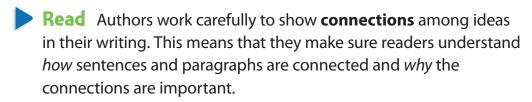


Lesson 19 **Describing Comparisons**



Describing the connections between ideas in a text will help you understand what the author is explaining.



Sometimes a writer shows connections by making a **comparison** between facts and ideas. Comparing means showing how two or more things are alike and different. Signal words such as *like*, *as*, *also*, and *both* show how things are alike. Signal words such as *however*, *but*, *different*, and *unlike* show how things are different.

Read the following paragraph about toothbrushes. How does the comparison help you understand the subject?

Like people today, ancient peoples wanted to keep their teeth clean. They also used toothbrushes. However, their brushes were very different. Our toothbrushes are plastic with nylon bristles. But the first toothbrushes were made of twigs with crushed ends.



► Think Read the paragraph again. Then finish the chart to see how the writer used comparisons to connect ideas.

Sentences	Signal Words	Purpose of Comparison
"Like people today, ancient peoples wanted to keep their teeth clean."	Like	
"They also used toothbrushes. However, their brushes were very different."		
"Our toothbrushes are plastic with nylon bristles. But the first toothbrushes were made of twigs with crushed ends."		

Talk How do the comparisons in the paragraph help you understand more about toothbrushes?



Academic Talk

Use these words to tell about the text.

- connections
- comparison



Ancient Toothpaste

by Tom Wiggins

- People have always liked to have clean, white teeth. Today, we just squeeze some toothpaste onto a brush and start scrubbing. The toothpaste is made from sodium fluoride, which keeps our teeth strong. It also contains a whitener and flavoring. But toothpaste used to be very different.
- The first tooth cleaner was made in Egypt over 1,600 years ago. Like today's tooth cleaners, it was a paste. Unlike today's toothpaste, it contained mint and dried iris flower. It also contained rock salt and pepper grains. And instead of using toothbrushes, the Egyptians rubbed the paste on their teeth with a finger.
- 3 Egyptian toothpaste also came in only one flavor: mint. Even with the mint, it tasted unpleasant and strong. Today, our toothpaste comes in many tasty flavors. We can choose from mint, cherry, and even bubblegum!
- 4 Like our toothpaste, ancient toothpaste did clean the teeth. However, it was not very pleasant to use. It was painful on the gums. It sometimes made them bleed. Egyptians must have cared a lot about their teeth to keep cleaning them even with all those problems!



Close Reader Habits

Circle words that signal comparisons. How do they help you understand how ideas are alike and different?

Explore

How do comparisons help connect the ideas in "Ancient Toothpaste"?



Think

1 Finish the chart to see how comparisons help connect ideas in the article. Add your own sentences in the last row.

Time words can make comparisons. Look for words such as *now/then* and *before/after*.

Sentences	Signal Words	Purpose of Comparison
"Like today's tooth cleaners, it		
was a paste. Unlike today's		
toothpaste, it contained mint		
and dried iris flower."		
((C)		
"Egyptian toothpaste also came in only one flavor: mint		
Today, our toothpaste comes in		
many tasty flavors."		
many rasty mavers.		

Talk

What ideas did you add to the last row of the chart? How are those ideas connected to each other and to other ideas in the article?

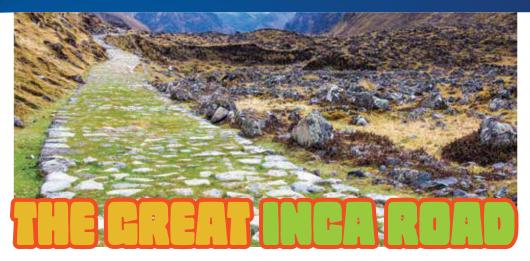


Write

Short Response How would you feel if you suddenly had to brush your teeth like the Egyptians did? Include comparisons from the article to explain your thinking. Use the space provided on page 316 to write your answer.

HINT Think about how you'll organize your writing to show comparisons.

Read



by Hilary Dumitrescu

- Roads are difficult to build and expensive to take care of. However, a great civilization needs great roads. Roads connect people to the goods they need to live. They allow the government to send help where it is needed. Even the most ancient civilizations understood the need for good roads.
- High in the Andes mountains, the Incan Empire thrived for hundreds of years. When Spanish explorers arrived in the 16th century, they were amazed by the roads they found. Even the longest Roman road, the Via Appia, was not as long as the Incas' Royal Way. The Incan road was 3,500 miles long! Like the Via Appia, the Royal Way connected the capital to other parts of the empire. More roads connected to it. All in all, the Inca roads stretched for 23,000 miles.
- Unlike the Romans, the Incas did not have wheels or carts. Instead, they rode llamas. These sturdy animals carried people and goods all over the empire. Messengers known as *chasquis* ran along the Inca Road. They carried messages from the king to all of his people.
- The Inca Road passed through high mountains. To safely cross the deep mountain ravines, the Incas built amazing hanging bridges. These bridges were not made out of steel like modern bridges. Instead, they were woven out of plant fibers! But the Spanish found that the bridges were strong enough to carry soldiers and horses safely.

Close Reader Habits

How does the author use comparisons to help you understand the topic? **Underline** the two civilizations whose roads are compared in paragraph 2.

Think

- 1 The roads of different groups of people are compared in this passage. Which groups are they?
 - **A** the Spanish and the Incas
 - **B** the Spanish and the Romans
 - **C** the Incas and the Romans
 - **D** the Incas, the Spanish, and the Romans
- Which **two** sentences from the passage compare and contrast two important roads?
 - **A** "Even the most ancient civilizations understood the need for good roads."
 - **B** "When Spanish explorers arrived in the 16th century, they were amazed by the roads they found."
 - **C** "Even the longest Roman road, the Via Appia, was not as long as the Incas' Royal Way."
 - **D** "Like the Via Appia, the Royal Way connected the capital to other parts of the empire."
 - **E** "These bridges were not made out of steel like modern bridges."
 - **F** "Unlike the Romans, the Incas did not have wheels or carts."
 - **G** "But the Spanish found that the bridges were strong enough to carry soldiers and horses safely."

Talk

How does the author make a connection between paragraphs 2 and 3? Talk about it with a partner.



Short Response Paragraph 4 compares two types of bridge. How does the comparison help you understand why Incan bridges were so amazing? Use the space provided on page 317 to write your answer.



Another way to spot comparisons is to look for the same details about two different subjects.

HINT Don't just look at signal words. Look for sentences that show how the bridges are the same or different.







Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 313.

Ancient Toothpaste

3	Short Response How would you feel if you suddenly had to
	brush your teeth like the Egyptians did? Include comparisons
	from the article to explain your thinking.

HINT Think about how you'll organize your writing to show comparisons.

Don't forget to check your writing.



Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 315.



4 Short Response Paragraph 4 compares two types of bridge. How does the comparison help you understand why Incan bridges were so amazing?

HINT Don't just look at signal words. Look for sentences that show how the bridges are the same or different.

Check Your Writing

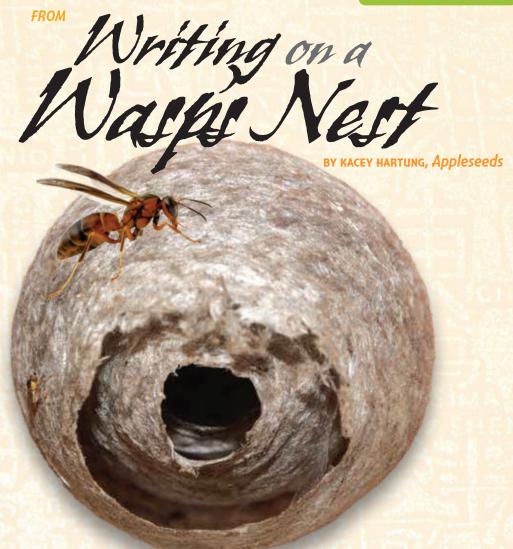
- ☐ Did you read the prompt carefully?
- ☐ Did you put the prompt in your own words?
- ☐ Did you use the best evidence from the text to support your ideas?
- ☐ Are your ideas clearly organized?
- ☐ Did you write in clear and complete sentences?
- ☐ Did you check your spelling and punctuation?



WORDS TO KNOW

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- mixture
- recipe
- ingredients



- You're outside on a warm spring day. You hear a buzzing sound over your head. On a nearby tree branch, you see a nest shaped like an upside-down umbrella. Wasps! Are you scared, or do you try to get a better look? Now think about this: A nest like that one led to the invention of something you would have a hard time living without—paper!
- Before paper was invented, the ancient Chinese wrote on pieces of silk cloth. But silk was expensive. The empress (or queen) of China wanted something to write on that would be cheaper and easier to make than silk. So she asked a palace worker named T'sai Lun to find a new material to write on. This happened about 1,900 years ago.
- According to the story, T'sai Lun remembered seeing an empty wasp's nest as a boy. The nest was made of a strong, lightweight material. T'sai Lun knew that if he could create a material like the wasp's nest, he would solve the empress's problem.

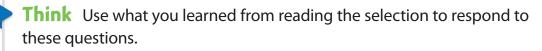
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- The job wasn't easy. It took T'sai Lun three years to come up with the perfect mixture: tree bark, scraps of fishing nets, and water. He boiled and beat the mixture into mush. Today we call the mush "pulp." Then he stretched a piece of cloth across a wooden frame and dipped it into the pulp. When he lifted the frame, a thin layer of pulp remained on top of the cloth. After drying in the sun, the layer formed kog-dz, which means "paper made from bark of mulberry tree."
- The Chinese were proud of T'sai Lun's invention and tried to keep the recipe for kog-dz a secret. Slowly, traders from China brought kog-dz to Japan, northern Africa, and Europe. As the use of kog-dz spread, the ingredients changed. In Europe, the people used cloth rags instead of tree bark. The rags worked well, but there were not enough to make all the paper that people wanted.
 - Today, paper is still made in the same basic way that T'sai Lun made it thousands of years ago. Wood is cut into small pieces, then broken down into pulp by large grinding machines. The pulp is sprayed onto a wire screen and heated until the paper is dry.
- We make different papers for different uses: soft tissue, stiff cardboard, colorful construction paper, smooth paper for computers, and glossy paper for magazines. They look and feel different, but they are all made from wood.
- Would you have thought that a wasp's nest could lead to a product we use every day? Before you run from those wasps, thank them for sharing their "recipe" for paper and changing our lives. Then you can run—after all, you don't want to get stung!



A worker dips a frame into pulp to make a large sheet of paper.



- 1 As explained in paragraph 2, how did the new writing material need to be different from the silk cloth that was being used?
 - **A** It needed to be stronger and heavier than silk.
 - **B** It had to be cheaper and easier to make than silk.
 - **C** It had to be more colorful than silk.
 - **D** It had to be made from the bark of trees.
- 2 As described in paragraph 5, how was papermaking in Europe different from papermaking in China?
 - **A** In Europe, there were more rags available than tree bark.
 - **B** In Europe, paper was made from a wasp's nest instead of tree bark.
 - **C** In Europe, paper was made from cloth rags instead of tree bark.
 - **D** In Europe, the rags worked much better than tree bark.
- 3 Read this sentence from paragraph 3.

The nest was made of a strong, lightweight material.

What is the **best** way to figure out the meaning of *lightweight*?

- **A** The word *light* means that it has something to do with color.
- **B** The context means that it is similar in meaning to *strong*.
- C It's made of the words *light* and *weight*, so it means "not heavy."
- **D** Since the material is used to make a nest, it means "grassy."

4	This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.			
	Part A How is paragraph 6 connected to one of the other paragraphs the article?			
	A	It compares how paper is made today to the description of how T'sai Lun made it in paragraph 4.		
	В	It compares T'sai Lun's paper to the types of papers described in paragraph 7.		
	C	It shows how writing materials have changed from what was described in paragraph 2.		
	D	It shows how T'sai Lun's paper is different from the wasp's nest described in paragraph 3.		
	Part B Which	detail from the article best supports your answer to Part A?		
	A	"The empress (or queen) of China wanted something to write on that would be cheaper and easier to make than silk."		
	В	"As the use of kog-dz spread, the ingredients changed."		
	C	"Today, paper is still made in the same basic way that T'sai Lun made it thousands of years ago."		
	D	"We make different papers for different uses"		
5	Read th	ne following sentence from paragraph 7.		
	They	look and feel different, but they are all made from wood.		
	What is being compared in this sentence? Explain how the sentence connects to the one that came before it.			

- A Paragraph 4 shows how hard it was to come up with a writing material similar to the wasp's nest described in paragraph 3.
- **B** Paragraph 3 shows how the wasp's nest reminded T'sai Lun of the recipe he came up with in paragraph 4.
- **C** Paragraph 4 shows how the tree bark T'sai Lun used was similar to the wasp's nest he remembered in paragraph 3.
- **D** Paragraph 3 describes the thin layer of pulp that T'sai Lun tried to make in paragraph 4.



Comparisons are used throughout this article to help readers understand more about the history of paper. Reread the article. Underline every comparison you find.

- **Plan Your Response** Create a list of the comparisons you found. What key ideas does each comparison help explain? Write that idea next to the comparison.
- Write an Extended Response Choose two comparisons from the list you made. Tell how those comparisons help connect or explain ideas in the article.



Learning Target

You've seen how comparisons can be used to connect or explain ideas in a passage or article. Tell how these comparisons and connections can help you understand what you read.

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