

Two Texts, One Idea

Compare complete stories and reconsider a first impression.

9.W.1.B "Write reflectively in response to readings in which students compare two or more texts with details, examples, and other textual evidence to support an idea or position."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Both stories below are original fiction written for this worksheet. Underline one revealing action in each; circle a detail that complicates your first judgment of either character.

Two Ways to Help

Text A: The Empty Chair

Nadia arranged twelve chairs for the neighborhood meeting. When only three people came, she began stacking the empty ones with a crash. Mr. Chen asked her to leave one beside him. He had brought his neighbor, who was nervous about speaking English in a group. With fewer people watching, the neighbor finally described the broken light outside her building. Nadia sat down and wrote the address. She still wished more people had come; three voices could not speak for every building. But she stopped counting the empty chairs. Before leaving, she arranged another small meeting and asked each guest to invite someone whose concerns they had not heard.

Text B: A Name on the List

I signed up to organize the food drive because the volunteer list would go in our school newsletter. I pictured my name above a mountain of cans. Then the pantry coordinator asked us to collect cooking oil and unopened spices instead. They would make a much smaller display. I wanted to argue, but she explained that families had requested ingredients they could use with food already on the shelves. I rewrote our announcement. I still checked the newsletter when it arrived. Seeing my name pleased me, but I also looked for the coordinator's list. I wanted our next collection to begin with that list instead of my imagined photograph.

From comparison to reflection

Compare how the characters change what they count as success. A reflection can acknowledge mixed motives or unfinished change. Build your own position about helping: support it with an action or quotation from each story, then explain how comparing the texts confirms, complicates or changes your thinking. You may reflect on an idea without sharing a private experience.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 How does Nadia change her plan? Explain what she learns and what concern remains.

2 What contrast between the narrator's actions and feelings makes Text B more complex than a simple lesson about selfishness?

3 Identify one similarity and one difference in how the stories present success. Use details from both.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a reflective comparison of Texts A and B. Use both texts to support a position about helping others. Complete the three stages below.

1. Gather evidence

State a position. Record one action or short quotation from each text that supports or complicates it.

2. Compare

Write one paragraph comparing the characters. Include evidence from both stories and explain a meaningful similarity and difference.

3. Reflect

Write a second paragraph explaining how the comparison confirms, changes or complicates your thinking. Connect your reflection to a specific story detail.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Both stories below are original fiction written for this worksheet. Underline one revealing action in each; circle a detail that complicates your first judgment of either character. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Nadia change her plan? Explain what she learns and what concern remains.	She listens to a neighbor, writes the address and plans another small meeting. She recognizes value in the discussion but knows three voices cannot represent every building.
2	What contrast between the narrator's actions and feelings makes Text B more complex than a simple lesson about selfishness?	The narrator follows the pantry's requested list instead of seeking a large display, yet still enjoys public credit. Useful action and a wish for recognition coexist.
3	Identify one similarity and one difference in how the stories present success. Use details from both.	Both characters shift attention toward others' needs. Nadia moves beyond turnout numbers while still seeking wider participation; the narrator follows requested supplies while still enjoying personal recognition.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

One possible plan

Position: Good intentions become useful when people listen, even if their motives remain mixed. A: Nadia plans another small meeting. B: The narrator rewrites the announcement but still enjoys the newsletter.

Comparison

Both stories suggest that helping requires revising an idea of success. Nadia stops treating the empty chairs as proof of failure after hearing a neighbor's concern. In Text B, the narrator replaces the imagined mountain of cans with the pantry's requested ingredients. Both learn to listen, but the obstacles differ: Nadia worries about how many people she reaches, while the narrator wants recognition. Neither ending claims that every problem has disappeared.

Reflection

I used to think a helpful act mattered less if the person wanted credit. Text B complicates that judgment because the narrator still enjoys the newsletter yet follows the pantry's needs. Nadia's unfinished concern about representation also makes change seem gradual. Together, the stories lead me to judge help partly by whether a person listens and adjusts, rather than by whether the person begins with perfect motives.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

Accept different evidence-based positions. Require accurate details from both complete stories, an explained comparison and reflection that grows from the reading. Do not require personal disclosure or a word quota. The plan is notes; comparison and reflection are separate paragraphs. Both texts are original fiction, not excerpts from missing works.