



What Can A Parent Do To Promote Thinking?

“Children grow into the intellectual life around them.”

Lev Vygotsky

The skill of Compare and Contrast means: Looking for similarities and differences. To compare typically refers to what is similar and contrast involves identifying the differences. Comparing and contrasting helps us develop new insights and learn information based on what is already known.

Ideas and tips for parents for the skill of Compare and Contrast:

Charts such as Venn diagrams help to visually see what is being compared and make sense of the information. Authors will often let you know when they are comparing and contrasting through signal words such as *also*, *similarly*, *likewise*, *although*, or *on the other hand*. The skill of compare and contrast can be used within books (such as two characters) or across books (such as between a fiction and nonfiction book on the same topic, or the differences in perspective of two authors).

Books that support the application of this skill:

- *Frog and Toad Are Friends* by Arnold Lobel
- *Mirror* by Jeannie Baker
- *George and Martha* by James Marshall
- *Blueberries for Sal* by Robert McCloskey
- *Stellaluna* by Janell Cannon
- *Little Red Riding Hood with Lon Po Po* by Ed Young
- *How Many Days to America* by Eve Bunting with *Grandfather’s Journey* by Allen Say

Questions that a parent can ask his/her child to reinforce this skill:

- How are (two characters or two pieces of information) alike/different?
- How is _____ like _____? How do you know?
- How does the character feel now at this point in the story?
- How do the author’s feelings about _____ compare to how another author feels about it?
- Are you and the protagonist *more alike or more different*? What is your evidence?