows that swapping from one task to another wastes time as the brain has to work hard to refocus each time. Efficiency and productivity are much higher when you concentrate and complete one task before moving on to the next one.



Script for [Comparing Texts Video 2](#)

Did you notice that the overall opinions of the authors in these texts was not immediately obvious? The first sentence does not make the main point clear, and you have to read further into the texts in order to see what their argument was.

Now that you have identified the overall opinion of each author in your summaries, you have probably realised that they largely agree about this topic. But did you also notice any points of disagreement?

Go back and have a look at the texts one more time. Then fill in the table provided in your worksheet. This table asks you to identify the points in common, points of disagreement, and any points that only one of the authors presented in their argument.

Remember you're only being asked to give a summary of the ideas, you don't need to quote big chunks of the text. Don't worry if you can't fill in the whole table, just manage what you can.

Once you've finished, send your completed worksheet through to your teacher. Happy writing!

Table provided for students to fill in (in [student worksheet](#))

Character	Points in common	Points of disagreement	Other ideas presented by one writer
Mikhala			
Sebastian			



Example filled-in table (not in student worksheet)

Character	Points in common	Points of disagreement	Other ideas presented by one writer
Mikhala	Multitasking is not effective	Students know they cannot really multi-task	Students are more interested in social life than homework Parents are being fooled
Sebastian	Students argue that it helps them concentrate	Students think they can really multi-task	We can change the way our brains are wired Research shows it is more effective to complete one task at a time

Feedback and task extension

If students do not do well on this activity, ask them to identify the specific sentences that gave them those ideas, and look more closely at the language used by the authors to clarify what they think their arguments are.

If students have done well at this activity, why not ask them to write a third text about multi-tasking that presents a different point of view? For example: multi-tasking is an effective way to learn and complete homework, or multi-tasking is only effective if it is confined to doing two things at a time. Ask students to bury the main idea in the text, so that the reader has to read past the opening sentence to identify the point they are making. They should avoid clearly stating their position in a single sentence.