Congratulations on your purchase of the Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag™ Compare & Contrast: Same-Topic Texts, Level 2 a hands-on activity that strengthens your students’ critical thinking skills.

Objective
Compare and contrast two same-topic texts by marking the similarities and differences and recording the information on a graphic organizer.

Meeting Common Core State Standards
Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic and two versions of the same story. Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

This Really Good Stuff® product includes:
• 6 Text Cards (The Level 1 card set has different borders so that you can easily manage both sets.)
• Red and Green Word Tags
• 2 Mats
• 1 Center Task Card
• 3 Answer Key Cards
• This Really Good Stuff® Teaching Guide

Identifying similarities and differences in the key points of two same-topic texts supports reading and writing across grade levels and content areas in several ways: it supports comprehension of increasingly complex texts; it develops analytical skills and problem-solving skills; it helps students understand that people may view the same topic in different ways; and it supports the notion that there may be more than one way to view a text, solve a problem, or engage in a discussion.

Managing the Center-in-a-Bag
• Should you need this or any other Really Good Stuff® Teaching Guides, download them from our Web site at www.reallygoodstuff.com.
• Display the Center Task Card during the activity.
• Affix 10-15 red and green Word Tags to the top of each Text Card.
• Make copies of the Record Sheet and store them in the bag.
• You may choose to put 2 low-odor, dry-erase markers (not included) in the bag.
• Demonstrate how to tidy the center when the activity is complete.
• Store the center materials in the bag and hang it alongside other Centers-in-a-Bag.

Introducing Compare & Contrast: Same-Topic Texts, Level 2 (Grades 4-5)
This two-part activity offers students practice in comparing and contrasting texts on the same topic. The Text Cards are designed to be multi-purpose—both for students’ independent practice and as a tool for your higher-order thinking instruction and questioning (question ideas listed on the following page). One side of the cards has standard black text and the other side offers color-coded visual support, with the similarities of the two passages in green text and the differences printed in red text. This color-coded side of the cards is useful in intervention instruction, and it is a helpful tool for all students to see the similarities and differences “pop” off the page.

Model the Activity
Begin by modeling the activity, discussing every step with students. Select a Text Card, and work on the black printed side. If you project the card onto a screen, students can track along with you. Determine a goal for the number of similarities and differences you hope to find, such as 5 of each (goals will vary for each student). As you read the two passages, mark the similarities with Green Tags, and mark the differences with Red Tags.
A good strategy is to read both texts first, then reread them for the similarities and differences. Show students how you frequently reread to check your thinking before you place your tags. In many instances you will see similarities that are not word-for-word the same. You will have to infer in some cases. Be sure to point this out as it occurs. Also encourage students to think about differences such as genres and print concepts, italics and punctuation. You may also encourage students to look for tone or author’s purpose.

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Helping Teachers Make A Difference®
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All teaching guides can be found online:
Toward the end of your think-about hunt for similarities and differences, turn the card over to see the color-coded text and to check your thinking. This color support helps students to readily see the similarities and differences in the text. It also gives them a visual for the quantity of similarities and differences they may aspire to find.

When you have tagged enough similarities and differences, transfer your tagged information to the Venn Diagram Record Sheet. To check your Venn diagram answers, use the matching colored Answer Card. Answer Cards will not include every possible idea; they serve as a guide.

Differentiate your expectations for your students. For some students, finding two or three similarities or differences may be sufficient. For others, you may encourage them to find up to 10 in some cases. To provide a goal for students, refer to the Answer Card as you decide how many similarities and differences you want your students to find. You may also encourage students to find similarities and differences that the Answer Card does not show. Be sure to allow time for students to share this information with a partner.

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After demonstrating, have students read to compare and contrast and complete the graphic organizer independently.

Questions for Higher-Order Thinking

1. In what ways can you compare and contrast two texts on the same topic?
2. Why do two authors writing on the same topic sometimes use different details or make different points?
3. What strategies are useful in identifying differences and similarities in key points between two texts?
4. What background knowledge is needed to identify similarities and differences in two texts on the same topic?
Useful Verbs for More Higher-Order Questions

analyze  invent  choose  
distinguish  compose  decide  
examine  predict  justify  
compare  plan  debate  
contrast  construct  verify  
investigate  design  argue  
categorize  imagine  recommend  
identify  propose  assess  
explain  devise  discuss  
separate  formulate  rate  
advertise  judge  prioritize  
create  select  determine

Center Task Card
Post this at the literacy center in a visible position. A student or a helper can refer to the Center Task Card for instructions. Refer to the shaded section at the top of the card for center preparation, including needed materials.

Related Really Good Stuff® Products:
Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag™: Lights, Camera, Action! Comprehension, Level 2 (Grades 4-5) (#305221)
Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag™: Reading Strategies Game, Level 1 (Grades 2-3) (#305286)
Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag™: Compare & Contrast: Same-Topic Texts, Level 1 (Grades 2-3) (#305358)
Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag™: Text Features, Level 1 (Grades 2-3) (#305361)
Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag™: Fact & Opinion Sort & Write, Level 1 (Grades 2-3) (#305367)
Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag™: Text Features, Level 2 (Grades 4-5) (#305371)
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Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag™: Ding! Ding! Ding! Summary Level 1 (Grades 2-3) (#305387)
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