



Compare and contrast

Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Practice

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When we **compare** two things, we tell how they are *alike*.

When we **contrast** two things, we tell how they are *different*.  
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Here are two stories. As you read, think about how the stories are *alike*, and how they are *different*.

The Donkey and the Mule

A Peddler set off on his usual journey. All of the things he would sell along the way were packed on his donkey and his mule. The donkey walked along easily until they started up the steep mountain path. The poor little donkey's load was more than he could bear. He begged the mule to take a little bit of his load, so that he could carry the rest more easily. But the mule paid no attention. At last they reached the top of the mountain where there was a small inn. The donkey was so exhausted that he fell to the ground. The next morning the donkey still could not get to his feet. Not knowing what else to do, the Peddler added the donkey's load to the mule's load, and went on without the donkey. The mule's load was heavy, but his heart was even heavier. "If only I had helped the donkey just a little, I would not have a double load myself," he reflected.

The Peddler's Mule

A Peddler took his mule to the seacoast to buy salt. On the way home, they crossed a shallow stream where the mule accidentally slipped and fell. All of the salt in the bags dissolved, and the mule's load was much lighter. The Peddler went back and bought even more salt than before. When they came to the stream, the mule fell down on purpose. When he got up, his load was again much lighter than before. The Peddler saw through the mule's trick, and went back to the seacoast a third time. This time, instead of salt, he bought a cargo of sponges. Again, the mule fell down when they reached the stream. The sponges filled with water, and greatly increased his load. This time he had only tricked himself.

Some of these details are true of just one of the two stories. Some are true of both stories. Some are not true of either story. Read each detail, and select the best answer.

1. A Peddler goes on a trip.
A. "The Donkey and the Mule" only C. Both stories
B. "The Peddler's Mule" only D. Neither story

2. One of the characters asks for help.
A. "The Donkey and the Mule" only C. Both stories
B. "The Peddler's Mule" only D. Neither story

3. One character is smarter than another.
A. "The Donkey and the Mule" only C. Both stories
B. "The Peddler's Mule" only D. Neither story

4. The characters agree about something in the beginning.
A. "The Donkey and the Mule" only C. Both stories
B. "The Peddler's Mule" only D. Neither story

5. A mule is sorry about something in the ending.
A. "The Donkey and the Mule" only C. Both stories
B. "The Peddler's Mule" only D. Neither story

6. The characters travel up a mountain path.
A. "The Donkey and the Mule" only C. Both stories
B. "The Peddler's Mule" only D. Neither story

7. The characters cross a shallow stream.
A. "The Donkey and the Mule" only C. Both stories
B. "The Peddler's Mule" only D. Neither story

8. The characters argue about something.
A. "The Donkey and the Mule" only C. Both stories
B. "The Peddler's Mule" only D. Neither story

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9. What is one other detail that is *alike* or *different* in the two stories?

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## Answer Key

1. C
2. A
3. B
4. D
5. C
6. A
7. B
8. D
9. Accept any reasonable responses.