

Skill 23

HOW TO

Write a Comparison

Colonial Schools

Look around your classroom. What do you see? Desks? Textbooks? Computers? How do you think your classroom might compare to a classroom in the 1600s and 1700s?

A good way to learn about people, places, and things is to compare them to something you know. When you make a **comparison**, you tell how two or more things are alike.

Read the following passage. Can you tell how colonial and current textbooks compare?



Hornbook

In classrooms today, you'll find textbooks with many pages and pictures. Colonial schoolrooms had a kind of textbook called a hornbook. A hornbook was a paddle-shaped board with a sheet of paper on it. The paper usually had the alphabet, numerals, and prayers written on it.

STEPS IN Writing a Comparison

Use these steps to write a comparison.

1 Pick the Topics

Choose two topics you want to compare.

2 List Features

Write down features, or details, about each of the topics you are comparing. Then find the features that both topics have in common.

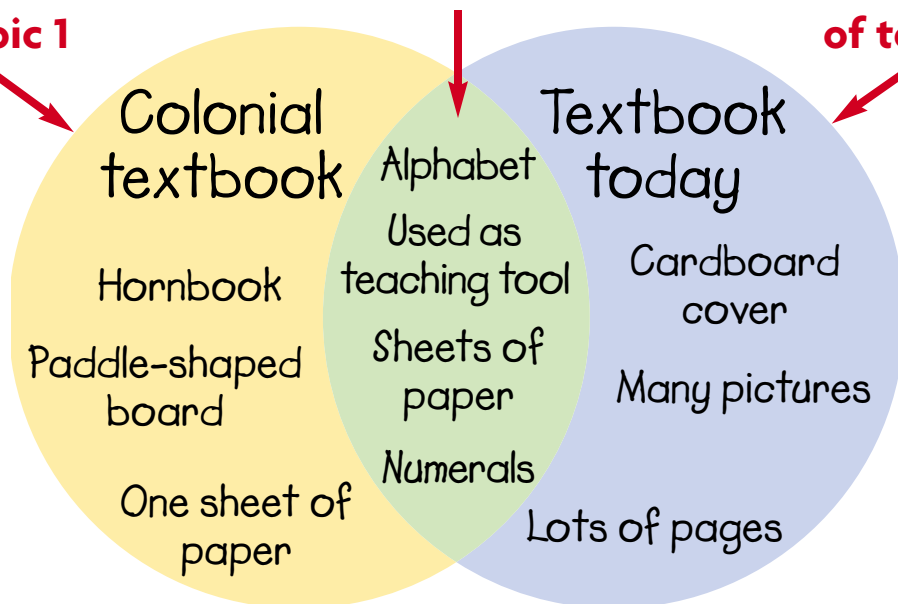
3 Write About the Common Features

Before writing your comparison, you can make a Venn diagram like the one below to help you find common features. Begin your comparison with a topic sentence that tells what two topics you are comparing. Then use your list of common features to make sentences that tell how the two topics are alike.

Features of topic 1

Common features

Features of topic 2



EXAMPLE OF Writing a Comparison

As you read the story below, think about how a colonial classroom is like your own.

School in Colonial America

A school day in colonial times started in the morning. Most students spent the day studying reading, writing, simple math, and prayers. Some wealthier schools also taught foreign languages, higher math, science, and social manners. Students used hornbooks to learn the alphabet, numbers, and prayers. They recited most lessons. Most colonial schools had only one room for students of all ages to share. Many schools were for either boys or girls. Only a few let boys and girls go to class together.

Topic sentence

Comparing School Days

Topic 1

Topic 2

Some things about my school day and a colonial school day are the same. Both school days start in the morning. Reading, writing, math, and science are studied in both schools. Numbers and the alphabet are learned by students in both schools. Each school also has books that the students use to study their lessons.

Common features

USE THIS SKILL

Write a Comparison

Write a comparison of the two classrooms shown in the two pictures below.



Colonial classroom



A classroom today

TEST TIP

When you are asked to make comparisons on a test, think about how things are similar. Be sure to check each answer against the information in the reading passage.