

What is comparing?

To compare is to recognise how things are similar and dissimilar. As our ability to compare increases, our minds start grouping things according to features and characteristics. For example, students may be asked to sort two-dimensional shapes according to determined characteristics.

Creating representations when comparing can help when moving into more abstract comparisons. This helps to move away from the literal similarities and differences and helps students recognise those differences that are subtler. An example of abstract comparison may be using a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences between genes and chromosomes, rather than a direct comparison of images.

A process of comparing may include:

- selecting the concepts, ideas, processes and items to be compared
- determining the characteristics that are being compared
- identifying the similarities and differences of the characteristics
- summarising and communicating the findings
- reviewing the comparison and revealing the findings, outcomes or decisions.

Compare as a cognition

Cognitive verbs are categorised using Marzano & Kendall's four elements of the cognitive system: retrieval, comprehension, analysis and knowledge utilisation (2007).

The cognitive verb compare is part of the analysis element of cognitive process. This element involves the 'generation of new information not already possessed by the individual' (p. 44).

Compare in the Australian Curriculum Version 9.0

The cognitive verb compare appears in various achievement standards (AS) and/or content descriptions (CD) in the Australian Curriculum. The following table shows the use of compare across the Australian Curriculum in Years 7–10.

Compare in the Years 7–10 Australian Curriculum AS and CD

	English	Health and Physical Education	Humanities and Social Sciences				Mathematics	Science	Technologies			The Arts				
			Civics and Citizenship	Economics and Business	Geography	History			Technologies	Design and Technologies	Digital Technologies	Dance	Drama	Media Arts	Music	Visual Arts
Year 7							CD									
Year 8					CD	AS	AS CD	AS CD								
Year 9	CD		AS CD		AS CD	AS CD	AS CD	CD								
Year 10	CD		AS CD		AS CD	AS CD	AS CD									

Compare in the Years 7–10 Australian Curriculum AS and CD

	Languages P–10 sequence							Languages 7–10 sequence						
	Chinese	French	German	Indonesian	Italian	Japanese	Spanish	Chinese	French	German	Indonesian	Italian	Japanese	Spanish
Year 7	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD
Year 8	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD
Year 9	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD
Year 10	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD	AS CD

Learning area/subject examples include, but are not limited to:

Year/s	Learning area/subject	AS	CD
Year 8	Science	They (students) compare different forms of energy and represent transfer and transformation of energy in simple systems.	compare physical and chemical changes and identify indicators of energy change in chemical reactions AC9S8U07
Year 9	Mathematics	They (students) compare and analyse the distributions of multiple numerical data sets, choose representations, describe features of these data sets using summary statistics and the shape of distributions, and consider the effect of outliers.	design and conduct repeated chance experiments and simulations, using digital tools to compare probabilities of simple events to related compound events, and describe results AC9M9P03
Years 9–10	Languages: Japanese Years 7–10 sequence	Students initiate and sustain Japanese language to exchange and compare ideas and experiences about their own and others' personal world.	use Japanese language in exchanges to question, offer opinions and compare and discuss ideas AC9LJ10EC02
Year 10	Humanities and Social Sciences: History	They (students) locate, select and compare a range of primary and secondary sources and synthesise the information in sources to use as evidence in historical inquiry.	compare perspectives in sources and explain how these are influenced by significant events, ideas, locations, beliefs and values AC9HH10S06

References

Marzano, R & Kendall, J 2007, *The New Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA.

More information

This information sheet is part of a suite of resources to support teachers in the explicit teaching and assessment of students' thinking. The suite of resources includes categories of common cognitive verbs, cognitive verb overviews and a cognitive verb toolkit with information sheets, posters and graphic organisers.

If you would like more information, please visit the QCAA website www.qcaa.qld.edu.au and search for 'cognitive verbs'. Alternatively, the suite of resources can be found here: www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/aciq/version-9/cognitive-verbs-in-version-9.0.



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