

Grade 5 , Unit 4
Comparing and Contrasting Characters and Genres

Pacing Guide: This unit is designed to be implemented in the course of **25 days** with **3 buffer days** for a total of **28 days**.

Unit Overview: In this unit students take an in-depth look at literature by comparing and contrasting two or more characters, settings, or events in stories and dramas. They will also analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text. Students will analyze a character, providing a claim about the character’s traits, and backing it up with reasons and evidence. Students present these claims/evidence orally and class members will listen and summarize points made by each speaker, evaluating how each claim is supported by evidence. Students will also write a compare/contrast essay.

Essential Questions and Big Ideas Addressed in this Unit

Essential Questions:

Why is it important to pay attention to what a character does and how the character does these things?

Why should readers compare characters across texts?

What are the components of a character analysis?

How can multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text?

Big Ideas (Possible Responses to the Essential Questions):

Paying attention to what characters do, think, and say helps readers to develop theories about characters. These theories then help the reader predict how the book will unfold and can help reveal theme.

Looking across texts helps the reader look at various ways characters deal with struggle or conflict and this helps us understand theme at a deeper level.

A character analysis must state a claim about the character, and then support that claim with reasons and evidence from the text.

Using visuals, music, and sound effects leads us to interpret a story in a certain way. This can sometimes change the way we were envisioning a story, and may lead us to deeper meaning.

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Common Core Reading Standards Highlighted in this Unit	Common Core Language Standards Highlighted in this Unit
<p>RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <p>RL.5.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.</p> <p>RL.5.7 Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text.</p> <p>RL.5.9 Compare and contrast stories in the same genre on their approaches to similar themes and topics.</p>	<p>L5.1c Use verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions.</p> <p>L5.1d Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.</p> <p>L5.2c Use a comma to set off the words yes and no, to set off a tag question from the rest of a sentence, and to indicate direct address.</p> <p>L5.3b Compare and contrast the varieties of English used in stories, dramas, or poems.</p> <p>L5.5a Interpret figurative language in context.</p> <p>L5.5b Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.</p>
Common Core Writing Standards Highlighted in this Unit	Common Core Speaking and Listening Standards Highlighted in this Unit
<p>W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.</p> <p>W.5.2 Write informative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. Introduce the topic clearly; group related information logically; Develop ideas with specific examples from the text; Use linking words; provide a concluding statement or section.</p>	<p>SL.5.2 Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.</p> <p>SL.5.3 Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.</p>
<p>Supporting Standards:</p> <p>RL.5.2</p> <p>RL.5.4</p> <p>RL.5.5</p>	

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Learning Experiences (Tasks)

Task 1: (approx. 7-10 days) Students begin this character analysis work by reading stories, zooming in on a character. As students read, they will begin to develop a theory about the character, and begin gathering evidence to support that theory, jotting notes on a recording sheet (attached) or on stickies. They will then use this information to assist them in writing a character analysis paragraph in which they state a claim about the character, and back it up with specific evidence from the text.

See attached mini-lessons from Lucy Calkins for more ideas. Also included in the playlist are ideas for using two novels in this unit: *Because of Winn Dixie* and *The Tiger Rising*.

One suggestion is to use the story *Elena* (p.550 HM). Students will read the story as a class, with the teacher chunking the text and providing key stopping points for students to think about the thoughts, actions, and words of the character and how these help readers form theories. Teacher should have students strategically reread parts of the text that provide specific evidence. (As Lucy Calkins says, “We use what a character does as a window to help us understand this person or character”).

If desired, teacher could provide a claim for students, and students would work to find evidence to support it. (eg., *Find evidence that supports the claim that Elena was a courageous and daring woman.*) Students would take notes as they read and reread.

Students then use these notes to write a character analysis. The paragraph would include the the name of the text, the claim, specific evidence from the text to back up the claim, and a conclusion.

In small groups, students can present their claims orally and group members listen and summarize the points made by each speaker, evaluating how each claim is supported by evidence.

<http://www.google.com/#q=how+to+teach+character+analysis+to+fifth+graders&safe=active&surl=1>

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See playlist for Lucy Calkins excerpt and minilessons (Source: A Curricular Plan for the Reading Workshop)

Task 2: Students will read another text, and analyze the character in this text, jotting traits and evidence from the text (see playlist for task 2 recording sheet). In task three, students will be comparing the characters from task one and two.

The teacher should be careful to pick a story that has a character that can be compared to the one from text 1. If using *Elena*, one possible comparison story could be *A Boy Called Slow* (see playlist). This is a true story, but lends itself well to character trait analysis. *Earthquake Terror* (HM basal) could also be used, but the text and the character are less complex.

Students should also present their ideas orally, with group members listening and summarizing the points made by each speaker.

Task 3: At this point in the unit, students will compare the characters from both texts, considering their character traits and how their actions exhibit these traits. They compare the struggles of the characters and how they work to overcome them. The characters may have similar problems but deal with them in different ways. How are their situations the same, or different? (see attached mini-lessons from Lucy Calkins for ideas on teaching the comparison).

In writing, students will plan and write an informational compare/contrast essay. Teacher should model this for students. The essay will include:

- The name of the two texts and characters being compared
- Several examples of how the characters are the same (using evidence from both texts)
- At least one way the characters are different
- A conclusion

Resource for graphic organizers:

<http://www.cobbk12.org/Cheathamhill/LFS%20Update/Graphic%20Organizers.htm>

Experience 4: Students will analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (reading standard 5 and spk/lis standard 2). They will use all they have learned about character analysis to determine tone/mood/meaning of a story. First, student will read and make

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meaning of a written story (e.g.: character analysis and theme). Then they will listen & watch a multimedia version of the same text, listening for the following purposes:

- to identify the different vocal styles the narrator uses to tell the story
- to identify how the narrator “gets into character”
- to notice how the music in the video contributes to the mood/theme of the story

Students should engage in some comparisons (2-3) of written text and a multimedia version, analyzing how a multimedia version of a text supports (or does not support) a written version.

In partnerships/small groups, students will then design a collaborative poster which synthesizes to explain how a visual version supports a written version. Students will present their posters to another small group.

Optional:

While the teacher is pulling small groups, the other students could work in small groups/partnerships to create a multimedia presentation of a book. This could be done using a variety of technologies (PowerPoint, Prezi, iMovie, “a play”, etc...)

Resources: (Note: these are not all typical fifth grade books, but the purpose of this task is to do the multimedia comparison and to enhance listening comprehension. Another option is to use excerpts from a longer chapter book and the corresponding movie clip (eg., Charlie and the Choc. Factory, James and the Giant Peach, Matilda...)

These multimedia presentations are found on Safari Montage:

Chato’s Kitchen by Gary Soto (see text on playlist)

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<http://safari.sandi.net/SAFARI/montage/play.php?keyindex=17116&location=local&>

Owl Moon by Jane Yolen

<http://safari.sandi.net/SAFARI/montage/play.php?keyindex=17141&location=local&>

<http://www.ltps.org/webpages/mmutinsky/block2.cfm?subpage=1235443> (owl moon text)

The Emperor's New Clothes

<http://safari.sandi.net/SAFARI/montage/play.php?keyindex=16510&location=local&>

*see playlist for text version

The Paperboy by Dav Pilkey

<http://safari.sandi.net/SAFARI/montage/play.php?keyindex=16460&location=local&>

Abel's Island by William Steig

<http://safari.sandi.net/SAFARI/montage/play.php?keyindex=17205&location=local&>

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