

Lesson Skill: Identifying and understanding character traits

Strand Reading--fiction

SOL 5.5
6.5
7.5
8.5

Materials

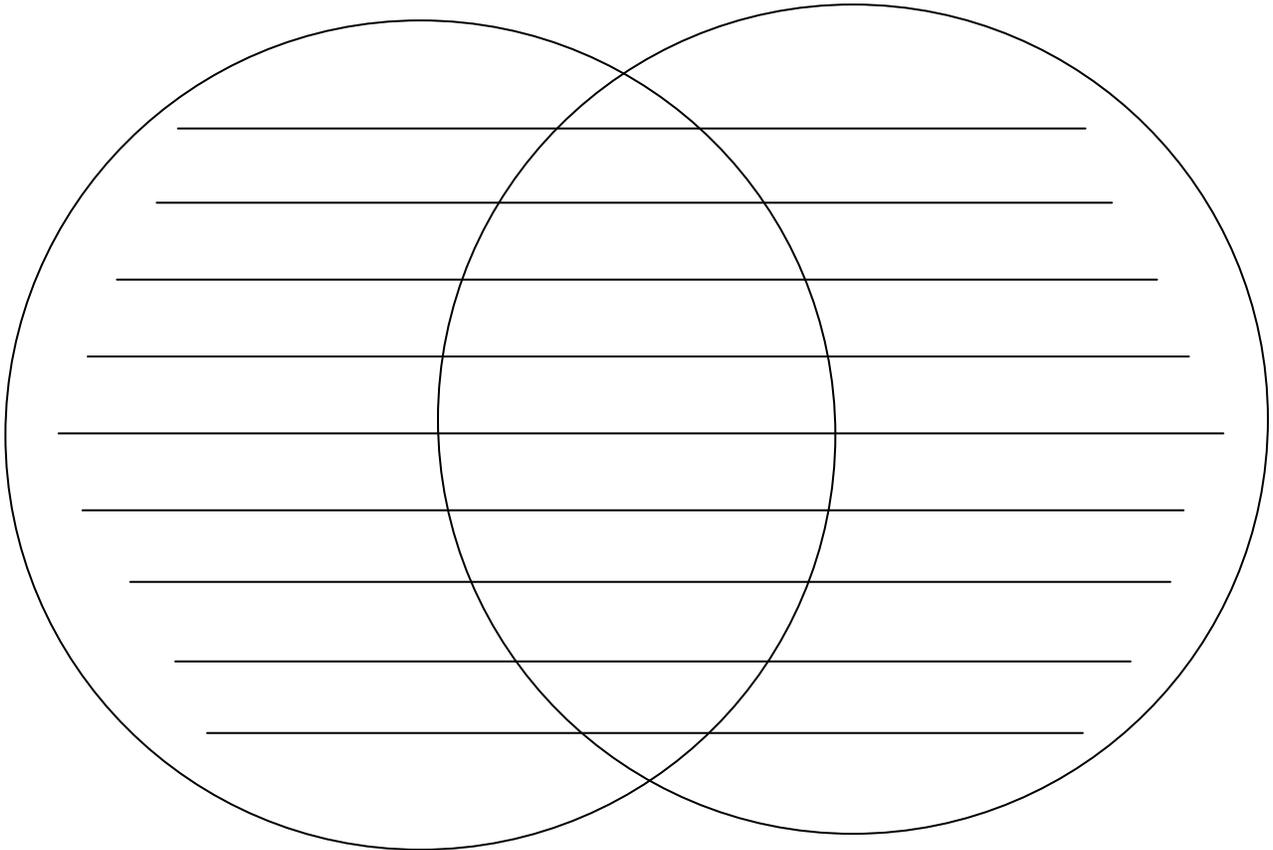
- Narrative text selection that includes ample information about the main character
- Copies of the attached The Main Character and Me graphic organizer

Lesson

1. Have students read a portion of a narrative text selection, gathering information about and identifying the characteristics of the main character as they read. Bear in mind that students may not really understand a main character who differs significantly from them. Tell students to write the identified characteristics in appropriate places on the graphic organizer and then complete the writing assignment at the bottom of the page.
2. Use this writing assignment to generate discussion about the text and the main character. Ask how comparing and contrasting a character with yourself can help you understand that character.
3. Have students update their chart as reading of the text continues.

The Main Character and Me

1. Brainstorm a list of the main character's characteristics.
2. List each characteristic that is *different* from you on a line in the *left* circle.
3. List each of your characteristics that is different from that of the main character on the same line, but in the *right* circle.
(For example, if you put "old" on the top line in the left circle, you'd put "young" on the same line in the right circle.)
4. List each characteristic both of you share in the middle where the circles overlap.



5. After you have completed the chart, respond to this prompt on the lines provided:
Human beings can be very different in many ways, but they almost always share some traits. What traits do you share with this main character? How does that help you understand how he or she acts? What differences between the two of you make it difficult for you to understand or connect with this character?
