

Teaching Informational Texts and Comparing Literary Works

Introduction This guide explains two program features in Prentice Hall Literature for Grades 6–10: Informational Texts and Comparing Literary Works. It discusses the teaching resources that support the lesson activities and the activities on PH Lit Online.

Informational Texts Begin by looking at the Student Edition Table of Contents in the Teacher’s Edition. Choose any Informational Text selection and turn to that page.

The purpose of the informational text activities is for students to transfer the skills they learned while reading fiction and apply them to nonfiction texts.

As an example, look at Grade 7, Unit 1. In this lesson, ask students to locate information in an atlas and read a public document. Students find and read specific text features, such as captions and legends, to increase comprehension.

Remind students to consider the Big Question as they read. In this example, ask students to look for facts and other truths for the Big Question in this unit: *What is the best way to find the truth?*



What is the best way to find the truth?

An atlas provides facts about the population of a place, but not about the lives of individual people. Documents such as “Byron Yee: Discovering a Paper Son” help to reveal the truth about people’s lives but also show how hard the truth can be to find.

Teaching Support

The Teacher’s Edition provides suggestions for teaching the designated reading skill, which in the example from Grade 7, Unit 1 is locating specific types of information.

Reading Skill

1. Introduce the skill.
2. Tell students that they will use text features to locate information.

Think Aloud: Model the Skill

Say to students:

When I read a text, I look for features that provide information. If I am reading a text that has visual elements such as photographs and charts, I read the captions. If the text includes maps, I look for scale bars and legends, or keys. All of these text features help me understand the information these visual elements are providing. As I read the text, I look for headings and boldfaced words and terms. These text features indicate the most important information.

Differentiating Instruction

The Teacher's Edition also provides helpful suggestions for differentiating instruction. Ask students to read selections in their Reader's Notebook, which provides appropriate reading support.

Test Practice

After the second informational text is Test Practice. Each set of informational texts provides test practice to assess skill mastery. The assessment includes comparing the two informational texts and completing a timed writing activity. Looking at the previous example, students compare the text features

Test Practice: Informational Texts

Comparing Informational Texts

(a) Which text presents more information in the form of visual elements, the atlas or the public document? (b) Which text presents more information through quotations? (c) How do visuals and quotations each help you to understand a topic? Explain.

Timed Writing
Locate Information to Write a Letter

Format and Audience
The prompt gives instructions to write a letter. Because the letter will be addressed to family members, it can be informal.

Write a Letter
Write a letter from the perspective of a "Paper son," like Byron Yee's father, arriving in America for the first time. Write to your family and describe your experiences. Use the public document you have read to add details to your letter. (15 minutes)

Academic Vocabulary
When you describe something, you use words that appeal to the senses to create a vivid picture in your reader's mind.

5-Minute Planner
Complete these steps before you begin to write:

1. Read the prompt carefully and completely. Notice key words like the ones highlighted, which give specific instructions about the assignment.
2. Reread the public document to locate information related to the assignment. Look for details that help you understand the experience of Chinese immigrants arriving in America during the early twentieth century. **TIP:** Quotations in public documents often include detailed information about people's experiences.
3. Make a list of the people, places, events, and experiences that you want to describe in your letter. Next to each entry on your list, jot down a few details you can provide in your description, based on information in the public document and on your own imagination.
4. Refer to your list as you draft your letter.

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used in each selection. For the timed writing activity, students write a letter to their family using descriptive words and details from the public document.

PH Lit Online

To access the PH Lit Online activities click the informational text title from the table of contents and choose **View** from the pop-up menu.

The Informational Text selections are listed below the red arrow. The same lesson content in the textbook is provided online.

Comparing Literary Works

Turn one more page in the Teacher's Edition to see Comparing Literary Works.

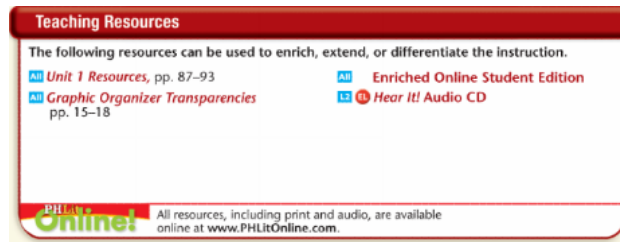
The reading activities and teaching support for these selections are similar to those for teaching leveled selections. One key difference is that every student reads both selections in Comparing Literary Works.

The Comparing Literary Works lesson activities lay the foundation and teach the skills required to compare two or more works of literature.

Before You Begin

Before students read selections, they focus on comparing genres or literary elements, such as humor and characters. In this lesson, students learn about comparing fiction and nonfiction. Teach new vocabulary and have students write about the Big Question. Then, introduce the selection authors.

Use the lesson resources, such as graphic organizers, to enrich, extend, and differentiate instruction. These resources are listed in the Teaching Resources box.



PH Lit Online Next, look at the Before You Read activities online. The colored arrows guide students through the lesson content. The Venn diagrams are interactive. Students can type into each area and print their work.

Students also have access to printable lesson worksheets. These are the same worksheets found in the Unit Resources books. Vocabulary Central features interactive flashcards, worksheets, and games to reinforce key words from the selections. Students can type their response to the Big Question directly into an online journal. Finally, students meet the selection authors before they read.

While You Read After students complete the Before You Read activities, they read both selections.

The Accessibility at a Glance chart provides important information about the text to help teachers plan appropriate reading support for students. The Differentiated Instruction boxes also provide additional teaching suggestions for below-level students, English learners, special needs students, and above-level students.

Selections have embedded reading support and questions to increase reading comprehension. For example, in the selection from Barrio Boy, students think about the emotions conveyed by the picture and explain who is narrating the story. Also notice that definitions are provided for challenging vocabulary words.

To help teachers prepare for instruction, the Teacher's Edition provides a wealth of information. In the selection from the previous example, read background information about the author and suggestions for activating students' prior knowledge.

Sometimes more than one teaching strategy is described. In the lesson example, students describe what they see in the picture. Students can complete this activity as a whole class, in small groups, or individually.

At the end of each selection there are Critical Thinking questions to check reading comprehension. Students interpret, analyze, and evaluate what they read. They also make connections to the Big Question.

PH Lit Online There is also support available to students as they read selections online. Students receive the same reading support found in the

textbook. The blue vocabulary words provide the definition with audio support. The prompts, such as literary analysis in this example, link to text boxes where students can type in their responses. Students can also highlight the text to note important passages. Finally, students answer the Critical Thinking questions by typing their responses in their online journals.

After You Read After students read both selections, begin the After You Read activities. These activities have students apply the skills they learned about comparing literature to the selections they just read. In the previous example, ask students to compare the fiction and nonfiction selections by answering questions and then writing a comparison of the two narrators. To reinforce the vocabulary, ask students to write a sentence using two vocabulary words. These activities prepare students for the selection tests.

Comparing Fiction and Nonfiction

1. **(a)** For each selection, tell whether the narrator and events are real or imagined. **(b)** Based on your answer, what rules about truth and accuracy did each writer follow for writing these selections?
2. Complete a chart like the one shown to help you analyze one character in each story.

Character	Detail	Fiction or Nonfiction?
The boy in "A Day's Wait"		
Miss Ryan in <i>Barrio Boy</i>		

3. **(a)** How might "A Day's Wait" be different if it were non-fiction? **(b)** How might *Barrio Boy* change if it were fiction?

Each set of selections provides leveled assessments to check mastery of knowledge and skills.

PH Lit Online All lesson activities are available online as well. Students type in responses to the questions and complete the comparison chart. Next, they type a comparison essay about the two narrators and create sentences with two vocabulary words in each sentence.

Review This guide discussed the Informational Texts and Comparing Literary Works features for Prentice Hall Literature for Grades 6–10. It explained the following:

- Informational Text activities involve the transfer and application of literary skills to a variety of nonfiction selections.
- Comparing Literary Works lays the foundation and focuses on skill instruction, enabling students to compare two or more works of literature.
- Both features provide leveled teaching resources that enable teachers to differentiate and personalize instruction.
- Students revisit and make connections to the Big Question.
- All lesson activities are available on PH Lit Online in an interactive format.