

GOLD EDITION

PRACTICE COACH™ PLUS



English Language Arts

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Compare and Contrast Informational Texts

Coached Instruction

Use the Reading Guides to help you focus on comparing and contrasting the passages.

Reading Guide

1. What is the main idea of this article? How does the last sentence reinforce the main idea?

2. Find a detail that supports the main idea. Write it below.

3. Underline two positive aspects of owning an electric car.

Electric Cars on the Road Today

Nowadays we need batteries for just about everything—television remotes, toys, cell phones, and laptops. Add “car” to the list of some people’s battery needs, though replacing the battery of an electric car will cost quite a bit more than a D-size battery for your remote-controlled car.

Electric cars are one alternative that people are using instead of gasoline-powered cars. Electric cars are more energy-efficient and cheaper to run than gasoline-powered cars. On a daily basis, they may be up to four times cheaper to run. However, at this time, they are expensive vehicles to buy. In the future, they may become much more affordable and therefore much more accessible to the general public.

Instead of using gasoline, these cars are run 100 percent by electricity. They use a battery that is similar to those in laptop computers and that needs to be recharged for many hours. Electric car owners could do this at night while they sleep or when they are at work.

Most likely, if you see an electric car, it would be in a city. This is because electric cars are best suited for short- or medium-range driving distances. If you were going on a long road trip, an electric car would not be a good choice.

Electric cars look very different from your typical gasoline-powered car. Electric cars are built for fuel economy. They are designed to reduce wind resistance and to get more mileage.

In the search to find alternatives to gasoline-powered cars, electric cars are one alternative that is available today.

Reading Guide

4. Draw a box around the paragraph that tells how a gasoline engine works.
5. Underline the sentence that describes why a gasoline-powered car is not energy-efficient.
6. Why do most people own gasoline-powered vehicles?

Gasoline-Powered Cars

The typical car you see on the road today has a standard motor. The motor is run with regular or diesel fuel.

When you turn on the ignition, gasoline, which contains chemical potential energy, is transformed into mechanical energy. Mechanical energy is what allows the engine to rotate and the wheels to spin. However, this transformation of energy is not very efficient. A lot of heat is lost as it radiates out of the engine. In fact, according to the United States Department of Energy, only 14–26 percent of the potential energy in gasoline actually moves your car. The remaining energy is lost.

Scientists and engineers are working on other fuel alternatives that are more efficient and produce less pollution. These fuels include ethanol, natural gas, and propane.

Even though gasoline is not very energy-efficient, gasoline-powered cars are usually the most cost-efficient at this time. Gasoline-powered cars are much less expensive than alternative-energy cars. Things may change in the future, but currently, our transportation system is convenient for gasoline-powered cars. Gas stations are very common across the United States. A driver pulls into a gas station with a nearly empty tank, fills up the tank, and immediately resumes driving.

In time, we may see less of a reliance on gasoline-powered cars. Many energy-efficient vehicles are being tested and used now. But if you look on the highway today, you will still see that gasoline-powered cars far outnumber any of the alternatives.

Discuss


1. Think about the differences between the two kinds of cars as described in the passages. Compare and contrast them.
2. How does each author organize the information in each passage? Compare and contrast the passages' structures.



Apply

Answer the following questions about the passages.

1. Which detail from the passages BEST supports the statement “Electric cars are best suited for short or medium driving distances”?
 - A. A lot of heat is lost as it radiates out of the engine.
 - B. The batteries need to be recharged for many hours.
 - C. A driver fills up the tank and immediately resumes driving.
 - D. Energy-efficient vehicles are being tested now.

 **Think It Through** I know that both articles compare and contrast electric cars and gasoline-powered cars. They also both contain lots of factual details. So I'll reread the passages to find the detail that best supports the statement. That detail will focus on driving distances.

Lesson Practice | Part 1

Use the Reading Guide to help you understand the passage.

Reading Guide

- What sentence in the first paragraph explains what the passage is mainly about?
- What do all these animals have in common?
- How do the animals get food in the winter?

Where Do They Go in the Snow?

In many northern states in the United States the forest floor is covered with three or more feet of snow in the winter months. Temperatures plunge into the 10s and 20s. Think about the animals. How do they survive these cold, snowy months?

Some use the snow to keep warm. When animals burrow under the snow, air is trapped inside the snow, and they can keep warm. The snowshoe hare is one of these animals. It finds a depression in the snow under an evergreen tree or bush to hide and rest during the day. At night, the hare comes out and looks for small plants and branches to eat. Its fur is white during winter so foxes or coyotes cannot see it easily.

Small animals like mice have dark fur, and predators can see them in the snow. So they dig tunnels to keep themselves safe. They burrow through the tunnels until they find seeds, plants, or bark from bushes to eat.

Beavers live in lodges in lakes and ponds, and they don't venture out in the snow. These lodges have been made from sticks and mud and are warm inside. The beavers eat bark and wood. Before the water freezes, they gather food and store it in the water. When they get hungry, they swim under the ice, tear away the food they have stored, and bring it back to the lodge.

Deer eat an enormous amount of food during the summer and fall to prepare for the winter months. They live off their fat and supplement it with buds from trees or tiny saplings. Deep snow is dangerous for deer. They move as little as possible to save energy so their fat will last until spring. Thus deer tend to stay on the southern side of hills where it's warmer.

Reading Guide

- What do bears do that is similar to the animals you read about in the first passage?
- What things do bears do differently from the animals you read about in the first passage?
- How is this passage organized?

How Bears Survive Winter

To survive the winter, bears start gorging on food in August. They will eat dead animals, berries, pine nuts, and insects, adding a layer of fat five inches thick to their bodies. They will need the fat to live on during the months when there is no food available. Bears won't eat again for another five months! During this time, their body temperature falls a few degrees, which means they use less energy. Using less energy means that they will burn off the fat more slowly.

Grizzly bears choose a spot on a north-facing slope. The weather gets colder there, and the snow won't thaw and wet their fur during warmer days. Then they dig their den in the dirt. Finally, they settle in their dens, where they fall asleep.

Black bears have many different kinds of dens. Some dig a shallow bowl under a fallen tree. Others might locate a cave or hollow tree. When they do make a den, they cover it with bark, twigs, leaves, grasses, and mosses. Inside the den, it still isn't very warm. A bear's fur and body fat must keep it warm all winter.

Other black bears don't use a den at all. They somehow know that it will soon snow. The snow acts like a blanket, trapping in the warm air from the bear's body. So these bears just curl up on the ground and wait for the snow to cover their bodies!

Female bears have their young during the winter. They wake up to give birth to their cubs, and then they go back to sleep. The cubs don't hibernate. They are busy drinking their mother's milk and growing bigger.

The amazing thing about bears is that even after five months in hibernation, their muscles are still strong. The day a bear wakes up, it can easily walk up a mountain!

Answer the following questions.

1. What main idea do both passages share?
 - A. Animals have different ways of surviving the cold winter months.
 - B. Animals are able to live off of their own fat during the snowy winter.
 - C. To survive the cold winters, animals use their fur, sunny slopes, and movement to keep warm.
 - D. To survive snowy winters animals must store food in secret places in order to survive.
2. Which of the following describes a major difference in the two passages?
 - A. The first passage describes how small animals survive winters, while the second discusses large animals like bears.
 - B. The first passage details what animals in winter eat, but the second does not mention food.
 - C. The first passage discusses how many animals survive winter, but the second discusses only one.
 - D. The first passage details how animals survive in the northern winters, while the second explains how bears survive in the south.
3. What do some bears and snowshoe hare do similarly to survive the winter?
 - A. They both build up fat on their bodies to live on during in the winter.
 - B. They both come out at night to search for food.
 - C. The both dig tunnels where they can hide under the snow.
 - D. They both use snow to help keep them warm.
4. How are the structures of the two passages different?
 - A. The first passage is based on main ideas and details, while the second passage is based on cause and effect relationships.
 - B. The first passage compares and contrasts animals, while the second passage discusses only one animal.
 - C. The first passage is structured around cause and effect, while the second passage is based on main ideas.
 - D. The first passage is based on main ideas and details, while the second passage is based on sequence.

5. What do bears and deer both do to survive the winters? What things do they do differently?

Lesson Practice | Part 2

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Pet Reptiles

a blog entry

A cat? A dog? A gecko lizard? More and more kids these days are asking for reptiles as pets. This might seem like an unusual choice, but there are many reasons why reptiles make good pets.

Many reptiles, unlike cats or dogs, don't take up a lot of space. Many kinds of lizards are small and can live happily in glass terrariums. A lizard owner might add sand or rocks to the bottom of the container. These additions make the home both more comfortable for the lizard and more like where a lizard would live in nature.

Most lizards are easier to care for than dogs or cats. Unlike other pets, lizards don't eat much. Lizard owners can buy prepackaged food at most pet stores. The food is sprinkled in the terrarium or in a bowl.

Many kids want pets, but they're allergic to fur. Lizards may be hypoallergenic, which means they cause fewer allergic reactions than other kinds of animals. Unlike many other pets, lizards do not have fur. Even though their skin is not soft and cuddly, it will not cause kids to sneeze or cough when they interact with their lizards.

Also, some pets are noisy, but lizards rarely make noise. Although some kinds of lizards make a grinding noise with their teeth, most are quiet.

Dog and cat owners must interact with their animals on a daily basis. Even though this can be fun, it takes up a lot of time. Lizards don't really need attention from their owners. Unlike dogs that want to be petted or played with, lizards prefer to be left alone. They don't need walks, and owners don't have to keep their shoes off the floor because lizards won't want to chew on them.

Lizards are great pets because they can introduce you to the natural world. Watching a lizard in a terrarium shows you how it behaves in its normal environment. In the comfort of your home, you can learn how a reptile acts.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Pet Owners,

At Woodglen Veterinary Group, we've noticed that many people have recently been choosing reptiles for pets. While people may think that lizards make cool pets, they are most likely not aware of the risks of owning reptiles. There are a lot of responsibilities involved with owning lizards. Many lizards are exotic and unfamiliar, so prospective owners don't have all of the information they need when they purchase or adopt them.

Certain reptiles, such as geckos or chameleons, are very small, but others are huge. For example, tortoises can grow to be two feet in length. Before you buy a reptile, be sure to find out exactly how big it will get.

Many kinds of lizards need special food or particular climates to survive. It is true that some types of lizards can eat prepackaged food bought at the pet store. However, others require frozen or even live food, such as insects or rodents. Some lizards prefer to hunt and trap their prey rather than being fed already-deceased food. Owners need to be prepared to help them in this way. Also, lizards can't produce their own body heat, so they have to heat their bodies in different ways. Pet lizards need heat sources, such as heated lights or heated rocks to keep them warm.

Not all reptiles are dangerous, but some can be. Snakes can and do bite. Not all snakes are venomous, but their teeth can still cause pain. Some lizards bite, as well. Many reptiles can also live for a very long time. Lizards can live from fifteen to twenty years, and some tortoises can live up to fifty years. It is important to keep these kinds of lifespans in mind when planning for a reptile's care.

Reptiles can make great pets for some people, but before purchasing one, do your homework. Make sure the pet is the right fit for you. If you have any questions, please give us a call.

Sincerely,
Dr. Paul Landry
Veterinarian
Woodglen Veterinary Group

6. Which passage uses a compare-and-contrast text structure?
- A. both passages
 - B. neither passage
 - C. “Pet Reptiles”
 - D. letter to the editor
7. In what way are the two passages alike?
- A. They have the same main idea.
 - B. They have the same topic.
 - C. They have the same point of view.
 - D. They have the same organization.
8. Read this sentence from “Pet Reptiles.” What does the letter to the editor say on the same topic?
- Lizard owners can buy prepackaged food at most pet stores.**
- A. Some lizard owners prefer to feed their lizards special foods.
 - B. Some pet stores do not have prepackaged food.
 - C. Some lizards can eat prepackaged food.
 - D. Some lizards require frozen or live food.
9. How is “Pet Reptiles” different from the letter to the editor?
- A. The author of the letter to the editor provides more scientific evidence than the author of “Pet Reptiles.”
 - B. The author of the letter to the editor provides an opinion while the author of “Pet Reptiles” does not.
 - C. The author of “Pet Reptiles” hopes to persuade readers while the author of the letter to the editor does not.
 - D. The author of the letter to the editor uses a sequence text structure while the author of “Pet Reptiles” does not.

10. Which of the following describes a MAJOR difference in the two passages?
- A. The first passage compares reptiles to other types of pets, but the second passage only discusses lizards.
 - B. The first passage explains how to care for a pet reptile, but the second warns of the dangers of owning a pet reptile.
 - C. The first passage argues reptiles make good pets, but the second makes readers aware of the challenges of reptile ownership.
 - D. The first passage describes learning about reptile behavior as a benefit of reptile ownership, but the second does not.
11. Reread the second paragraph in “Pet Reptiles.” What additional information about a reptile’s habitat do you learn in the letter to the editor?
