

# THE TRIANGLE AIDA

Literature

Grades 5–6

## OBJECTIVES

### CONTENT

Students will read the book *Aida* by Leontyne Price and further develop the reading comprehension skills of determining main idea and supporting detail, drawing conclusions, determining character traits, and making inferences.

### THINKING SKILL/PROCESS

Students will skillfully compare and contrast information by determining significant similarities and differences between two characters in a novel and drawing a conclusion based on their comparison.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

### CONTENT

Students will read *Aida* by Leontyne Price. Cooperative learning as well as independent learning will be utilized.

### THINKING SKILL/PROCESS

An explicit thinking map, graphic organizers, and structured questioning emphasize a thinking strategy for open compare and contrast. (See p. 94 for reproducible diagrams.) Collaborative learning enhances thinking.

## LESSON

### INTRODUCTION TO CONTENT AND THINKING SKILL/PROCESS

- **How many of you watch television or go to the movies? Think about two of your favorite female or male television or movie stars. Do they have anything in common? Think of some ways in which they are the same and write them on your paper.** Allow students time for reflection and writing. Students should identify both physical traits and personality traits, as well as background and interests.
- **What were some of the differences?** Allow students time for writing. Students should also include the same traits as well as some new ones.
- **Now, what can you say about the people you described based on the similarities and differences? Draw some conclusions about them. Remember, conclusions don't repeat the similarities and differences, or say simply that they are alike and different. Conclusions tell us something new that is suggested by the similarities and differences.** Allow students time to discuss and report back.
- **What you've been doing is comparing and contrasting. It is a natural inclination that we all have when we are thinking about two people or things. How many times have you discussed with your friends why you think someone is a really "cool" actor or actress? Here**

### OPEN COMPARE AND CONTRAST

1. How are they similar?
2. How are they different?
3. What similarities and differences seem significant?
4. What categories or patterns do you see in the significant similarities and differences?
5. What interpretation or conclusion is suggested by the significant similarities and differences?

is a thinking map (previous page) that outlines the important questions to ask when you compare and contrast. You will notice that there are more than two questions. What is the third thing we ask? POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSE: *What similarities and differences seem significant?* For example, it might not be important to know what time the T.V. show comes on. What do you notice about the fifth question? POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSE: *It asks us to draw a conclusion.* When you tell your friends which one you like better and why, you are drawing a conclusion. Students should respond in the positive. Keep this thinking map in mind as we compare and contrast.

- Today I am going to read a book to you by Leontyne Price called *Aida*. Leontyne Price was an opera singer whose greatest role was Aida in the opera of the same name. *Aida* was written by Giuseppe Verdi, an Italian composer who lived in the 1900s. Remember that an opera is a play where the dialogue is sung instead of spoken in regular conversation. Price was asked to join with the illustrating team of Leo and Diane Dillon to author a book based on the plot of the opera. You will need to listen carefully as I read, because you will be expected to recall details from the story for our thinking and writing activity. Read *Aida* to the students. Be sure to show the illustrations, as they are quite beautiful.

THINKING ACTIVELY

- The book *Aida* is about two women. Who are they? *Aida and Amneris.*
- How did they meet? POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSE: *Aida was captured by the Egyptians and taken to the Pharaoh, who gave her to his daughter, the Princess Amneris, as her slave.*
- Just like the stars that you compared and contrasted, these two ladies also have similarities and differences. We are going to use a graphic organizer for “Open Compare and Contrast” to look at these two characters more closely in order to better understand their actions and their relationship. Pass out the “Open Compare and Contrast” graphic organizer to everyone and allow time for names to be written on papers. (Pencil is preferred so that students may erase.)
- With your group (3–4 students), identify as many similarities as you can that Aida and Amneris share and write them on your graphic organizers. It is important that all of you record the similarities because you will need this graphic organizer for future reference. Allow time for students to record several similarities. After they have listed the items, call on students at random to report. Ask for only one similarity per student and record the response on a transparency or the board if you do not have an overhead. Be sure to ask questions that cause the student to think more carefully about each response they give. Questions of cause and effect, implications, and clarification extend not only the thinking but also the com-

<b>OPEN COMPARE AND CONTRAST</b>		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span>↙</span> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">HOW ALIKE?</div> <span>↘</span> </div>		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span>↙</span> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">HOW DIFFERENT?</div> <span>↘</span> </div>		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-right: 10px;">WITH REGARD TO</div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60%;"></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <span>↔</span> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60%;"></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <span>↔</span> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60%;"></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <span>↔</span> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 60%;"></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <span>↔</span> </div> </div> </div>		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">PATTERNS OF SIGNIFICANT SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES:</div>		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;">CONCLUSION OR INTERPRETATION</div>		

prehension as well. Tell students that they may add any similarities that they see on the transparency to their own list. POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *Both were women, princesses, their countries were at war, lived in Africa, loved Radames (a handsome Egyptian captain), betrayed Radames, were from countries on the continent of Africa, were enemies, were the adored daughters of kings, were wealthy, had slaves, were beautiful.*

- **Now think of ways in which Aida and Amneris are different. Write the differences on the graphic organizer under the title “How Different?”** You will notice that there is a center box. Above these boxes what does it say? *With regard to.* Let’s see if we can figure out what this is for. One of the ways in which Aida and Amneris are different is that Aida is from Ethiopia and Amneris is from Egypt. What would be the category of this particular difference? *Birthplace.* So underneath Aida, we would write “Ethiopia” and under Amneris we would write “Egypt” and in the “With Regard To” box that connects them we would write “Birthplace.” (Demonstrate by writing this on the transparency as you explain.) **With your group, fill in the “How Different?” section of the graphic organizer. Remember to write the category of the difference in the box between the two side boxes.** Allow students time to write the differences between Aida and Amneris.
- **How are Aida and Amneris different?** As you call on individual students, ask extending questions about the causes and effects, implications, or significance of the differences between the two girls. Write them down on your class graphic organizer. Students should add any difference that they find interesting or significant to their own diagram. POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *With regard to birthplace, Aida was from Ethiopia and Amneris was from Egypt. With regard to Attitudes/Personalities, Aida was kind, cautious, understanding, patient, selfless, reluctant to betray Radames, and Amneris was quick-tempered, jealous, spoiled, vain, selfish, betrayed Radames out of anger. With regard to Radames himself, Aida was loved by him and she was willing to die for him, but Amneris was not loved by Radames and she caused his death. With regard to their rank in the household, Aida was a slave with no rights and was a personal handmaiden to Amneris, and Amneris was the mistress of Aida and had the power of life and death over her.*
- **Look over your graphic organizer. Do you see any similarities and differences that might not be very important? We want to base our understanding of the two girls on significant ideas. For example, the fact that they are both women might not be as significant as the fact that they both loved Radames. Take a few minutes to mark out those you consider to be not important.** Give students a few minutes to look over their graphic organizer.
- **Did anyone mark anything out?** Students responses will vary. Discuss those that are mentioned and be sure to ask why they considered the item unimportant compared to the others. Allow a dialogue between students if there is a difference of opinion. Emphasize that these are their ideas and each graphic organizer may be different.
- **Think about all of the similarities that you have written down. Do you see any patterns that have developed? Take a minute to look over your graphic organizer and write down a few patterns that you find.** Allow time for students to analyze their graphic organizers and write down some patterns. Students may have difficulty finding patterns. Remind them that these are big ideas or ideas that occur over and over. For example, both women are forever changed by their love of Radames and his ability to love only one of them. Tell them not to repeat just the similarities and differences in the pattern box, but to look at the big picture. You may have to give them an example to help them. POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *The way they felt about Radames, their upbringing, Aida’s ability to adapt to any situation.*

- **Based on the comparing and contrasting that you have just done, think about what you have learned about Aida and Amneris. The last box of the graphic organizer calls for an interpretation of the information that you have thought about. Write a sentence(s) that expresses the conclusion suggested by the skillful thinking you have done about these two girls and their similarities and differences you have written down.** Allow students time to write their conclusions. If students have a problem understanding what a conclusion is or how it differs from a summary of similarities and differences, use an example to help them understand.
- **We are going to do an activity now in which each of you will have a partner. When you have your partner, I will continue the directions.** Either assign partners or allow students to choose someone who sits close. **Decide on which one of you will be Number 1 and which will be Number 2.** Allow time to do this. **We are going to “Think-Pair-Share.” This is an activity where you each will be given the opportunity to read your sentence while your partner listens. The role of the listener is to assist his/her partner to express the conclusion more clearly. The listener may only ask questions:**

Question of clarification: If you don't understand what something means, either a word or a statement, you should ask a question which will help you to understand. Ex. “What did you mean when you wrote \_\_\_\_\_?”

Question of elaboration: If you would like more information about a statement that you think is too brief, ask your partner for more details. Ex. “Can you tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_?”

Question of challenge: If you think that your partner is off track or is confused, you should ask a question about why he/she made the conclusion. Ex. “Why did you think \_\_\_\_\_?” Be careful here because you want to direct your partner to rethink the sentence and not to take your question personally.

- **Number 1, you be the listener and, Number 2, you read your conclusion. In about two minutes we will change roles.** After both have been given time to respond, allow students the opportunity to rewrite their conclusions. Ask for volunteers to read their sentences to the class. As the volunteer reads his/her conclusion a second time, have the class reflect on the content and the kind of statement that the student is making—one that involves comparison or contrast (or both), cause and effect, or a generalization, etc. Ask students to identify where on the graphic organizer supporting information can be found if this is the opening sentence of a paper comparing the two stories. Students' conclusions should include the names of the two princesses and how their relationship changed due to the love they gave and received from Radames, and their individual status in the household. Have volunteers share their conclusions with the rest of the class. Celebrate their efforts and discuss whether the conclusion will set the stage for writing about similarities, differences, or both. POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *The conflict between Ethiopia and Egypt was reflected in the conflict between their princesses over their love of the same man. The conquered princess, Aida, showed more loyalty and love than Amneris, who betrayed the man she loved and led him to his death.*

#### THINKING ABOUT THINKING

- **What do we call the kind of thinking we just did?** *Comparing and Contrasting.*
- **What questions did we ask as we did this kind of thinking?** Students should mention the questions on the thinking map for skillful open comparing and contrasting. If they are having trouble, point to some of the questions and ask if each was considered. Students identify the following questions: How are the two things similar? How are they different? What similarities

and differences seem significant? What interpretation or conclusion is suggested by the significant similarities and differences?

- **Is it a good idea to compare and contrast this way? In what ways was this different than just thinking about similarities and differences?** POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *It focuses our thinking as to why we are comparing and contrasting two things instead of just making lists. When you asked questions, they made us think about why we thought the similarity or difference was significant and sometimes helped us to see that they were very important.* Students often remark that this helps them to understand the story and the characters in greater depth.
- **Do you think that this is a valuable way to think about how things are alike and different? Why?** Answers will vary.
- **How did the graphic organizer help you in the process?** Students often answer that the graphic organizer allows them to write things down in an organized way. The “With Regard To” box helps to focus their thinking. The probing questions allow them to think more in depth, which in turn helps them to determine what is significant. The graphic organizer helps them reach a conclusion that is based on sound thinking.

#### APPLYING YOUR THINKING

##### Immediate Transfer

- **We will be reading another novel called *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* that involves two very strong characters. The two men have a great influence over the main character of the book. One is the captain of the ship and the other is Zachariah, the cook. We will use the strategies for open compare and contrast to take a closer look at these two men.**
- **In social studies, we will begin studying America before the beginning of the Civil War.** Using open compare and contrast, we will determine the similarities and differences of the North and South, find patterns, and draw conclusions about these two regions.

##### Reinforcement Later

- **Compare and contrast two versions of *Sleeping Beauty*—a traditional one and *Sleeping Ugly*.**
- **Compare and contrast *Snow White* and her stepmother.**

#### WRITING EXTENSION

Have students write a four-paragraph essay using the graphic organizer as prewriting. The conclusion sentence should be used in the opening paragraph. (See writing template)

Have students write another version of the story reversing the roles of the two princesses, but keeping their personalities and attitudes the same.

Using the differences section of the completed graphic organizer, write a diamante poem using “Aida” and “Amneris” as the top and bottom nouns.

#### SUGGESTED SPECIAL NEEDS MODIFICATIONS

**Frontload:** Inferring an interpretation of a piece of literature based upon information in the work is often challenging to some students. Students often choose to retell or summarize information rather than making an inference from that information. Therefore, prior introduction to using information to make an inference will be necessary for these students. Teachers should provide

models and think-alouds of how to make conclusions which interpret the information. Daily events, as well as content-related activities should model the language and the process of thinking. Initially, guiding students to a specific aspect of a situation for interpretation or conclusion may be necessary. For example, “What does the information tell us about folk heroes? Is there a pattern that we see? What evidence did we use to infer that conclusion or interpretation?”

**Clarify:** If the readability of the text is beyond some students, they may need to obtain the content through another medium (e.g., audiotape, read-aloud) or follow the same procedure in a like-ability group using a text at their reading level.

**Diversify:** Cut apart short paragraphs or longer pieces of writing and place them side-by-side for comparison. The teacher may limit the similarities and /or differences to only a few for some students. In general, because of the time constraints, limiting the number of ideas within each area of the graphic organizer can help students to focus on the process as they skillfully compare and contrast. The teacher may also focus some students on specific types of differences by writing them into the “with regard to” boxes.

Students who need extra help in learning how to find the main idea or draw a conclusion from a story can be guided by the teacher offering focus questions like “What did the lives of both boys tell us about their accomplishments?”

Students who need help with their writing should be challenged to write on their graphic organizers along with the other students. Oral interaction with these students can help them articulate what they have written. However, after their group processes what its members have written, you can also provide them with a copy of the finished graphic organizer to staple onto their own. They can then read the results to which they contributed. It is important that the thinking take precedence over the writing for these students.

For other students, writing assignments connected with the graphic organizer may be modified in two ways: 1) Allow students additional time to complete the regular assignment, or 2) Reduce the length of the writing assignment.

Special needs students are often aided by working in cooperative groups. Students with conceptual language may be particularly challenged by the concepts “same and different.” Group work will especially help these students. Establish an atmosphere in which all answers are initially accepted in such groups. Give special needs students additional time to complete the graphic organizer, require only one graphic organizer per group, or have them work with a partner.

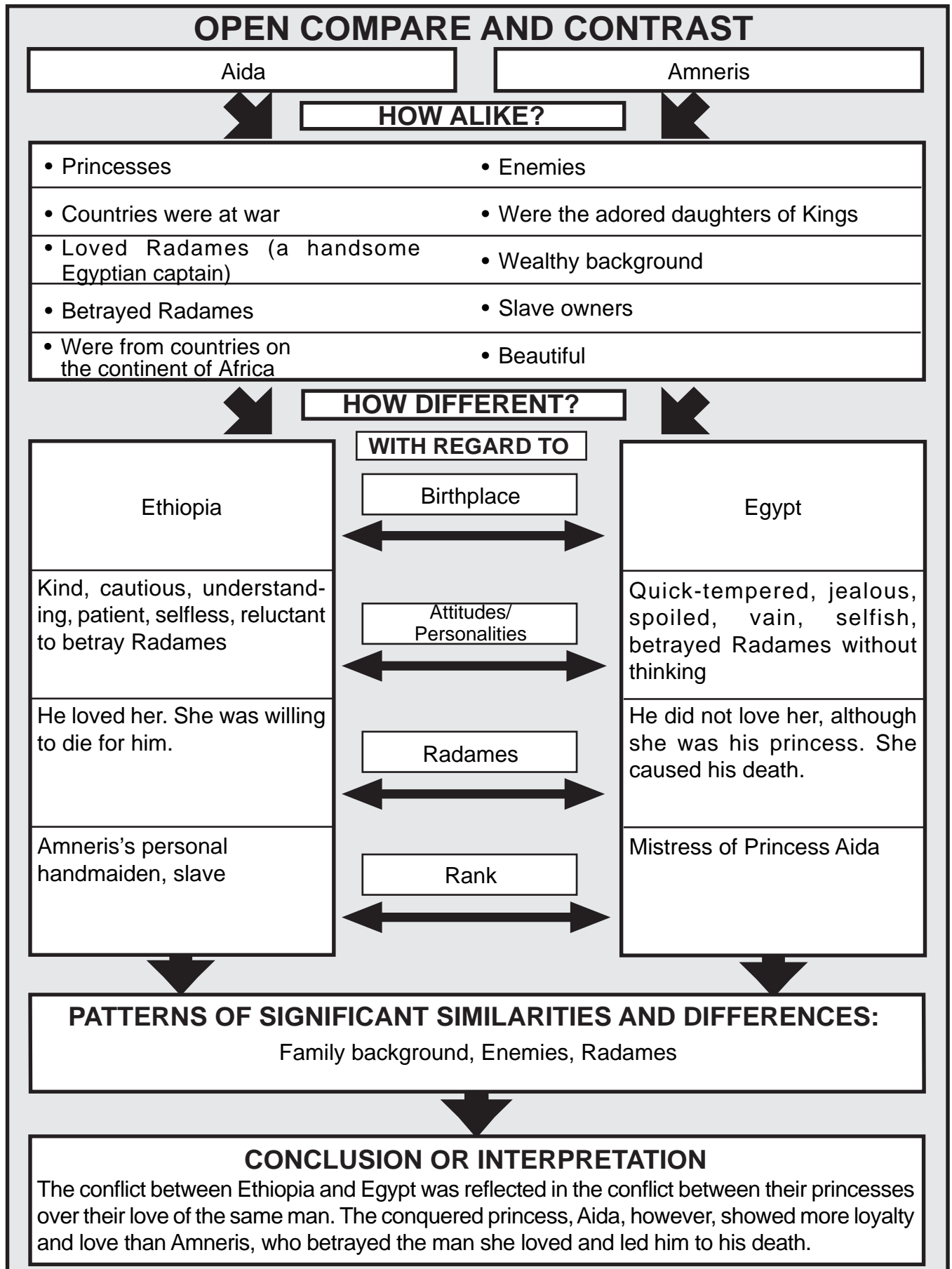
**Expand the Possibilities:** Assessments of written responses may be based upon the student’s thinking first and expressive skills secondly. Oral responses may also reveal thinking beyond the student’s ability to express him- or herself in writing. Asking students to accompany any writing they do with a completed graphic organizer for compare/contrast can also provide a basis for assessing the degree to which they have mastered the thinking skill as well as the content.

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#### ASSESSING STUDENT THINKING ABOUT COMPARE AND CONTRAST

In order to assess student thinking about open compare and contrast, students should complete a graphic organizer utilizing two things from a content area. Then have them write a four-paragraph essay with the graphic organizer as a prewriting activity. Use the thinking map for open compare and contrast to assist in evaluation of steps.

Sample Student Responses • The Triangle



**Sample Student Compare/Contrast Writing • The Triangle**

The conflict between Ethiopia and Egypt was reflected in the conflict between their princesses over their love of the same man. The conquered princess, Aida, however, showed more loyalty and love than Amneris, who betrayed the man she loved and led him to his death. These African princesses had many similarities and differences.

The similarities of the two women are many. Both were loyal to their countries, which were at war. Aida obeyed her father and showed her loyalty when she tricked Radames into revealing the unguarded pass. Overhearing Radames telling Aida the secret, Amneris accused him of being a traitor to Egypt. Another way the princesses were alike is they both came from privileged backgrounds. They were brought up in palaces with everything they could imagine. These daughters of kings both had slaves to do their bidding. Their feelings for Radames, the handsome Egyptian captain, was another similarity. Aida loved Radames so greatly that even though she got him to betray the secret of the pass, she died with him in the tomb. Amneris also loved Radames and even though she caused his death by accusing him of being a traitor, in the end she tried to save him from the tomb.

Although Amneris and Aida have many similarities, they also have many differences. One way they are different is their attitudes. While Aida was selfless, Amneris was selfish. Aida sacrificed for both her father and Radames. Amneris was extremely jealous and wanted to hurt what she could not have. They were also different with regard to freedom. Aida was a captured slave who had to obey every wish of her mistress, Amneris. Brought to the Pharaoh's palace in chains, she had no free will. Finally, they were different in the depth of feelings that Radames had for each of them. Amneris was his country's princess and because of that he owed her his allegiance. However, he deeply loved the "slave girl" Aida and even sacrificed all he valued for her.

The princesses had many similarities and differences, but only one was with the man she loved when the stone was rolled into place. Aida and Radames sealed their love with their death.

The conflict between Ethiopia and Egypt was reflected in the conflict between their princesses over their love of the same man. The conquered princess, Aida, however, showed more loyalty and love than Amneris, who betrayed the man she loved and led him to his death.



# BLOOD BROTHERS SIGN OF THE BEAVER

Literature

Grades 5–6

## OBJECTIVES

### CONTENT

Students employ the comprehension skills of main idea, supporting detail, drawing conclusions, determining character traits, and making inferences.

### THINKING SKILL/PROCESS

Students will learn to consider options and consequences skillfully in the context of making a decision by completing a decision making graphic organizer.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

### CONTENT

Students will read the novel *Sign of the Beaver* by Elizabeth George Speare. Cooperative learning as well independent learning will be utilized.

### THINKING SKILL/PROCESS

An explicit thinking map, graphic organizers, and structured questioning emphasize a thinking strategy for open compare and contrast (See p. 94 for reproducible diagrams.) Collaborative learning enhances thinking.

## LESSON

### INTRODUCTION TO CONTENT AND THINKING SKILL/PROCESS

- **Think about a time when you met someone new. What did you naturally do in regard to people that you already knew? Were there some similarities between the two? Write them on your paper.** Allow students time for reflection and writing. Students should identify both physical traits and personality traits, as well as background and interests.
- **What were some of the differences?** Allow students time for writing. Students should include the same traits as well as some new ones.
- **Let's think a little more about how we compare and contrast things. In school, you are usually asked to list some similarities and differences between the things you are comparing and contrasting. If you are shopping with your family and your mother is comparing and contrasting two breakfast cereals and you are helping her so that she can make a good choice, do you usually just list any similarity and difference you might notice? For example, if one box is green and the other yellow, is that a difference you note?** Students usually say that they would not take anything like the color of the box into account. **So what do you take into account?** POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *Taste, whether there are raisins in the cereals (I like raisins), whether the cereals have to be cooked, how much the cereals crackle when you put milk on them, how nutritious they are, how much sugar is in them, whether they are healthy.* **Why do you take into account these similarities and differences?** Most students respond that they are important ones for them. **So isn't that another thing you think about when you compare and contrast, which similarities and differences are important? If I was going to make a list of questions to ask when we compare and contrast, wouldn't there now be three questions on the list: How are they alike, How are they different, and Which similarities and differences are important?** Students usually agree with this.

- Are there any other questions that I should add to this list of important questions to ask when we compare and contrast? What else do you think about? Do you just list, in your mind, the important similarities and differences and then go do something else? POSSIBLE STUDENTS RESPONSES: *No, that isn't all, I then decide which cereal I want to eat. I make a decision about which one I want. I think more about the similarities and differences and tell my mother which I think she should choose.* When you do this, do you just repeat or summarize the similarities and differences? Students easily recognize that they say something more than what the similarities and differences are when they draw a conclusion. **So there is another question that we should add to our list: What conclusion can we come to about the things we are comparing and contrasting, based on the similarities and differences? And let's make sure that when we draw a conclusion, it is something that doesn't repeat the similarities and differences, but says something different that is suggested by the similarities and differences.** For instance, the first cereal is a better choice than the second because it is much more nutritional and costs much less.

- Here is a thinking map for comparing and contrasting that includes these questions, plus one other about patterns that some people also say they think about before they draw a conclusion. Let's try to use this map to compare and contrast rather than just listing some similarities and differences. Then comparing and contrasting will be much more interesting.

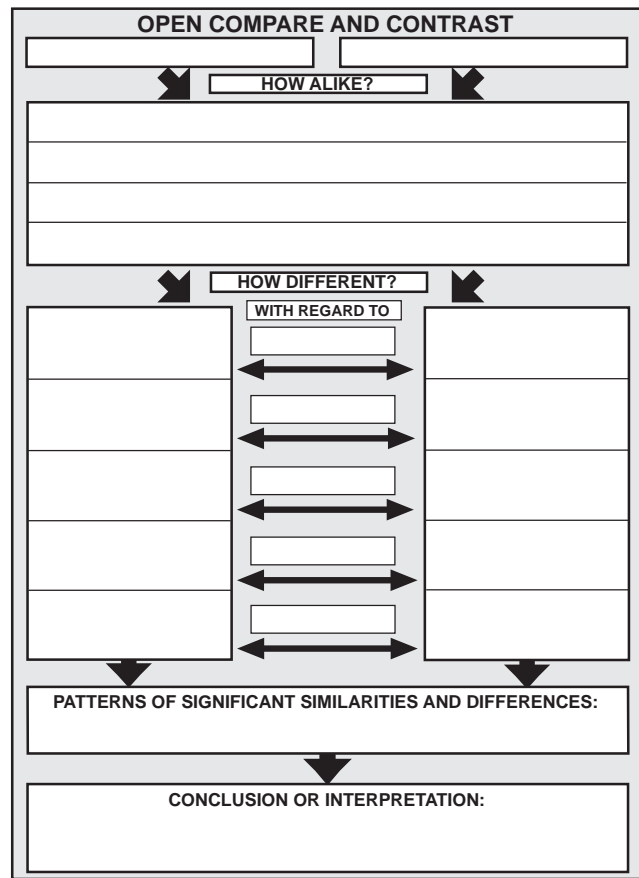
- Comparing and contrasting is a natural inclination that we all have whether it occurs when we meet someone new, or when we are comparing boyfriends and girlfriends or characters in a book. When you compare and contrast people, are some things more important than others? Allow students to give examples.

THINKING ACTIVELY

- We have just finished a novel named *Sign of the Beaver*, about the settlement of the Maine territory in the mid-1700s. Who were the two main characters? POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSE: *Matt and Attean.*
- How did they meet? POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSE: *Matt was attacked by bees and Attean's grandfather Saknis and Attean saved him when he fell into the water and hurt his leg. They nursed him back to health.* Just like the friends that you compared and contrasted, they also have similarities and differences. We are going to use a graphic organizer for "Open Compare and Contrast" to look at these two characters

OPEN COMPARE AND CONTRAST

1. How are they similar?
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5. What interpretation or conclusion is suggested by the significant similarities and differences?



**more closely in order to better understand their changing relationship.** Pass out the “Open Compare and Contrast” graphic organizer to everyone and allow time for names to be written on papers. (Pencil is preferred so that students may erase.)

- **With your partner, identify as many similarities as you can that Matt and Attean share and write them on your papers. It is important that both of you record the similarities because you will need this graphic organizer for future reference.** Allow time for students to record several similarities. (Have copies of the novel available for reference.) After they have listed the items, call on students at random to report similarities that they have written. Ask for only one similarity per student and record the response on a transparency or the board if you do not have an overhead. Be sure to ask questions that cause the student to think more carefully about each response. Questions of cause and effect, implications, and clarification extend not only the thinking but also the comprehension as well. Students should add any similarities that they see on the transparency to their own lists. POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *Both liked Robinson Crusoe. Both learned from each other. Both were prejudiced. Both received gifts that had belonged to their grandfathers. Both had a good work ethic. Both had no parents at the time. Both hunted for food and were responsible.*
- **Now think of ways in which Matt and Attean are different. Write the differences on the graphic organizer under the title “How Different?” You will notice that there is a center box. What does it say above these boxes? POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSE: *With regard to Let’s see if we can figure out what this is for. One of the ways in which Matt and Attean are different is that Matt is white and Attean is a Native American. What would be the category of this particular difference? POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSE: *Race, background. So underneath Matt we would write “white” and under Attean we would write “Native American” and in the “With Regard To” box that connects them we would write “Race.”**** (Demonstrate by writing this on the transparency as you explain.) **With your partner, fill in the “How Different?” section of the graphic organizer. Remember to write the category of the difference between the side boxes.** Allow students time to write the differences between Matt and Attean. POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *Culture—Attean lived in a wigwam, celebrated by dancing, worshipped spirits, women cooked/Matt lived in a cabin, slept on a bed, worshipped one God, cooked for himself. View of the land—Attean believed “The land is like the air”—it belongs to everyone. Matt believed land could be bought in order to belong to the owner only. Survival Skills—Attean made fishhooks, bows and arrows, & snares. Used all parts of animals. Knew the signs of the tribes. Matt grew crops on the land, built a cabin, could shoot a gun to get food, and read. Family Support— Attean’s had Grandparents, a sister, and the Native American Tribe/ Matt had a small family that was not there: father, mother, sister.*
- **How are Matt and Attean different?** As you call on individual students, ask extending questions about the causes, effects, implications, or significance of the differences between the two boys. Write the differences down on your class graphic organizer. Students should add any difference that they find interesting or significant to their own diagram.
- **Look over your graphic organizer. Do you see any similarities and differences that might not be very important? We want to base our understanding of the two boys on significant ideas. For example, the fact that they are both boys might not be as significant as their sharing of knowledge. Take a few minutes to mark out those you consider to be not important.** Give students a few minutes to look over their graphic organizer.
- **Did anyone mark anything out?** Student responses will vary. Discuss those that are mentioned and be sure to ask why they considered the item unimportant compared to the others. Allow a dialogue between students if there is a difference of opinion. Emphasize that these are their ideas and each graphic organizer may be different.

- **Based on the comparing and contrasting that you have just done, think about what you have learned about Matt and Attean.**
- **What are the patterns of significant similarities and differences that you found? Remember, these are not merely a repetition of the similarities and differences, but big ideas that you find repeated. For example, the prejudices that the boys bring to their relationship and that they overcome is a pattern that is found in the lesson. Can you find any others? Work with your group for a few minutes and be ready to tell the class what you find.** Allow students time to discuss the patterns. Then call on each group to report. POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *Survival in a harsh environment, learning about culture, etc.*
- **The last box on the graphic organizer calls for an interpretation of the similarities and differences that you have uncovered about Matt and Attean. Write one sentence that expresses a conclusion suggested by the skillful thinking you've done about these two boys.** Allow students time to write their conclusions.
- **We are going to do an activity now in which each of you will have a partner. When you have your partner, I will continue the directions.** Either assign partners or allow students to choose someone who sits close. **Decide on which one of you will be Number 1 and which will be Number 2.** Allow time to do this. **We are going to “Think-Pair-Share.” This is an activity where you each will be given the opportunity to read your sentence while your partner listens. The role of the listener is to assist his/her partner to express the conclusion more clearly. The listener may only ask questions:**

Question of clarification: If you don't understand what something means, either a word or a statement, you should ask a question which will help you to understand. Ex. “What did you mean when you wrote \_\_\_\_\_?”

Question of elaboration: If you would like more information about a statement that you think is too brief, ask your partner for more details. Ex. “Can you tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_?”

Question of challenge: If you think that your partner is off track or is confused, you should ask a question about why he/she made the conclusion. Ex. “Why did you think \_\_\_\_\_?” Be careful here because you want to direct your partner to rethink the sentence and not to take your question personally.

- **Number 1, you be the listener and, Number 2, you read your conclusion. In about 2 minutes we will change roles.** After both have been given time to respond, allow students the opportunity to rewrite their conclusions. Ask for volunteers to read their sentences to the class. As the volunteer reads his/her conclusion a second time, have the class reflect on the content and the kind of statement that the student is making—one that involves comparison, contrast (or both), comparison and contrast, cause and effect, or a generalization, etc. Ask students to identify where on the graphic organizer supporting information can be found if this the opening sentence of a paper comparing the two stories.
- Ask for student volunteers to read their conclusions to the class.

#### THINKING ABOUT THINKING

- **What do we call the kind of thinking we just did?** *Comparing and Contrasting.*
- **What questions did we ask as we did this kind of thinking?** Students should mention the questions on the thinking map for skillful, open comparing and contrasting. If they are having trouble, point to some of the questions and ask if each was considered. Students identify the

following questions: *How are the two things similar? How are they different? What similarities and differences seem significant? What interpretation or conclusion is suggested by the significant similarities and differences?*

- **Is it a good idea to compare and contrast this way? In what ways was this different than just thinking about similarities and differences?** POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES: *It focuses our thinking as to why we are comparing and contrasting two things instead of just making lists. When you asked questions, they made us think about why we thought the similarity or difference was significant and sometimes helped us to see that they were very important.* Students often remark that this helps them to understand the story and the characters in greater depth.
- **So you think that this is a valuable way to think about how things are alike and different?** Answers will vary.
- **How did the graphic organizer help you in the process?** Students often answer that the graphic organizer allows them to write things down in an organized way. The “With Regard To” box helps to focus their thinking. The probing questions allow them to think more in depth, which in turn helps them determine what is significant. The graphic organizer helps them to reach a conclusion that is based on sound thinking.

#### APPLYING YOUR THINKING

##### Immediate Transfer

- **We will be reading another novel that involves two strong characters. It is called *Beauty* and it is by one of your favorite authors, Bill Wallace. We will be using the open compare and contrast strategies to find significant similarities and differences between Luke and his grandfather. We may even take it further and use skillful comparing and contrasting to compare and contrast Saknis and Attean with Grandpa and Luke.**
- **Have you ever sat in a movie and thought that it was nothing like the book? We will use the strategies of open compare and contrast to find the similarities and differences between the book *Sign of the Beaver* and the movie that was made from it, *Keeping the Promise*. Our conclusions should be quite interesting.**

##### Reinforcement Later

- **Compare and contrast two versions of *Cinderella*—a traditional one and *That Awful Cinderella* (which is from the stepsisters’ point of view).**
- **Compare and contrast *Huckleberry Finn* and *Tom Sawyer*.**

#### WRITING EXTENSION

Have students write a four-paragraph essay using the graphic organizer as pre-writing. The conclusion sentence should be used in the opening paragraph (see writing template).

Have students write another version of the story using a Native American girl in Attean’s place.

#### SUGGESTED SPECIAL NEEDS MODIFICATIONS

**Frontload:** Inferring an interpretation of a piece of literature based upon information in the work is often challenging to some students. Students often choose to retell or summarize information

rather than making an inference from that information. Therefore, prior introduction to using information to make an inference will be necessary for these students. Teachers should provide models and think-alouds of how to make conclusions which interpret the information. Daily events, as well as content-related activities should model the language and the process of thinking. Initially, guiding students to a specific aspect of a situation for interpretation or conclusion may be necessary. For example, “What does the information tell us about folk heroes? Is there a pattern that we see? What evidence did we use to infer that conclusion or interpretation?”

**Clarify:** If the readability of the text is beyond some students, they may need to obtain the content through another medium (e.g., audiotape, read-aloud) or follow the same procedure in a like-ability group using a text at their reading level.

**Diversify:** Cut apart short paragraphs or longer pieces of writing and place them side-by-side for comparison. The teacher may limit the similarities and /or differences to only a few for some students. In general, because of the time constraints, limiting the number of ideas within each area of the graphic organizer can help students to focus on the process as they skillfully compare and contrast. The teacher may also focus some students on specific types of differences by writing them into the “with regard to” boxes.

Students who need extra help in learning how to find the main idea or draw a conclusion from a story can be guided by the teacher offering focus questions like “What did the lives of both boys tell us about their accomplishments?”

Students who need help with their writing should be challenged to write on their graphic organizers along with the other students. Oral interaction with these students can help them articulate what they have written. However, after their group processes what its members have written, you can also provide them with a copy of the finished graphic organizer to staple onto their own. They can then read the results to which they contributed. It is important that the thinking take precedence over the writing for these students.

For other students, writing assignments connected with the graphic organizer may be modified in two ways: 1) Allow students additional time to complete the regular assignment, or 2) Reduce the length of the writing assignment.

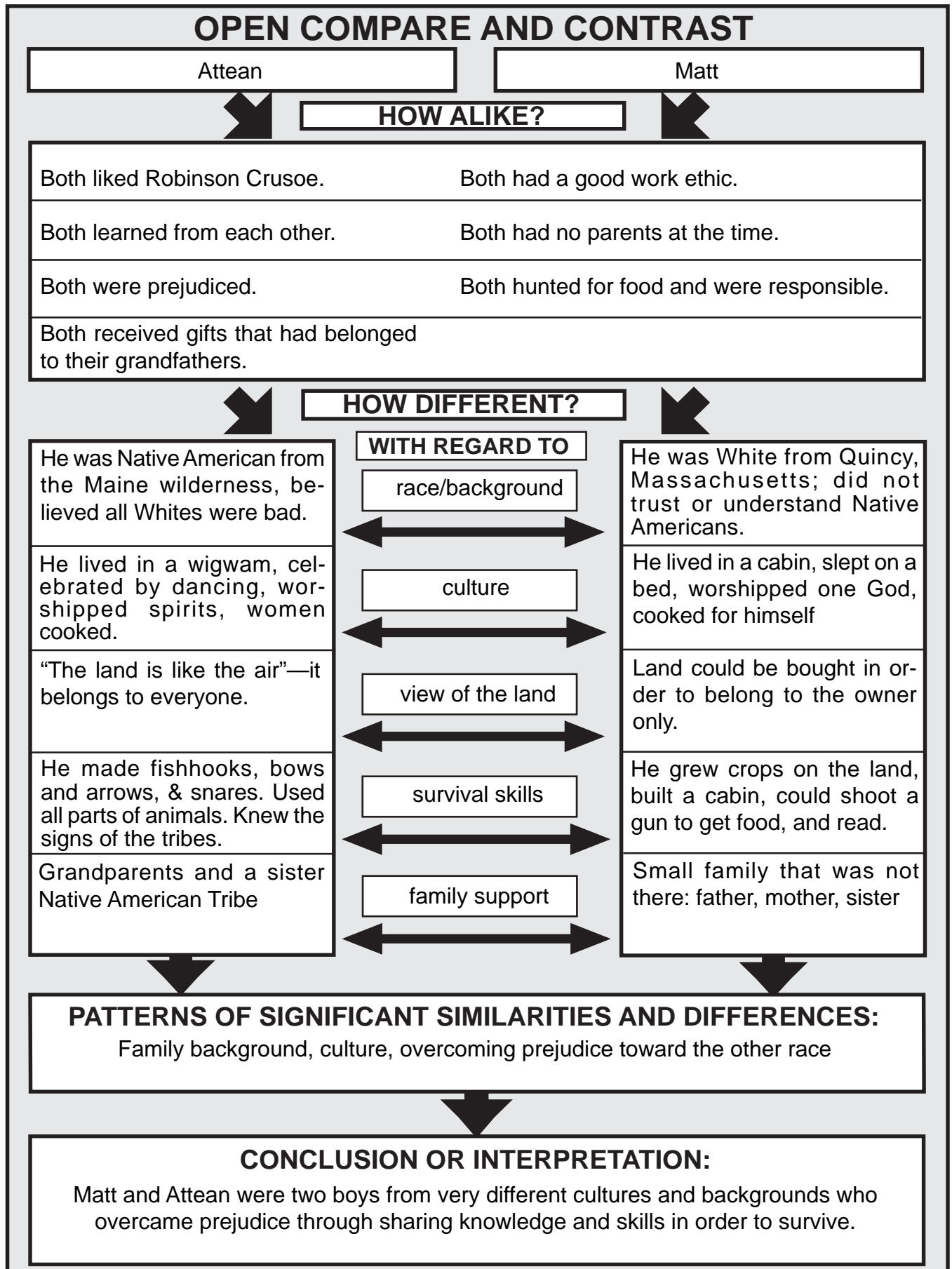
Special needs students are often aided by working in cooperative groups. Students with conceptual language may be particularly challenged by the concepts “same and different.” Group work will especially help these students. Establish an atmosphere in which all answers are initially accepted in such groups. Give special needs students additional time to complete the graphic organizer, require only one graphic organizer per group, or have them work with a partner.

**Expand the Possibilities:** Assessments of written responses may be based upon the student’s thinking first and expressive skills secondly. Oral responses may also reveal thinking beyond the student’s ability to express him- or herself in writing. Asking students to accompany any writing they do with a completed graphic organizer for compare/contrast can also provide a basis for assessing the degree to which they have mastered the thinking skill as well as the content.

#### ASSESSMENT OF SKILLFUL COMPARE AND CONTRAST

To assess open compare and contrast, you may use the graphic organizer as a pre-writing activity and have the students compare and contrast any two items from a content area. Have them write a four-paragraph essay based on their thinking. Determine if they are following the steps of the thinking map for comparing and contrasting.

Sample Student Responses • Blood Brothers



**Sample Compare/Contrast Student Writing • Blood Brothers**

Matt and Attean are two boys from two very different cultures who discover friendship through sharing their knowledge and skills with each other. In the book *The Sign of the Beaver*, these young men learn how to survive on their own in the woods of Maine. There are similarities and differences between the two boys.

Matt and Attean are different but have many similarities. They were both very quick-thinking. When they saw the bear, by quick thinking they killed it. Both of them were highly intelligent. Attean was a smart person because he knew the ways and signs of the wilderness and knew how to get back. Matt knew how to cook, build a cabin, and read. The two boys were both without parents, which made them be more resourceful. Attean's parents were killed by White men, and Matt's parents were in Massachusetts.

Although Matt and Attean have many similarities, they also have several differences. One way the boys are different is their culture. Attean's culture has spirits, clothes made from skins, dancing ceremonies, and wigwams. Matt's culture has a belief in God and Christ, clothes made from cloth, and log cabins. Another way in which they are different is their survival skills. Attean fishes with a spear, makes good bows and arrows, and knows his way out of the wilderness. Hunting with a gun until it is stolen, Matt cooks his own food, fishes with a fishing pole, and farms. The last way in which they are different is their background and race. While Attean is a Native American from the woods of Maine and believes that no one can own the land, Matt's race is White, from the town of Quincy, Massachusetts, and he believes that land may be bought and sold.

Matt and Attean prove that friendship can exist without prejudice. They learned from each other by sharing their skills and experiences. They looked beyond their differences and became friends through their similarities.

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