



Compare and contrast

Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Practice

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When we **compare** two things, we tell how they are *alike*.

When we **contrast** two things, we tell how they are *different*.  
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As you read the story, think about how the characters are *alike*, and how they are *different*.

The Old Woman and the Doctor

In a small village, there lived an old woman who had slowly lost her sight until she was completely blind. She was very poor, but she had a few fine pots and costly trinkets that she had collected for many years and treasured dearly. She decided to send for the doctor, for by selling her treasures she would be able to pay for his services. If only she could have her sight back, she would gladly live without her trinkets and treasures.

The doctor came to the old woman's little hut, and they came to an agreement. If his treatment cured her blindness, she would give him a certain sum of money. But if she was not cured, she would give him nothing.

For many weeks, the doctor came daily to apply lotion and bandages to the old woman's eyes. Being a poor man himself, each time he visited, he took one of the woman's small treasures away with him. Each thing he took was so small that he did not think she would miss it.

When the last bandages were removed, the woman had recovered her sight. She looked around her house, and saw that all of her treasures were gone. She declared that she would give the doctor nothing. The doctor insisted, but the old woman still refused. So he took her before the Judge.

The old woman stood before the Judge and said, "This man speaks the truth. I did promise to pay him if his treatment cured my blindness, but if I continued to be blind, I was to give him nothing. Now he says that I am healed. I, however, assure you that I am still blind. For before I became blind, I saw all of my small treasures in my house. But even though he swears that I am cured, I cannot see a single one of my treasures now." The Judge ruled that the old woman owed the doctor not a penny.

Some of these details are true of just one of the characters in the story. Some are true of both characters. Some are not true of either character. Read each detail, and select the best answer.

1. ...made an agreement in the beginning of the story
 - A. The old woman only
 - B. The doctor only
 - C. Both characters
 - D. Neither character

2. ...did not have much money
 - A. The old woman only
 - B. The doctor only
 - C. Both characters
 - D. Neither character

3. ...thought the doctor's treatments might cure the woman's blindness
 - A. The old woman only
 - B. The doctor only
 - C. Both characters
 - D. Neither character

4. ...was an honest person
 - A. The old woman only
 - B. The doctor only
 - C. Both characters
 - D. Neither character

5. ...went on a journey
 - A. The old woman only
 - B. The doctor only
 - C. Both characters
 - D. Neither character

6. ...argued about something
 - A. The old woman only
 - B. The doctor only
 - C. Both characters
 - D. Neither character

7. ...thought the doctor should be paid
 - A. The old woman only
 - B. The doctor only
 - C. Both characters
 - D. Neither character

8. ...was probably happy with the judge's decision
 - A. The old woman only
 - B. The doctor only
 - C. Both characters
 - D. Neither character

9. What is one other detail that is *alike* or *different* in the two stories?

Answer Key

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. A
5. D
6. C
7. B
8. A
9. Accept any reasonable response.