

Comparing Works

Connections

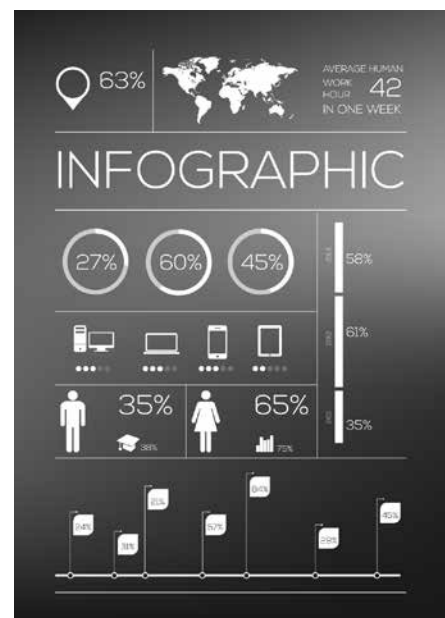
Have you ever...

- Seen a political cartoon that was related to a recent news story?
- Read two stories that were similar but by two different authors?
- Watched a movie that was based on a book?

We all see related information from different sources presented in different ways. The differences might be format, style, tone, purpose, or some other aspect of writing. Making a comparison can help you understand how authors communicate.

Written and visual material can be compared in many ways. Two works might address the same topic, but in different ways. The genre or format may be different. A cartoon might be about the same topic as a news story, but the focus and impact is different. The tone or purpose might be different. By comparing works, you can see how different authors express themselves.

Presenting ideas in different ways creates different effects. How is a cartoon different from an essay? How is an infographic different from a letter? How is a fictional story or poem different from a slideshow? How is one story or essay different from another? The author may be trying to reach a specific audience or emphasize a specific point. Different formats, genres, and styles have different purposes, emphases, and impact.





Comparing Arguments in Different Formats

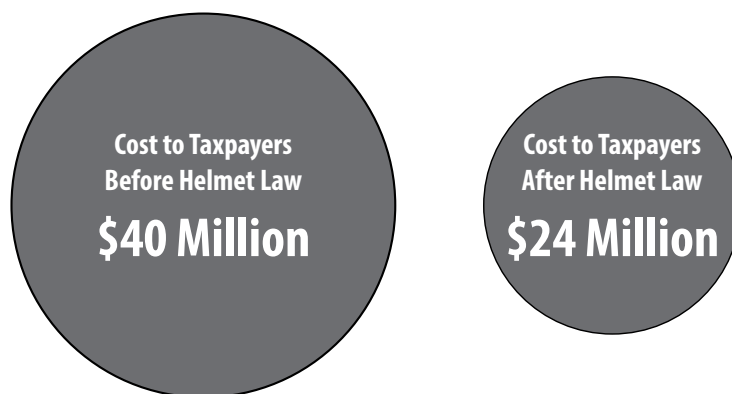
Arguments can “sell” the idea in many different formats, including paragraphs, pictures or cartoons, and graphs and charts.

Read and view the three arguments. Then answer the following questions.

Helmet laws protect motorcycle drivers in 48 of the 50 United States. These laws vary; some only require helmets for drivers under 21. States that require motorcyclists to wear helmets have seen a steep decline in severe head trauma from accidents. Not only does wearing a helmet translate into less time spent in the hospital following an accident, but a higher rate of full recovery and lower hospital costs, less time missed from work, and less cost to the taxpayer. States that do not require all motorcyclists to wear helmets need to change their laws in order to see these benefits for their citizens as well.

Opponents say that it’s their right to be free to ride unhelmeted, but are they the only people who suffer if they get injured? Loved ones suffer with the injured, who may need months or years of rehabilitation.

Drivers in cars are required by law to wear seat belts, so why would we allow motorcyclists to ride at the same speeds as cars with nothing between them and the road? Helmet laws save the average state \$60 million dollars over 12 years. States, taxpayers, and riders all benefit from a helmeted cyclist.



In 1991, prior to enacting its helmet law, California’s state medical insurance program paid \$40 million for the treatment of motorcycle-related head injuries. That figure dropped to \$24 million after enactment of a universal helmet law.

Source: Adapted from “Universal Motorcycle Helmet Laws Reduce Costs to Society” by The National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration, available at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/motorcycle/safebike/costs.html>



Identify the Claims

No matter the format of an argument, the first thing you want to do is find the claim. The claim is the idea or statement that the author wants you to agree with. This is like figuring out what an advertisement wants to sell. “Oh, this is a commercial for shoes!” You need to know what idea the author wants you to “buy.”

To find the claim of an argument, imagine the paragraph, cartoon, or chart as a commercial, and ask yourself, “What do they want me to agree with?” If you can answer that question, you have found the claim. As in advertisements, sometimes the claim of an argument is implied, or left unstated. In these cases, the argument still has a claim, but it is left up to the reader (you) to put it into words.

- ?
1. What is the claim in the argument written in paragraph form?

The argument wants the reader to agree that all 50 of the United States should require motorcyclists to wear helmets at all times.

- ? 2. What is the claim of the argument being made in the circle graph? Is it stated or implied?

The claim of the circle graph is implied. The reader is asked to agree with the circle that is “better.” Which is “better”—spending \$40 million of taxpayer dollars on motorcycle injuries, or spending \$24 million?

- ? 3. What is the claim of the cartoon? Is it stated or implied?

The claim of the cartoon is implied, that riders who don’t wear helmets are vulnerable to injury. The cartoon implies that riders should wear helmets.

Look for Similarities and Differences Between the Arguments

Imagine the argument in a different format. Ask yourself, “What would this argument look like as a graph? What would it look like as a cartoon? How can I describe this cartoon or graph in words?”

This is really a way of using your imagination to “read between the lines.” You do this every time you see a commercial or advertisement—so you have a lot of experience! You “translate” the commercial into a message, and you either agree with it or disagree with it.

Look for evidence that supports the claim. What evidence is included? What evidence is excluded? Does the argument include reasons to support the claim? How effective is evidence? How do the arguments in different formats compare?

- ? 4. What do the three arguments have in common?

The arguments about mandatory helmet laws all ask the reader to agree that helmets should be worn by riders. Their claims are similar.

? 5. How are the arguments different?

The written passage gives the most information. It explicitly states a claim and provides detailed evidence. The chart gives evidence that affects non-riders, focusing on the monetary advantages of mandatory helmet laws. The cartoon focuses on the human aspect of wearing helmets and does not mention mandatory helmet laws. It is implied that laws should be in place, however. Perhaps some would choose not to wear helmets, but is that a choice they should be permitted by law to make?

Connect the Comparison to a Bigger Picture or Draw a Conclusion

What is effective about each argument? How does each argument affect the reader? Why does the author choose the format? How does the format connect to the author's purpose? How can your comparison help you draw conclusions or combine the information?

? 6. How do the different formats connect to the author's purpose, and change the meaning and effect of the arguments?

The written passage contains the most detailed information and an explicit claim. The tone is formal. The author is trying to make a clear argument with specifics that the reader can examine and critique. However, the reader needs to read, absorb, and process more information. Although the argument is the most complete and specific, the reader needs to think more and process the information in the passage.

The graphic with the two circles emphasizes only one point, so it limits the information the reader needs to process. It's visual, so it's easy to see right away the difference in numbers. This graphic seems intended to grab the reader with one obvious fact, and use that clear data to sway the reader's view.

The cartoon uses humor. It's similar to the graphic in that it focuses on one point, but the tone is informal and mocking. Instead of visual data, it uses humor. It makes fun of people who want to be "free" to wear a helmet. Ultimately, those people are the losers if they end up injured, or worse. Humor can be compelling, but it lacks a complete and logical argument.



Read the passages and answer the questions that follow.

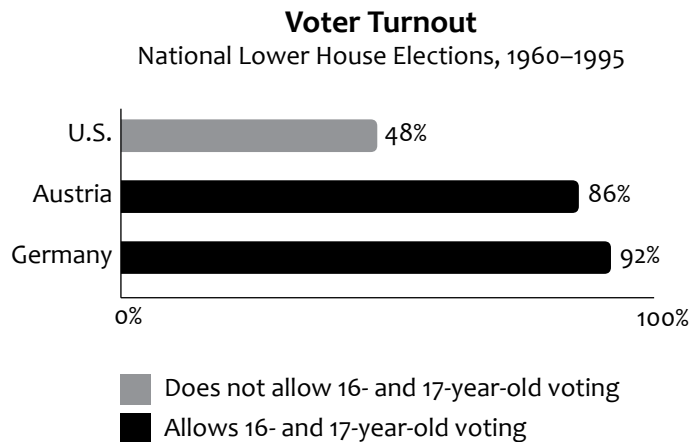
The voting age should be lowered to 16 for local elections. In most states, 16- and 17-year-olds are legally able to drive and hold jobs. They are also able to make the decision to stay in or leave high school before graduating in most states. 16- and 17-year-olds have a large stake in the decisions made by local school districts and city councils, so they should be permitted a voice in those decisions.

The United States Constitution prohibits denying suffrage to those under the age of 18, yet federal law sets the voting age at 18. It would be better to lower this age to 16, as it already is in many countries, such as Germany, Austria, and Brazil.

When people feel they have more control over their futures, they are more invested in making deliberate, thoughtful choices. So many life decisions are made at this time in a person’s life that it is only right that young adults be allowed to participate more fully in their government. Preventing 16- and 17-year-olds from voting requires them to rely on parents or guardians to voice their needs, at just the time when teenagers need to be forming their own opinions. As they take on more responsibility, they need to be allowed more voice.

Some might say that young people are too immature to make “adult” decisions. Yet, voting at 16 can arguably create 18-year-olds who are more conscientious and more willing to make mature, impactful decisions for themselves.

Becoming an adult doesn’t happen all at once, and being handed responsibility all at once can be overwhelming. Implementing 16-year-old local voting is a great method for transitioning teens into adulthood.



Source: Voting turnout from “Electoral Participation” by Mark N. Franklin, in *Controversies in Voting Behavior* (2001).

1. What is the claim of the first argument?
 - a. 18-year-olds don't vote often enough.
 - b. 16- and 17-year olds are being denied their constitutional right to vote.
 - c. Adults don't know how to vote; teaching them early is the way to fix this.
 - d. 16- and 17-year-olds should be allowed to vote in local elections.

2. What is the claim of the second argument?
 - a. Allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to vote might increase voter turnout.
 - b. The U.S. has the lowest voter turnout of all first-world nations.
 - c. Germany is more democratic than Austria.
 - d. Voter turnout is definitely not affected by the age voting is permitted.

3. Does the graph prove there is a link between age and voter turnout? Why or why not?

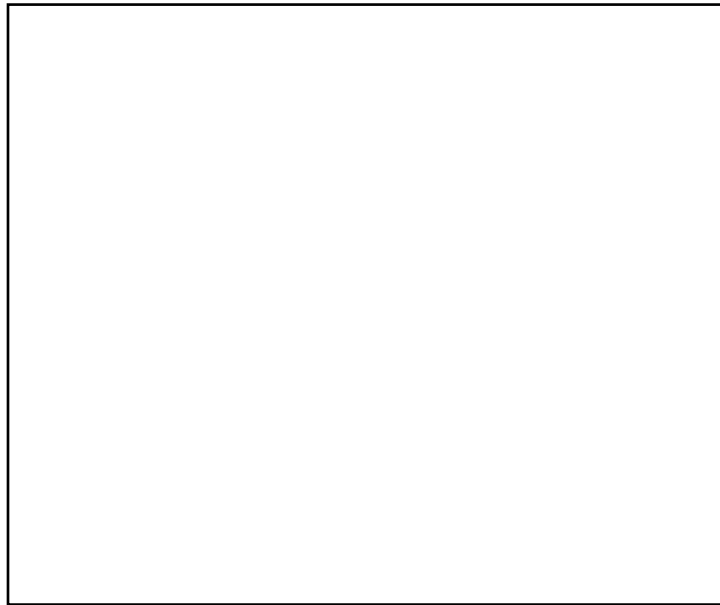
4. What is one advantage the first argument has over the second? Why?

5. Compare the two arguments. What is the effect of the different formats of the two arguments?

6. What are the limitations of communicating an argument in the form of a chart?

★★ 7. What is a conclusion you can draw based on the passage and the chart?

★★ 8. Draw a cartoon that has a claim “16- and 17-year-olds should have their own voice in local elections.”



★★ 9. When do you think a cartoon would be more effective than a chart? Why?

★★ 10. Do you think the written argument for permitting 16 and 17 year-olds to vote would be stronger if it included the information illustrated in the chart? Why or why not?



Comparing Similar Texts

Sometimes you will compare texts with similarities: similar genres, styles, or themes. The following passages have similar genres and share some ideas.

Read the two passages and answer the following questions.

In *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* by Agatha Christie, Detective Hercule Poirot investigates the death of Emily Inglethorp, a recently remarried wealthy widow.

“This is a very pleasant meeting for me, Miss Cynthia. This is my old friend, Monsieur Poirot, whom I have not seen for years.”

“Oh, we know Monsieur Poirot,” said Cynthia gaily. “But I had no idea he was a friend of yours.”

“Yes, indeed,” said Poirot seriously. “I know Mademoiselle Cynthia. It is by the charity of that good Mrs. Inglethorp that I am here.” Then, as I looked at him inquiringly: “Yes, my friend, she had kindly extended hospitality to seven of my country people who, alas, are refugees from their native land. We Belgians will always remember her with gratitude.”

Poirot was an extraordinary looking little man. He was hardly more than five feet, four inches, but carried himself with great dignity. His head was exactly the shape of an egg, and he always perched it a little on one side. His moustache was very stiff and military. The neatness of his attire was almost incredible. I believe a speck of dust would have caused him more pain than a bullet wound. Yet this quaint dandified little man who, I was sorry to see, now limped badly, had been in his time one of the most celebrated members of the Belgian police. As a detective, his flair had been extraordinary, and he had achieved triumphs by unravelling some of the most baffling cases of the day.

He pointed out to me the little house inhabited by him and his fellow Belgians, and I promised to go and see him at an early date. Then he raised his hat with a flourish to Cynthia, and we drove away.

“He’s a dear little man,” said Cynthia. “I’d no idea you knew him.”

“You’ve been entertaining a celebrity unawares,” I replied.

And, for the rest of the way home, I recited to them the various exploits and triumphs of Hercule Poirot.

In *A Study in Scarlet* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes investigates the murder of Enoch Drebber.



[Sherlock] Holmes was certainly not a difficult man to live with. He was quiet in his ways, and his habits were regular.

It was rare for him to be up after ten at night, and he had invariably breakfasted and gone out before I rose in the morning. Sometimes he spent his day at the chemical laboratory, sometimes in the dissecting-rooms, and occasionally in long walks, which appeared to take him into the lowest portions of the City. Nothing could exceed his energy when the working fit was upon him; but now and again a reaction would seize him, and for days on end he would lie upon the sofa in the sitting-room, hardly uttering a word or moving a muscle from morning to night. On these occasions, I have noticed such a dreamy, vacant expression in his eyes, that I might have suspected him of being addicted to the use of some narcotic, had not the temperance and cleanliness of his whole life forbidden such a notion.

As the weeks went by, my interest in him and my curiosity as to his aims in life, gradually deepened and increased.

His very person and appearance were such as to strike the attention of the most casual observer. In height he was rather over six feet, and so excessively lean that he seemed to be considerably taller. His eyes were sharp and piercing, save during those intervals of torpor to which I have alluded; and his thin, hawk-like nose gave his whole expression an air of alertness and decision. His chin, too, had the prominence and squareness which mark the man of determination. His hands were invariably blotted with ink and stained with chemicals, yet he was possessed of extraordinary delicacy of touch, as I frequently had occasion to observe when I watched him manipulating his fragile philosophical instruments.

From *A Study in Scarlet* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1886

Identify Similarities in Elements of the Text

No matter what the similarities and differences are in the two texts, you can compare elements of the texts in a simple chart to find similarities. Think of this as a checklist of elements of style or form. Two diverse works may have many similarities.

- ? 1. In the chart below, note similarities between the two passages.

Element	Similarities	Differences
Genre		
Format		
Themes/Ideas		
Perspective		
Tone/Style		
Structure		
Purpose		

Identify Differences in Elements of the Text

If two passages have strong similarities, it may be difficult to identify differences. Though you might find both similarities and differences in some areas, look particularly at the elements where you didn't find strong similarities, and note specific words and phrases in the text where applicable.

- ? 2. In the chart below, note differences between the two passages.

Element	Similarities	Differences
Genre	Mystery genre	
Format	Passage from a novel	
Themes/Ideas	Introducing a brilliant detective	
Perspective	First person, friend of detective	
Tone/Style		
Structure		
Purpose	To introduce the detective	

Draw Conclusions or Apply the Comparison

Once you have a finished chart noting similarities and differences, draw conclusions about the texts or apply what you’ve learned to your task.

Element	Similarities	Differences
Genre	Mystery genre	
Format	Passage from a novel	
Themes/Ideas	Introducing a brilliant detective	In passage 1, the narrator is familiar with the detective’s past, but in passage 2 the narrator is “curious,” doesn’t know the detective well.
Perspective	First person, friend of detective	
Tone/Style		The first passage is lighter and more humorous, using words like “dandified” in passage 1 vs. darker words like “hawk-like,” “forbidden” in passage 2.
Structure		Passage 1 uses a conversation with a third person, in a scene. Passage 2 is description from the narrator.
Purpose	To introduce the detective	

? 3. What conclusions would you draw about the two texts based on the comparison?

The main difference between the passages seems to be tone. Holmes is depicted more darkly and mysteriously. His past is hidden and arouses curiosity, while Poirot’s past is full of “exploits” and “triumphs” that the narrator seems to relish discussing. Holmes is described as “hawk-like” and silent, while Poirot is egg-shaped and “dandified.” Overall, Holmes is stranger and evokes more curiosity.

Practice
It!

Read the two letters to the editor and answer the questions that follow.

To the Editor:

Cell phones for young people often have a bad reputation. People think that pre-teenage children should not carry cell phones, and the article “Phones in Our Schools? The Ultimate Distraction” attempts to make the case that phones shouldn’t be allowed in classrooms. As a teacher, I whole-heartedly disagree.

Cell phones in the classroom can integrate technology into learning in a way that nothing else can. From instant class polls and quizzes, to real-time research, to text or tweet participation in lectures, cell phones can add depth and interaction to classroom teaching. At the same time, students are learning to use important technology for our present and future. Don’t dismiss handheld classroom technology without exploring its benefits.

—A concerned teacher


To the Editor:

The article “Phones in Our Schools? The Ultimate Distraction” is dismissive, irrelevant, and unworthy of publication. If I seem annoyed, that’s because I am. When are we going to stop looking at new technology as some sort of demon to be feared? When are we going to stop limiting progress by focusing on possible “dangers” of every innovation?


Fear of technology follows innovation at every turn. Cell phones are bad for our children! 3D printers will be used to print guns! Encrypted information will help terrorists! In reality, these fears are always overblown and seek to rob us of the benefits of technological advancement.


The article in question is full of fear-mongering, mentioning that cell phones distract students from learning and provide access to “undesireable” material. Well, windows also distract students, and even information you don’t like can expand knowledge. Certainly, cell phones can be used for good or bad purposes, but overemphasizing the worse uses of technology leads to missed opportunities and slows progress.

—Annoyed reader

-  1. Use the chart to document similarities and differences between the two letters to the editor.

Element	Similarities	Differences
Genre		
Format		
Themes/Ideas		
Perspective		
Tone/Style		
Structure		
Purpose		

-  2. Write a comparison of the two passages that points out similarities and differences and draws a conclusion about the point of view of the authors.

-  3. Which letter presents a stronger argument? Why?



Check Your Skills

The following passages are from the inaugural addresses of President Barack Obama and President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Read the passages below and answer the questions that follow.

Excerpt from Franklin Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address

So first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.



In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunk to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side; farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone.

More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with the perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because the rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed, through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

Source: Excerpt from the First Inaugural Address by Franklin D. Roosevelt, March 4, 1933. Available at <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres49.html>

Excerpt from Barack Obama’s First Inaugural Address

That we are in the midst of crisis is now well understood. Our nation is at war, against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some, but also our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age. Homes have been lost; jobs shed; businesses shuttered. Our health care is too costly; our schools fail too many; and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet.

These are the indicators of crisis, subject to data and statistics. Less measurable but no less profound is a sapping of confidence across our land—a nagging fear that America’s decline is inevitable, that the next generation must lower its sights.

Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America—they will be met.

On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord.

On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn-out dogmas that for far too long have strangled our politics.

We remain a young nation, but in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set aside childish things. The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness.

Source: Excerpt from the First Inaugural Address by Barack Obama, January 20, 2009.
Available at <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres68.html>

1. Which of the following is a similarity between the two inaugural addresses?
- a. Both addresses talk about problems facing the country.
 - b. Both addresses use repetition at the beginning of paragraphs.
 - c. Both addresses offer detailed plans to deal with problems.
 - d. Both addresses point out the mistakes of past presidents.

*Remember
the Concept*

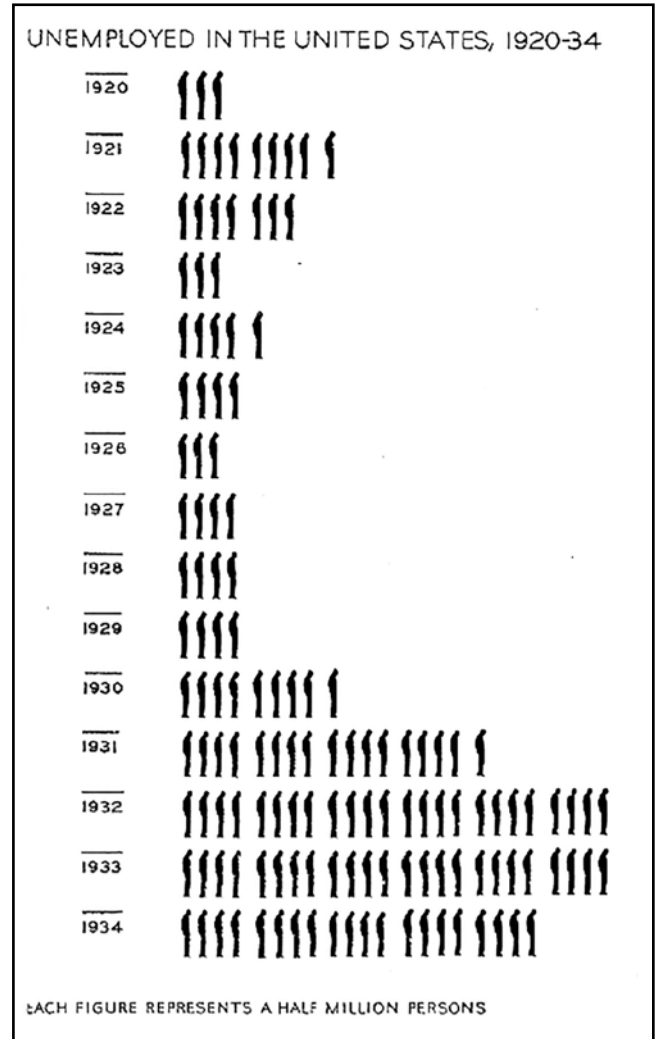
Identify main ideas, similarities, and differences.

Apply your comparison to draw conclusions or connect to bigger ideas.

2. Which of the following is a difference in tone between the two inaugural addresses?
- Roosevelt’s tone is sarcastic and joking, while Obama’s tone remains sincere and serious.
 - Roosevelt’s tone is optimistic, emphasizing problems, while Obama’s tone is pessimistic, emphasizing solutions.
 - While both have similar tones in many ways, Obama’s is more critical of individuals.
 - Both are negative and critical about individuals, but Obama is also critical of government and businesses.
3. Which of the following is a difference in style between the two inaugural addresses?
- Obama uses lists to emphasize problems in the nation, while Roosevelt doesn’t list out problems, down-playing their importance.
 - Obama uses repetition as rhetorical language to emphasize hope moving forward, while Roosevelt doesn’t prominently use repetition.
 - Roosevelt uses alliteration to emphasize important points, while Obama does not use any alliteration.
 - Roosevelt uses metaphors like “grim” to emphasize the problems of the countries, while Obama does not use any metaphors.
4. What conclusion can you draw about the two presidents from the inaugural addresses?
- Both presidents would serve two terms in office.
 - While Obama is a pessimist, Roosevelt is an optimist.
 - Both presidents are dedicated to improving the country, but Obama is more realistic about approaching problems.
 - Both presidents were elected during times of domestic problems, and constituents expected improvements in economic and social issues.
5. How does the photograph that accompanies President Roosevelt’s inaugural address relate to his speech?
- The photograph illustrates solutions that Roosevelt plans to implement.
 - The photograph illustrates people’s concerns over economic problems, which likely contributed to Roosevelt’s election.
 - The photograph illustrates the ongoing levels of reduced wages that made citizens frustrated with the previous administration.
 - The photograph illustrates the “fear” that Roosevelt talks about when he says that “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”

6. What is a difference in impact between Roosevelt’s description of unemployment and the chart showing unemployment from 1920 to 1934?
- The chart makes the steep rise in unemployment visually clear, while the speech emphasizes hope and promise for the future.
 - The chart defines problems clearly, while in the speech, problems seem vague and obscure.
 - The chart is more specific about the breadth of the many problems, while the speech focuses on one problem.
 - The chart makes the problems seem easy to solve, while the speech emphasizes hardship.

7. Based on the chart and Roosevelt’s speech, which conclusion could you draw about Roosevelt’s election?
- Roosevelt’s election was aided by steeply rising unemployment.
 - Roosevelt’s election caused higher unemployment.
 - Roosevelt’s election was unrelated to economic problems.
 - Roosevelt was elected by a narrow margin.



Source: “The Need For Economic Security In United States,” unpublished study by the Committee on Economic Security. Available at <https://www.ssa.gov/history/reports/ces/cesvol9theneed.html>

8. What is a difference in purpose between Roosevelt’s speech and the chart?
- Roosevelt’s speech is meant to show that the problems are solvable, while the chart is meant to show that the problems are insurmountable.
 - Roosevelt’s speech is meant to humanize the problem of unemployment, while the chart is meant to dehumanize it.
 - Roosevelt’s speech is political, meant to boost confidence in his policies and administration, while the chart is meant to visually illustrate a statistic.
 - Roosevelt’s speech is meant to show how bad a job the previous administration did, while the chart is meant to imply a definite solution to the problem.

Comparing Works

Comparing Arguments in Different Formats

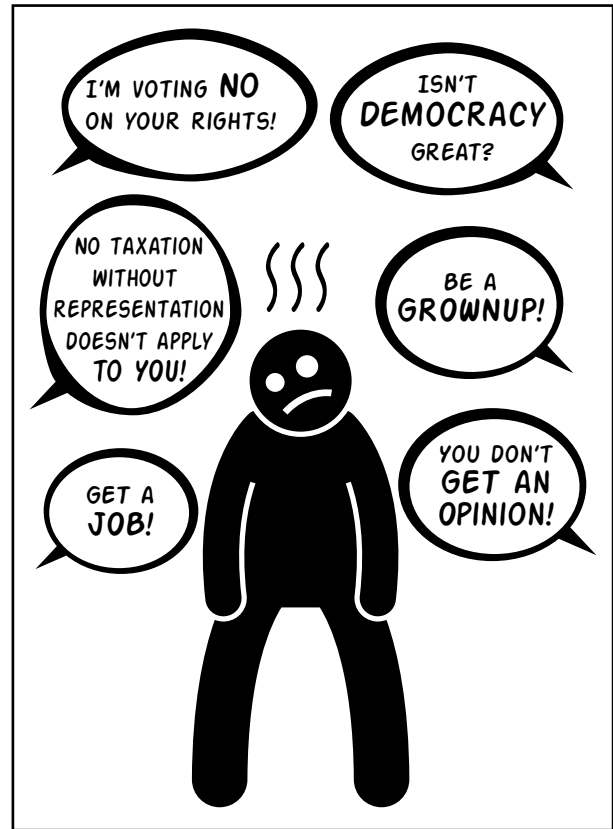
Practice It!

- d. 6- and 17-year-olds should be allowed to vote in local elections.

This claim is stated in the first sentence, and the passage gives reasons for why this would be advantageous.
- a. Allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to vote might increase voter turnout.

The countries that allow minors to vote have a much higher voter turnout rate; however, other factors could affect the voter turnout.
- No. The graph may show a correlation, even though there are only three countries shown. However, it doesn't prove causation. There is no evidence that a lower voting age causes higher voter turnout. There may be other reasons why the countries have higher voter turnout. There would need to be additional information to prove a link exists between the two.
- Answers will vary. One advantage of the passage is that it gives multiple reasons for changing the law to allow minors to vote. The chart can't convey detailed information and only gives one possible implied reason to allow younger people to vote.
- Answers will vary. The chart may be easy to interpret and visually appealing, but it's limited in the information it can show. The passage is more detailed and provides more support for its argument. It can also make more nuanced points than the chart. However, it may be more difficult for the reader to grasp all the information.
- Answers will vary. The main limitation of the chart is the amount of information it conveys. It doesn't explain the reasoning, give additional information that supports the argument, or provide responses to counterarguments. A chart can sometimes also be misleading, as well, in part because it gives a broad overview of data instead of a detailed analysis.
- Answers will vary. You might draw the conclusion that the lower voting age in Germany and Austria has not caused negative consequences, since the author of the first passage approves of it and the chart shows that voter turnout in those countries is high.

- Answers will vary. Many cartoons are possible. Here's one possible idea:



- Answers will vary. A cartoon might be more effective at making the reader empathetic to an argument. The argument might seem more real or personal in a cartoon format.
- Answers will vary. The written argument might be stronger if it could make a causal connection between the voting age and voter turnout in the chart, or if it could use the chart to counter arguments that a lower voting age might cause problems with voter turnout. However, without further supporting information, the chart isn't a strong argument to add support to the written passage.

Comparing Similar Texts

Practice It!

1.

Element	Similarities	Differences
Genre	Both letters to the editor	
Format	Both are short letters, two to three paragraphs	
Theme/ Ideas	Both have the same claim, that the argument that cell phones shouldn't be allowed in classrooms, is wrong.	The first states that technology is important in the classroom and that students learn technology. On the other hand, the second focuses on fear-mongering in the article and in thought about technology in general.
Perspective	Both letters are from readers of the paper.	The first letter is from a teacher, while the second letter is someone more concerned with technology generally.
Tone/Style		The tone of the first letter is neutral and reasonable, focusing on uses of cell phones in the classroom. The tone of the second is admittedly "annoyed." The writer uses questions and exaggerated exclamations to show frustration and irritation.

Structure	The structures of both are brief reviews, disagreeing with the article, and giving a few reasons in short paragraphs.	
Purpose	The purpose of both articles is to get the reader to agree that the article in question is wrong.	The second author seems more concerned with convincing people not to fear new technology, while the first author seems concerned that cell phones should be allowed in classrooms.

2. Answers will vary. The authors, though similarly arguing that the article about cell phones in classrooms was wrong, each emphasize different ideas. The first author points out the educational uses of cell phones, and as a teacher, has some qualification as an expert. This author is concerned that cell phones should be allowed in the classroom. The second author, on the other hand, takes an emotional tone and argues that the article promotes fear of technology.
3. Answers will vary. You might argue that the first letter, which makes clear arguments that cell phones are useful in classrooms, is better because it focuses on reasoned arguments why cell phones should be allowed in class.

Check Your Skills

1. a. Both addresses talk about problems facing the country.

Obama mentions a “crisis” and talks about war and about problems with the economy, health care, schools, and energy use. Roosevelt mentions loss of value, increased taxes, and other economic problems.

2. c. While both have similar tones in many ways, Obama’s is more critical of individuals.

Both addresses are similar in many ways. They both emphasize hope over fear and contain at least some blame for the greedy or political rulers. They both are optimistic about solving problems. Obama, however, includes critical words about individuals: “our collective failure to make hard choices,” “a sapping of confidence across our land—a nagging fear that America’s decline is inevitable, that the next generation must lower its sights.” Roosevelt says that the only thing to fear is fear itself, but he doesn’t emphasize that individuals have succumbed to fear or contributed to the country’s problems.

3. b. Obama uses repetition as rhetorical language to emphasize hope moving forward, while Roosevelt doesn’t prominently use repetition.

Obama repeats the phrase “on this day” to show a marker of change in the government and hope for the future. Roosevelt uses little repetition, and it’s not very prominent. There is some slight repetition, using the word “no” in “no failure of substance . . . no plague of locusts,” but Obama’s repetition is much more obvious and important to the passage.

4. d. Both presidents were elected during times of domestic problems, and constituents expected improvements in economic and social issues.

The speeches both focus on the problems of the country and how they are about to improve. This implies that both presidents are expected to improve economic and social issues in the country, such as unemployment.

5. b. The photograph illustrates people’s concerns over economic problems, which likely contributed to Roosevelt’s election.

The photograph shows people protesting for relief for the unemployed. The signs include “Immediate Cash Relief for the Unemployed” and “No Evictions for the Unemployed.” These sentiments, that the unemployed need government help, contributed to Roosevelt’s election.

6. a. The chart makes the steep rise in unemployment visually clear, while the speech emphasizes hope and promise for the future.

The visual chart shows a steep rise from 1930 to 1933, making it clear, but focuses on only that one problem. The speech talks about many problems based on the bad economy, but puts them in the context of change that is coming, emphasizing hope and promise for the future.

7. a. Roosevelt’s election was aided by steeply rising unemployment.

The chart shows steeply rising unemployment shortly before Roosevelt’s First Inaugural Address in 1933, when he took office. Also, during his speech, Roosevelt focuses on the upcoming promise for the future, after rejecting the “rulers of the exchange of mankind’s goods” and “unscrupulous money changers.” Based on the chart and the speech, Roosevelt was elected to alleviate unemployment and related problems, replacing a rejected administration and the policies that led to economic hardship.

8. c. Roosevelt’s speech is political, meant to boost confidence in his policies and administration, while the chart is meant to visually illustrate a statistic.

The inaugural address is the political speech at the beginning of a president’s term in office. Roosevelt talks about the problems, but he emphasizes hope and change for the future. The speech is meant to promote his policies and create confidence. The chart uses human figures to show unemployment numbers. It’s meant to help people visualize the unemployment statistics in terms of how many people are affected.