

Lesson Skill: Comparing two or more texts

Strand Reading – fiction and nonfiction

SOL 9.4, 9.5
10.4, 10.5
11.4, 11.5
12.4, 12.5

Materials

- Copy of two persuasive speeches (Do an Internet search. Consider choosing one from a fiction text)
- Rhetoric Evaluation Chart
- Venn diagram
- Access to nonfiction materials
- Access to technology
- One piece of cardstock
- Curriculum Framework, 11.5

Lesson

1. Each student takes out a sheet of paper and draws a large Tic-Tac-Toe board. The center will be a FREE SPOT. For all of the other empty locations, a student writes an element of rhetoric or persuasion and gives an example. Model completing one square as a class to establish expectations.
2. Students walk around and find someone who has the same word written in one of the boxes. Once students find a match, they write the other person's name and share each other's example. Incorrect examples, as well as literary devices not belonging to rhetoric or persuasion will not count. Students who achieve three in a row should shout "Tic-Tac-Toe" and sit down. All students must get three in a row.
3. Explain that one of the tools necessary for twenty-first century living is to be able to make decisions about the validity of opinions as well as factual information.
4. Arrange students in groups of four.
5. Distribute the Rhetoric Evaluation Chart. Review the categories with the students. Explain that as students read two speeches, they will evaluate them based on the chart's categories.
6. Distribute copies of the speeches.
7. Students read each selection and collaborate to complete the Rhetoric Evaluation Chart.
8. Groups share responses from the Rhetoric Evaluation Chart with the class.
9. Record accurate responses onto the class chart.
10. Using the completed class Rhetoric Evaluation Chart, discuss how both speeches were meant to be persuasive. Groups collaborate to evaluate each text by analyzing words, phrases, concepts, sentences, quotes that demonstrate how the author intentionally crafts the work to achieve its purpose.

11. Groups collaborate to compile The ABC's of Persuasion for each text. Each page is a different letter of the alphabet (students should use as many letters of the alphabet as possible). The word, phrase, or concept on each page will begin with a different letter of the alphabet. Each page will be divided in half. One side will analyze the excerpt from one speech and the other half will analyze the others. Each page must have the following criteria:



- ❖ The letter of the alphabet in the upper left-hand corner
- ❖ A word, phrase, concept, sentence, quotation that demonstrates an element connected to purpose of each selection
- ❖ A statement explaining what it is and how it connects to the purpose
- ❖ A small drawing or symbol for your idea
- ❖ In the bottom right-hand corner, the initials from student who did the work for that page

12. As students develop the ABC's of Persuasion, post the following questions to guide their choice of words, phrases, concepts, and quotes: "What are these authors trying to say?" and "What are these authors' point of views about the topics?"
13. After students have completed the ABC's of Persuasion, require groups to reflect back through their booklets to look for similarities and differences in the ways the authors crafted their persuasive arguments. The students and teacher discuss and create a Venn diagram to record similarities and differences.
14. Pose the following question to the students: What makes these forms of persuasion effective? Divide students into four groups using the four corners of the room. The first group thinks that only the first speech was effective. The second group thinks only the second speech was effective. The third group thinks both, and the fourth thinks neither. In each corner, have students make a case for their thinking. They must give evidence directly from the text. Each group member is expected to contribute orally during the presentations.
15. Students research the historical context of each text. Collaborate to create a list of questions related to the historical and cultural context of each text. These questions will drive the students' research.
16. Direct students to conduct a day of research using the library and electronic resources to find out about the historical and cultural connections these selections have. The same group that read and wrote the ABC booklets will reconvene and begin their investigation.
17. The whole class will debrief about what they found out and how it relates to the two selections. Ask the students to think about the following question:
- Does a historical and cultural perspective clarify or add misconceptions to persuasion?
18. As a final exercise, distribute one piece of cardstock to each student. Each student designs a sign that captures the viewpoint of one of the authors. Students must be mindful of their word choice as a persuasive tool when conveying the message.

Strategies for Differentiation

- In preparation for the lesson, create the Tic-Tac-Toe board with the elements of rhetoric or persuasion already written in the boxes. Provide a list of examples for each rhetorical/persuasive element and have the students match the examples to the elements on the Tic-Tac-Toe board.
- Students will still walk around the room to share examples.
- Students will be provided with an ABC's of Persuasion booklet with the word, phrase, or concept already written on each page. Students will then give examples from the texts and draw a symbol for their ideas. The pages will be divided up among the students in the groups.

Rhetoric Evaluation Chart

Analyzing the Message		
Author		
Author's Purpose		
Intended Audience		
Speaker		
Context (historical, cultural)		
Viewpoint		
Persuasive techniques		
Literary devices		
Word choice		