

SOS SPOTLIGHT ON STRATEGIES

Simple instructional strategies that incorporate digital media in meaningful, effective, and practical ways.

Get Venn-y With It



According to Robert J. Marzano, one effective instructional strategy is to help students identify similarities and differences. In Harvey Silver's book, Compare and Contrast, he says this strategy "strengthens students' memories by focusing their thinking on analysing pairs of ideas, enhances their ability to remember key content and improves comprehension by highlighting important details." By using digital resources, you are able to level the playing field for students who may not have had real life experiences on which to base their reasoning.



Materials: two images that align with your curricular goals, a large Venn Diagram,, paper and pencil for students

1. Display two images side-by-side.
2. Ask students to compare and contrast images, citing evidence to support their observations. For example:
 - "I think _____ because I see _____."
3. Record student responses in the Venn Diagram. Remind students to cite evidence to support their observations.
4. Guide students to look closely at the images by asking guiding questions such as:
 - What are the differences in lighting in the two pictures?
 - How does the difference in lighting affect how you see the picture?
 - What mood was the artist of each picture trying to capture? How do you know?
 - Are the images more alike or more different? Why do you say that?



Looking closely at an image provides students with the opportunity to practice locating details to back up or justify claims that they make about an overall piece of work. For students who find text analysis difficult, this can provide a friendlier way to practice analysing and providing feedback about a topic.

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1. Have students use the Venn Diagram notes to generate a written analysis of the two paintings.
2. Reverse the strategy: Rather than providing students with the two images, start with a concept or vocabulary word. Have students search for two images that represent that concept in some way and create a Venn Diagram that compares their images. For example:

word: erosion

