

Critical Concepts 8.3A Non Fiction Lesson Plans

Skill Focus: CC.8.3A – Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (through comparisons, analogies, and categories).

Vocabulary Word Bank: analyze, connection, distinction, analogy, comparison, category

November Lesson Objectives

- **SWBAT** identify individuals, ideas, or events in a text.
- **SWBAT** analyze how a text makes *connections* among individuals, ideas, or events through comparison, analogy, or category.
- **SWBAT** analyze how a text makes *distinctions* among individuals, ideas, or events.
- **SWBAT** use academic vocabulary (analyze, connection, distinction, analogy, comparison, category) accurately in discussion and writing.

Non-Fiction Texts Suggestions for November (text selections are suggestion only, teachers can change the text to fit their classroom needs, if choosing another text it should come from the Educational Epiphany Curriculum)

- *Sandy vs. Irene: How Do the Storms Stack Up* – Eric Hoffas
- *Remarks at the Memorial Service of Ed Bradley* – William Jefferson Clinton
- *Revolution vs. Civil War* – Author Unknown
- *Difference between Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi* – Author Unknown

Graphic Organizer: Citing Evidence Refer to your Educational Epiphany Critical Concepts Binder: Graphic Organizers Tab: CC 8.3A 1-10 (pages 33-76 in the Graphic Organizers Tab)

I Do (Teacher Model – 15 mins)

Text: *Sandy vs. Irene: How Do the Storms Stack Up* – Eric Hoffas

Steps:

1. Distribute the **event-focused organizer**.
2. Review the vocabulary word bank.
3. Teacher read-aloud of first two sections.

Teacher Think-Aloud (modeling):

"I notice this article compares two major storms: Hurricane Sandy and Hurricane Irene. Since it's about *events*, I'll use the event-focused organizer.

For Event 1, I'll write Hurricane Sandy. For Event 2, Hurricane Irene. For Event 3, I could write 'storms in the Northeast in general,' since the text creates a category that includes both."

"Now I analyze how the text uses comparison to show connections. It says both storms caused widespread power outages and billions in damages. That's a clear similarity and helps me see how the author connects the two events as part of a larger pattern."

"Next, I look at how the text makes distinctions. It explains that Sandy caused flooding in New York City subways, while Irene mostly damaged inland rivers and smaller towns. This distinction helps the reader see that even though both were hurricanes, their impacts were different."

Sample Student Response (modeled):

- Event 1: Hurricane Sandy
- Event 2: Hurricane Irene
- Event 3: Category: Major Northeastern Hurricanes
- **Connections:** Both storms caused mass power outages, billions in damages, and showed vulnerability of infrastructure.
- **Distinctions:** Sandy devastated NYC subways and coastlines; Irene's flooding hit smaller river towns more severely.

We Do (Guided Practice – 20 mins)

Text: *Revolution vs. Civil War* – Author Unknown

Steps:

1. Students read sections aloud in small groups.
2. Class discusses whether to use an **event- or idea-focused organizer** (event-focused works best).
3. Guide students in filling in the organizer together.

Teacher Think-Aloud:

"This text compares two categories of wars—revolutions and civil wars. That's why the event-focused organizer makes sense here.

Event 1: Revolutions. Event 2: Civil Wars. Event 3: Specific example—American Revolution. Now, what connections are being made? The author connects both by explaining they involve groups fighting for political power and control. That's the similarity."

"For distinctions, the author explains that revolutions involve overthrowing a foreign power, while civil wars involve groups fighting within one nation. This distinction clarifies why the two categories of wars are not identical."

Sample Class Organizer Response:

- Event 1: Revolutions
- Event 2: Civil Wars
- Event 3: American Revolution (example of Event 1)
- **Connections:** Both involve groups using force to change governments and often reshape a nation's future.
- **Distinctions:** Revolutions are against an outside ruler; civil wars are internal conflicts between groups in the same country.

You Do with Partner (Collaborative Practice – 30 mins)

Text: *Difference between Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi* – Author Unknown

Steps:

1. Provide all three organizer types.
2. Partners choose correctly (individual-focused).
3. Teacher circulates and prompts with guiding questions.

Teacher Circulating Think-Aloud:

"Look carefully: this text highlights Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. Since it's about individuals, the individual-focused organizer works best.

Ask: what connections are made between them? Both used nonviolent resistance to fight injustice.

What distinctions are made? The text explains Gandhi focused on independence from British colonial rule, while King focused on civil rights within the United States."

Sample Partner Response:

- Individual 1: Martin Luther King Jr.
- Individual 2: Mahatma Gandhi
- Individual 3: Category: Leaders of nonviolent resistance
- **Connections:** Both advocated for change through peaceful protest.
- **Distinctions:** Gandhi's cause was Indian independence; King's cause was U.S. racial equality.

You Do Independently

Text: *Remarks at the Memorial Service of Ed Bradley* – William Jefferson Clinton

Steps:

1. Students select the **individual-focused organizer**.
2. Students work independently to analyze.

Teacher Think-Aloud (scaffold if needed):

"In this speech, Clinton connects Ed Bradley to other journalists by comparison—he places Bradley in the same category as legendary reporters who pursued truth. That's a connection. But he also distinguishes Bradley by explaining his unique compassion and ability to connect with people of all backgrounds, something that set him apart from peers."

Sample Student Response:

- Individual 1: Ed Bradley
- Individual 2: Other great journalists

- Individual 3: Category: Truth-seekers in journalism
- **Connections:** Bradley is connected to the tradition of journalists who hold power accountable.
- **Distinctions:** Unlike many journalists, Bradley combined rigorous reporting with deep empathy and humanity.