

Venn Diagrams

Purpose:

To enhance understanding by means of comparisons, to foster students' abilities to make connections between texts, and to encourage thoughtful reflection and categorization.

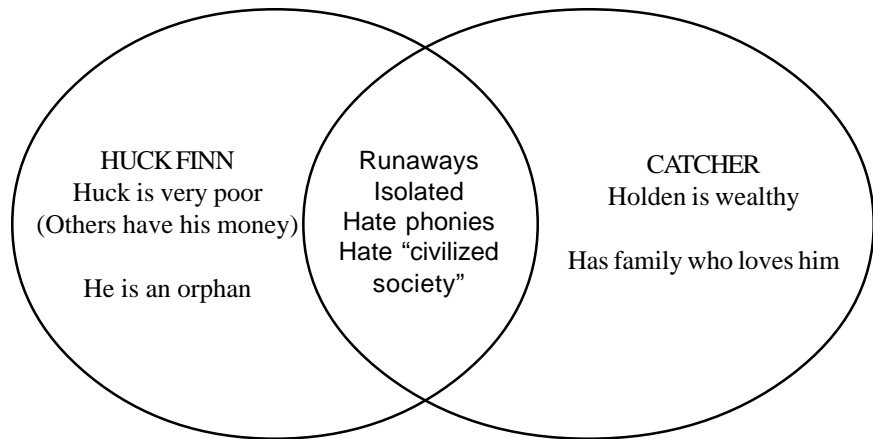
Materials:

Multiple copies of texts, paper and pencil or chalkboard and chalk

Procedure:

1. Students look for contrasts and comparisons as they read or after they have read.
2. Students work in small groups of two or three, brainstorming and then drawing a Venn diagram together.
3. Class shares and discusses the diagrams and expands on the ideas within the circles.
4. Students keep the diagrams in their portfolios for future writing activities. A logical assignment is a comparison/contrast paper using the Venn diagram as a base.

Example from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Catcher in the Rye*.

**Notes:**

Another alternative is for the teacher to select words and phrases from the text before students work with the diagrams. The student's task in this case would be to decide where to place words and phrases on the diagram and to prepare reasons for their decisions.

When students become comfortable with the diagrams, they can use them during prewriting as a way to organize their thoughts.