



## WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

### Video: Reptile Relatives

#### *Compare-Contrast Nonfiction Text Structure (whole-whole)*



### Organizing Your Writing Using Compare-Contrast Nonfiction Text Structure

It is long recognized that middle school students are aware of and can recognize compare-contrast text structure more easily than some other structures when they read. Being aware of and recognizing text structure is important knowledge to have. Researchers have found that it helps readers differentiate important from unimportant information. They also report students who know and understand how text is structured are better able to recall the information that they've read.

While students may have an easier time recognizing compare-contrast text structure in other's writing, they have a much more difficult time trying to use this structure when organizing their own writing. Since they are often asked to compare and contrast information in a written summary of what they have read, this can be a problem. It seems that is difficult for them to produce agreement between main ideas and supporting details when using this organizational structure.

### Three Organizational Patterns of Compare-Contrast Text Structure

- Whole-Whole Compare-Contrast Text Structure is used when the author describes each topic separately, providing all the features and details of one topic (e.g., dolphins) in the first set of paragraphs followed by parallel paragraphs about the second topic (e.g., whales).
- Part-Part Compare-Contrast Text Structure is a point-by-point comparison of two topics. For example, in a composition of dolphins and whales, the first, second, and third paragraphs might be about where they live, how they communicate, and the physical features of each, respectively.
- Mixed Compare-Contrast Text Structure is a combination of whole-whole and part-part. Some paragraphs might be only about the dolphins or whales, whereas other paragraphs might be about the similarities and differences in one feature of both, such as their food.

### Using a Graphic Organizer

Graphic organizers help students focus on concepts and how they are connected to other concepts. When used during the planning process of writing, the ideas presented in a graphic organizer can be expanded on in a more organized way. This helps the writer create a clearer message for his or her audience.

#### References:

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# thinking ALoud

Making Sense of Literacy



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