Compare/Contrast Information from a Variety of Texts

One stop on the road to literacy…

LEVEL 3
RC5

The Outcome

The student will compare and contrast information from a variety of texts.

Why Go There?

Explain to your student that a good reader thinks about what she reads by looking for the similarities and differences in

- character traits
- settings
- story problems and plots
- solutions
- timelines
- genres

Also, a good reader compares and contrasts information in authentic text, such as in sale ads and food labels.

What To Do

Teach comparing and contrasting information by following the directions on the pages 22 and 26.

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Venn Diagram Directions

Materials: *Relax! It's a Vacation!,* pages 23-24
Venn diagram, page 25
OR
Road Rage, pages 26-28
Venn diagram, page 29

Directions:

Read passages first, following the steps on page 2.

Then define comparing as how things are alike and contrasting as how things are different.

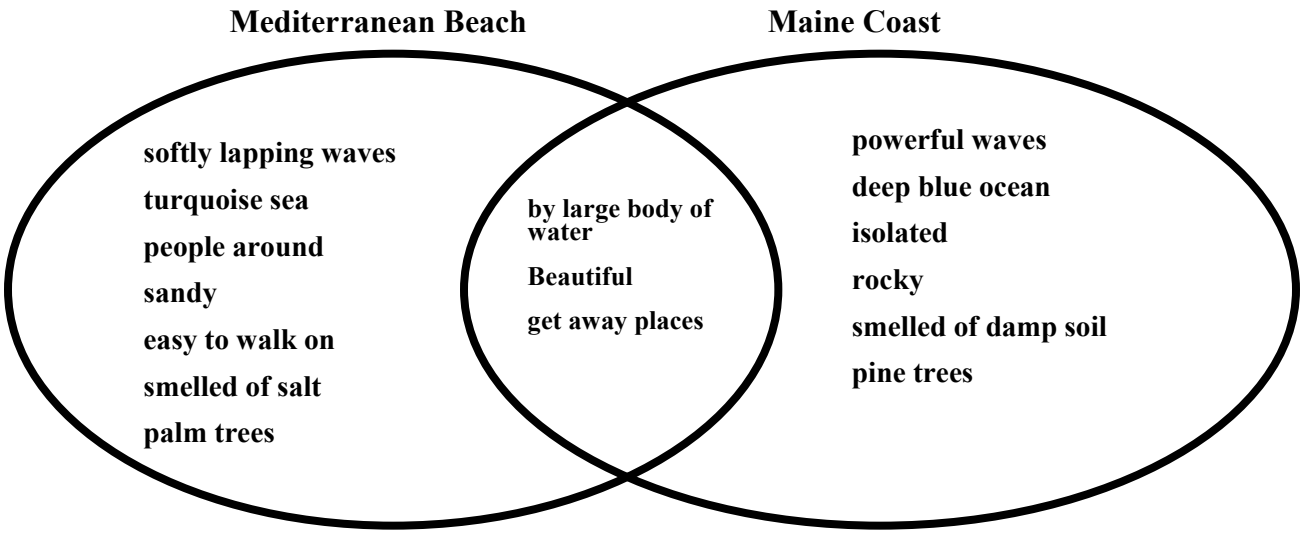
Show the blank Venn Diagram (page 25 or 29) and explain how it works.

Similarities are placed in the center where the two circles overlap.

Differences are written in outer portions that don't overlap. See the example below.

Complete the first Venn Diagram together.

Sample for *Relax! It's a Vacation!* Pages 23-24



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Relax! It's a Vacation!

Carla fidgeted in the lounge chair. This wasn't working for her. Maybe if she'd get settled more comfortably...

She shifted her tense shoulders and ordered herself to relax. Breathing in the salt air, she felt her bones soaking up the heat of the baking Mediterranean sun. She hoped the soft ocean waves breaking at the foot of her lounge chair would be just the ticket to lull her to sleep.

Minutes ticked by. With a sigh of frustration, Carla jerked her chair back into an upright position. She always had a hard time relaxing—even on vacation.

Raising her hand to shield her eyes from the blinding sun, she scanned the beach and spotted her friend Mary as she bobbed about in the ocean, waving a bright yellow Frisbee. Carla couldn't help but smile. Mary was so fun loving. She thought back to the day Mary had won this fabulous Mediterranean trip for two. She'd been the 100th caller on some radio show. Mary had called Carla right away to invite her, but Carla wasn't sure she wanted to go. Yet Mary wouldn't take no for an answer. "Oh, Carla, I'll go with no one but you! You must come with me or I'll have no fun at all!"

Why Mary had wanted her to come, Carla wasn't sure. Yes, they were friends, but they were so very different. Mary was outgoing, bubbly, and full of energy. Carla was quiet, low key, and liked spending time alone.

Mary's shriek of laughter brought Carla's mind back to the beach. A guy and his sister they had met at dinner last night were romping in the water with Mary. The three of them had been tossing the Frisbee to one another, and now a golden retriever had swum out to play with them. Carla grinned. She felt a tug to join in but instead turned her head to study her new surroundings.

This place was absolutely beautiful. Breathtaking. Before her stretched the Mediterranean ocean. Where the water was shallow, it sparkled a clean, bright green, and further out to sea, it settled into a deep turquoise. The beach was white crystal sand—compact and easy to walk on. In some areas,

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the sand was rippled, creating patterns that reminded her of bands of clouds.

A few gulls hung overhead, shrieking as if trying to drive people off their beach. Tourists streamed onto this stretch of beach from the many hotels lining the shore. Joggers ran in skimpy swimsuits and shiny new running shoes. Sunbathers hunted for empty chairs under the shade of palm trees or umbrellas. Beach combers walked with heads down, scanning for seashells even though none were to be found. And gulls shrieked as they fought each other for food.

Carla breathed in suntan lotion, salt air, and shrimp frying at the nearby grill. Laughter and shouts rose above the lively Reggae music coming from a hotel patio. All around Carla people were relaxed and having a good time.

Lowering the head of her chair once again, Carla laid back and closed her eyes. She thought of the only place where she ever found true peace. That was on a flat boulder on a rocky cliff on the shore of her small hometown in Maine. Suddenly she felt herself standing there—on her favorite rock. The only sound was the moan of wind as it whipped around her. Deep blue ocean spanned the vast horizon. She was so high up she could see the lighthouse a couple of miles down the coast-hugging road. Pine trees stood guard beside her and a thick forest stood at attention behind. Silently gulls drifted on the wind and the smell of damp soil filled her. The inlet below was nothing but round, worn rocks with tattered gull feathers scattered about. Walking across this rugged, rock-strewn shoreline to get to her boulder was always done carefully. One misstep and a person could twist an ankle. And adding to the challenge of walking on rocks were the powerful waves rolling in, grabbing and tumbling rocks as if the ocean were rolling dice. Carla understood why no one ever came to this part of the shore.

Suddenly a blast of cold spray pelted Carla, bringing her sharply back to the present. With a gasp she bolted up and almost fell out of her chair. The retriever, who was standing right next to her, had just given himself a good shake. The Frisbee wedged in his grinning mouth and his tail flopping back and forth, he gave a muffled bark, inviting Carla to play. She didn't ignore the tug to go play this time, but rose from her chair. "Alright, buddy," she said laughing. "You talked me into it!" Tugging to free the Frisbee from the friendly pup's jaws, she sprinted off to join the fun.

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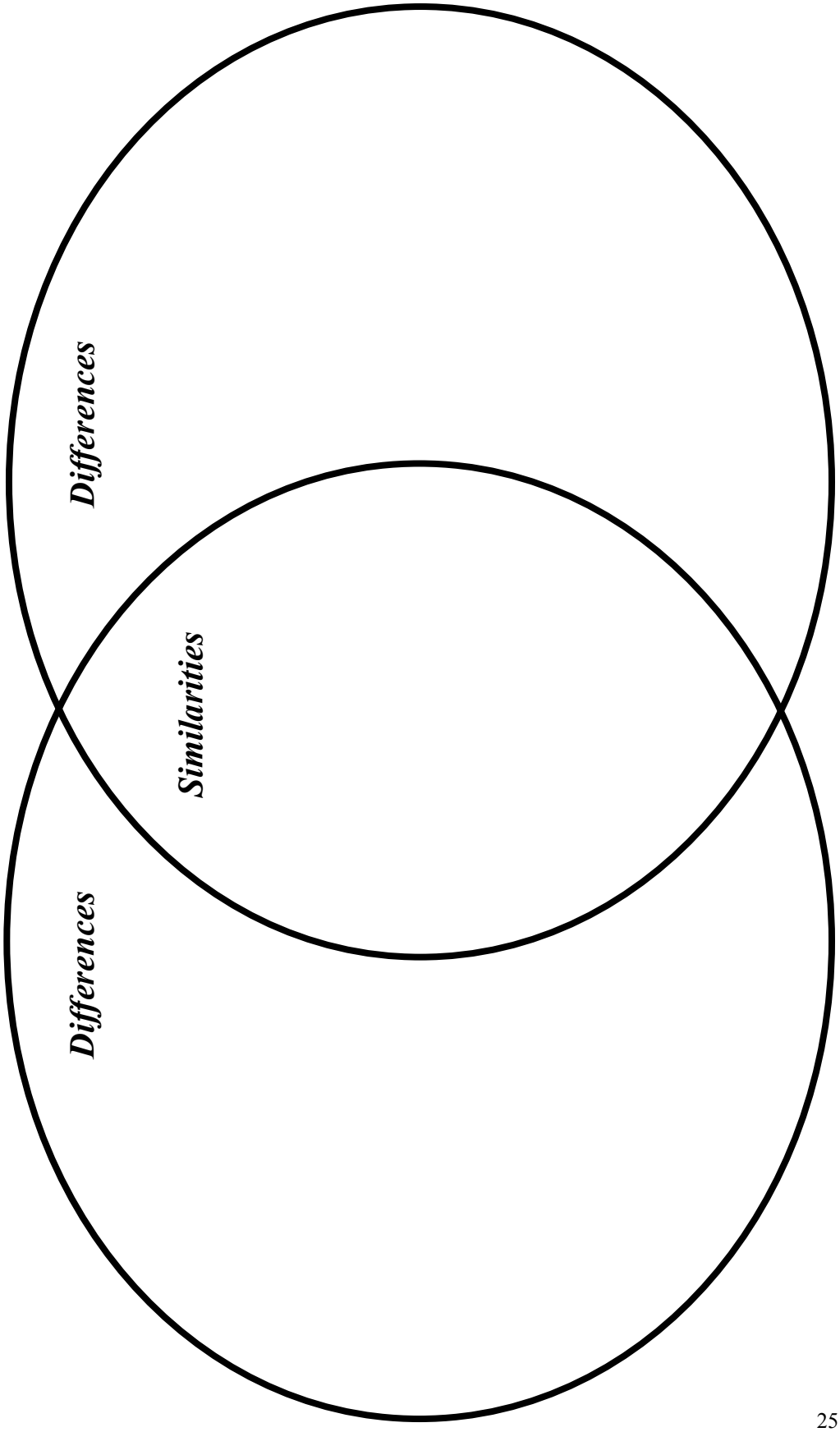
Relax! It's a Vacation!



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Road Rage

As he eased his car onto the shoulder of the road, Paul Heffling had some misgivings. On the other side of the road two cars were stopped. The front bumper of a late model Taurus was touching the back bumper of a fairly new Subaru. Paul thought about not stopping. He didn't want to get involved for two reasons. One, it was a minor accident. And two, there were a couple of very angry women screaming at each other in the middle of the road. He didn't like being around women who were upset. He started to drive on and let them settle it themselves, but the cars needed to be moved out of the road immediately. Although there usually wasn't much traffic on this country road, drivers often drove over the speed limit along this route. A more serious accident could happen while the women stood around arguing.

Unfolding his tall, lanky body from his low sports car, Paul was pelted by the heat of anger pumping from these women like a furnace on steroids. With arms flailing, spit flying, and nose touching nose, these women were out of control. Paul's stomach went sour.

"You ran into me! You stupid...!" screamed the taller of the two. She was a middle-aged Latino woman, hair pulled back in a tight bun and dangly earrings dancing with each angry toss of her head. She stood closer to the Subaru which had been rear ended.

The other driver, a heavy set, young Latino woman, swore, "You stopped! You stopped right in the middle of the road, you..."

They hadn't noticed Paul's approach.

"Ladies!" Paul called loudly, causing both women to jump. "Are you two okay?"

Both women nodded. Not wanting to give them time to start fighting again, Paul quickly added, "We need to get your cars off the road."

He paused, looking at the cars in confusion. There was no stop sign or stop light. So why had the Taurus run into the back of the Subaru?

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The Taurus driver started flopping her arms about like she was being attacked by bees. "I'm not moving my car until a deputy comes and sees what she did to my car! I ran into her, but she had no business stopping in the middle of the road like she did! She just stopped! Stopped right here for no reason at all!" Tears poured down her smooth cheeks.

"Now, Miss..." Paul started, his shoulders tensing.

"No! Now I mean it! This woman has done me wrong! I'm not lying! She just stopped in the middle of the road! Now she's ruined my car! Ay dios mio! Oh, my God!" With that, she dramatically flung her round body onto the hood of the car, beat her chubby fists on the hot metal, and sobbed noisily. Paul rolled his eyes and ran his fingers through his hair, ready to yank it out.

Looking to the other driver, he realized she hadn't said a word during the Taurus driver's ranting. She just stood there, breathing evenly, with her arms folded across her chest and one eyebrow cocked. There was the start of a smile at the corners of her mouth. Paul felt his shoulders relax. He turned back to the crying woman, who was well into her drama. Her body shuddered as she slid down the side of her car.

Paul had to raise his voice to be heard over her crying. "This isn't bad enough to call a deputy, miss, and we need to get the cars off the road."

"No!" she shrieked, leaping up and facing Paul. Her choppy breath, smelling of cigarettes, hit him like a boxer punching an opponent.

"Don't you understand? This woman just stopped in the middle of the road! Just stopped! I want a deputy to see what she did!"

The other woman calmly uncrossed her arms and smoothed her slightly rumpled linen jacket. "What is your name?" she asked quietly.

The young woman eyed her suspiciously. "Maria."

"Well, Maria, I am Angélica. I thank you for teaching me something important today."

""Wh-what did I teach you?" Maria asked suspiciously.

"The need for control. You see, when I had slowed down to cross the rail-road tracks, I saw you fly up behind me in my rearview mirror. I

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thought, boy, she's in such a hurry. I bet she tailgates me. And sure enough, as I went across the railroad tracks, you were six inches from my bumper."

"I was not that close," Maria mumbled unconvincingly.

Angélica put her hand up, stopping Maria. "Yes, you were. As I sped up, you stayed six inches off my bumper. I tapped my brakes, but you came even closer. That's when I got really angry... blind with rage. I didn't care about anything but getting out of my car and teaching you a lesson. Yes, I stopped in the middle of the road. But you were too close to stop in time."

Maria sniffed and ran the back of her hand across her runny nose. "I still don't get what I taught you."

"You taught me that I must control my anger. I don't want to ever lose control like that again."

Maria studied Angélica with hooded eyes but didn't say anything. Angélica moved to examine the cars, followed by Paul and then Maria. They saw there was very little damage.

"This man is right. We don't need to call a deputy. Let's pull our cars over and exchange our information," Angélica said.

So with the cars safely pulled to the side of the road, and the women talking calmly, Paul crossed the road to his car. Everything had turned out okay. But most of all, Paul was pleased that what might have been an ugly scene had turned out alright.

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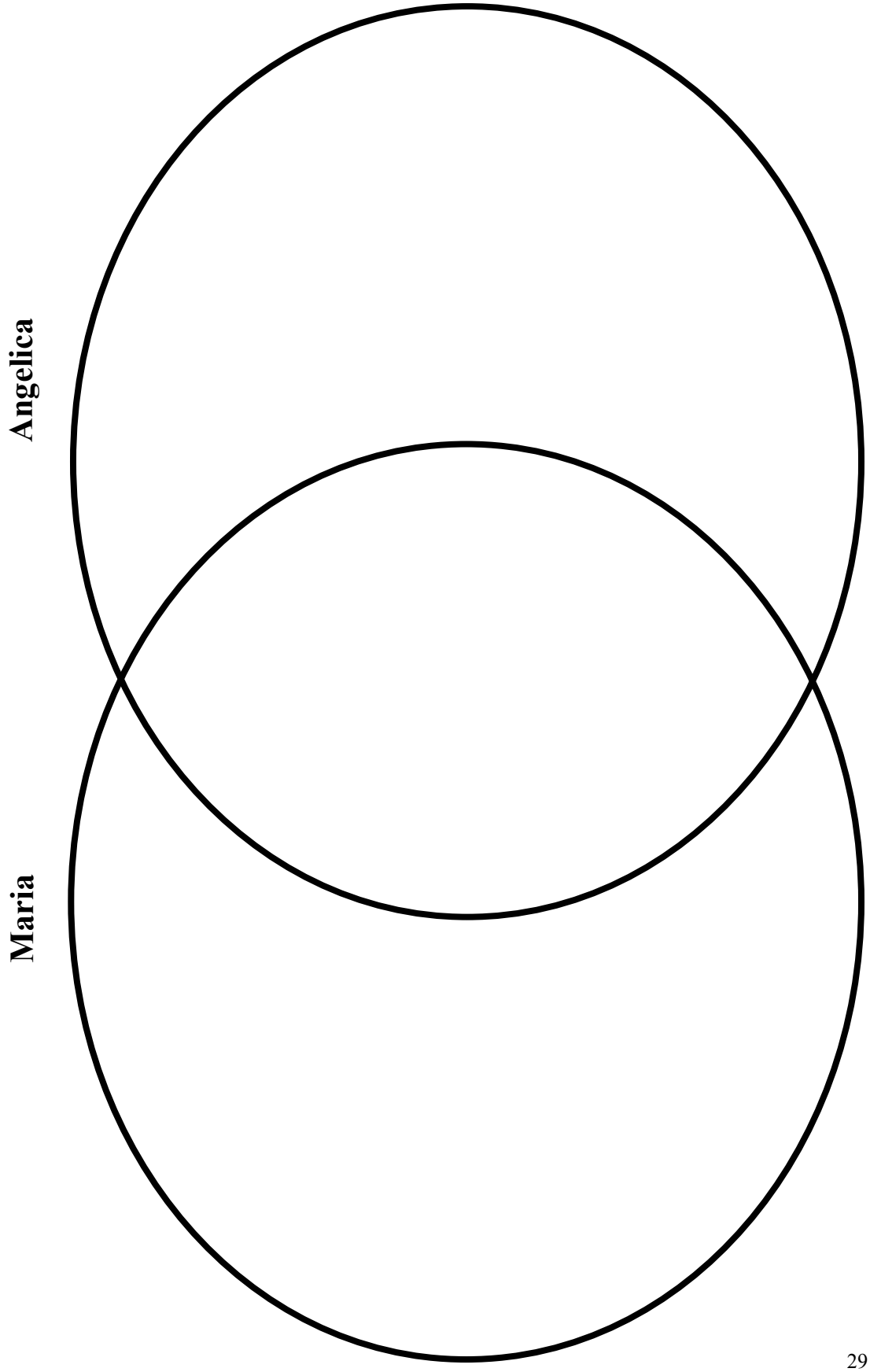
Road Rage



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Identify Cause and Effect

One stop on the road to literacy…

LEVEL 3
RC6

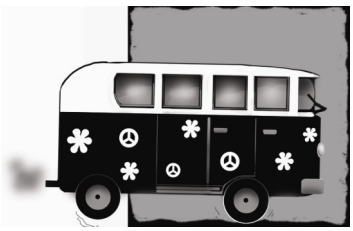
The Outcome

The student will identify cause and effect.

Why Go There?

Explain to your student that a good reader looks for causes and effects when reading. Give the example that when we eat too much (cause), we gain weight (effect). A good reader knows the words that signal a cause and effect.

How To Get There



Use stories *Car Talk* (pages 31-35) and *Miles Ahead* (pages 36-39) to teach cause and effect.

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Car Talk: Cause and Effect Directions

Materials: *Car Talk* on pages 32-35

Directions:

Follow the steps on how to teach a reading passage (page 2) and guide your student through *Car Talk*.

Then teach your student that understanding cause (why something happens) and effect (what happens) is important for comprehension of text.

Have him begin reading the story aloud, asking him to stop when he comes to Sasha's first mistake (forgets to turn off the dome light).

Ask him what happened because of that—what was the effect— (the battery died). Then ask what happened as a result of that (Dad stopped mowing to go get her).

Ask what was the effect of Dad stopping his mowing (when he got back, he couldn't finish because of rain). Then ask what was the result of that (Dad had to mow on Saturday and not play golf).

Organize the information graphically as shown below. Guide your student to understand one cause may lead to more causes and effects.

Continue in the same manner until the story is finished.

Car Talk Cause and Effect

Cause: Sasha forgets to turn off the dome light.

Effect: Dad had to stop mowing to pick her up.

Cause: Dad couldn't mow when he got home because it was raining.

Effect: Dad had to mow Saturday and not play golf.

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Car Talk

"Dad, do I have to do this?"

William Harding, who was bent over the engine of a 2004 Toyota Camry, slowly lifted his gaze. His sixteen-year-old daughter stood in the garage doorway with her arms locked across her chest. The glare of the overhead lights behind cast her into shadows. Even though William couldn't see her face, he knew it'd be scrunched up like she'd gotten a whiff of rotting fish. He sighed. She was feeling mistreated, picked upon, and rebellious.

He studied her with some amusement. Her milk chocolate skin glistened from a recent shower. She was dressed in her good jeans and favorite tee shirt. He knew she was hoping he'd let her off the hook so she could join her friends on this beautiful spring Saturday morning to do whatever teenage girls do.

"Yes, Sasha, you have to do this." His voice was firm but not unkind.

She made a tutting noise, and trudged to the car, bringing a fresh scent of soap with her.

"This isn't a punishment, Sasha."

Her eyes rolled in disbelief.

"Let's start by looking at the facts."

"Aw, Dad, no! Please, can we just get on with this?"

William continued as if she hadn't interrupted. "You've had your license for one month. In the first week, you went to a friend's house, turned the dome light on to check your lipstick, and failed to turn the light out. It stayed on all night and the next day and your battery went dead."

"Yes, sir, I know now that when I turn that little light on, I have to turn it off. I learned that lesson. I'm sorry about that, Dad."

"Why are you sorry?

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"Because you were in the middle of mowing the grass and had to stop to come get my car started. By the time you got home, it was raining and you couldn't finish the yard work until the next day. And that meant you didn't get to play golf. I'm really sorry, Dad."

"I know you are. I don't bring this up to make you feel bad. I want to be sure you understand the consequences of your actions."

"Yes, sir," she sighed.

"What happened a week later, Sasha?"

Sasha's head dropped and she drew random circles on the quarter panel with her index finger. She mumbled something William couldn't understand. He kept his patience because she'd never given him a lick of trouble before. He knew this was hard for her. Heck, it was hard for him, too.

"Speak up, Sasha."

Sasha forced her chin up and looked him in the eye. "I ran out of gas."

"Where?"

Her chin dropped an inch and she focused on something over William's left shoulder.

"On the interstate," she whispered.

Just hearing those words made William's heart freeze. His daughter with car problems on the interstate—he hated to think what could have happened.

"And what is the problem with that?"

Tears glistened in the corners of her eyes. "I had to call Mom. She was in the middle of cooking supper. She had to stop what she was doing, and she and Keith brought me some gas."

"And?"

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"When she got home, dinner was ruined. And Keith didn't get his homework done until real late."

"And most importantly?"

"I could have been hurt on the interstate."

"And why did all of this happen?"

"On account of the fact that I didn't check the gas gauge." Tears flowed down her cheeks.

He hated to see her cry, but he wanted to be sure she understood the gravity of the situation. "So what happened yesterday?" William asked.

"I drove home with the emergency brake on."

"Yes, you did. And that's real hard to do when there's a loud beep going the entire time you're driving and a red light lit up on the dashboard. Not to mention the car must have been difficult to drive. How did you miss the warning signs, Sasha?"

"I had the radio on kinda loud and I just didn't see the little red light."

" 'Kinda loud'?"

"Very loud."

"And what about difficulty driving? Did you have any of that?"

"Yes, sir. I noticed it wasn't driving quite right. But I knew you'd fix it when I got home." Her overly bright eyes pleaded for understanding.

"And what might have happened because you chose to let it go until you got home?"

"My brakes might have failed me," Sasha sniffed. "And as a result, you're having to spend your Saturday morning checking out my breaks. I'm really, really sorry, Dad."

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William placed a gentle hand on her shoulder. “I know, Sasha. You didn’t do any of this on purpose. But this lack of focus cannot continue. Your safety is my number one concern. So here’s what we’re going to do. I’m going to take you through this car and show you how to take better care of it. You need to respect this car, appreciate the fact you have use of it, and know how to take care of it. If you can’t be responsible when you drive, you won’t have the privilege of using the car. Understand?”

“Yes, sir.” Suddenly Sasha wrapped her arms around his waist and pressed her head against his chest. “Thanks, Daddy,” she whispered.

He squeezed her and planted a kiss on top of her head. She may be sixteen, but she was his little girl. “You’re welcome, Pumpkin. Now let’s get to work.”

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Miles Ahead: Cause and Effect Directions

Materials: *Miles Ahead* on pages 38-39

Directions:

Follow the steps on how to teach a reading passage (page 2) and guide your student through *Miles Ahead*.

Then review cause (why something happens) and effect (what happens).

Explain that there are some words that signal a cause or effect is coming up. A list of those words is on page 37. Go over these words, giving examples.

Have him begin reading the story aloud, stopping at appropriate places to talk about the causes and effects, and to point out signal words.

FOLLOW UP:

Invite your student to write about the events of a day in his life. Encourage him to use as many of the signal words as possible.

FOLLOW UP:

Find science or historical reading material at your student's reading level. They are great resources for identifying cause and effect.

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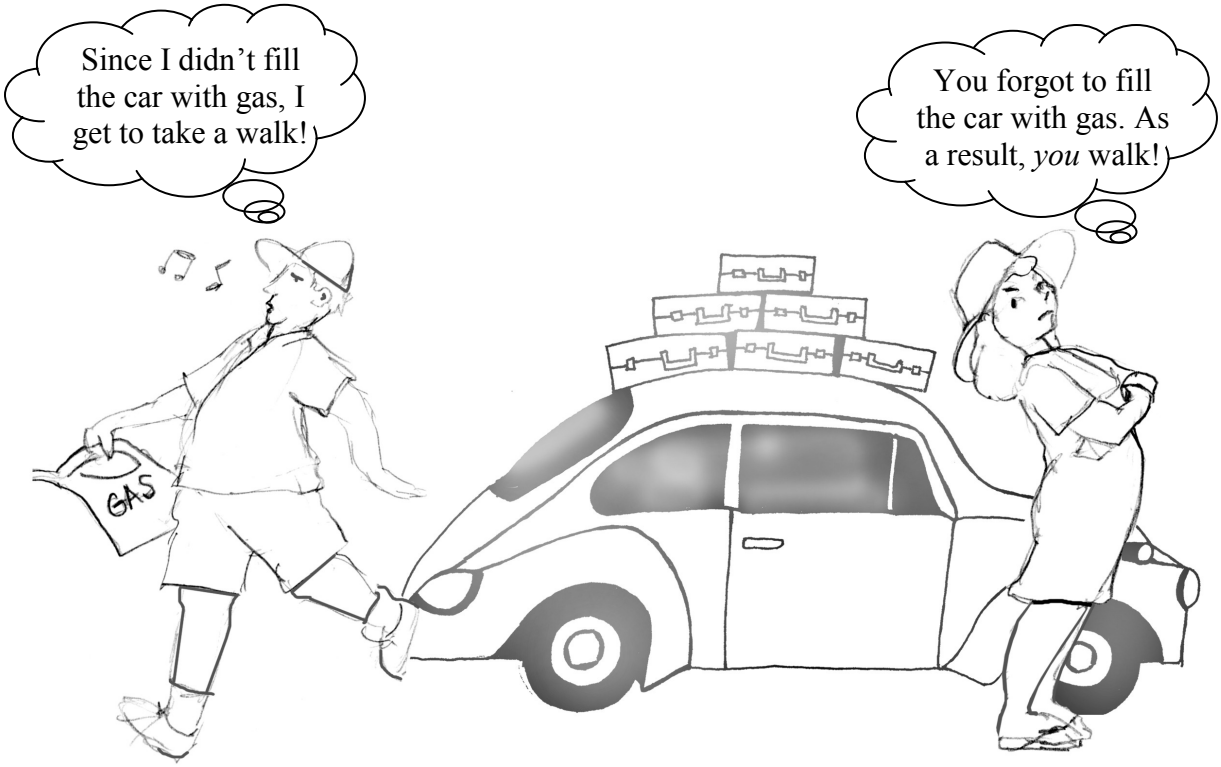
Signal Words

Cause	**Effect**
because	as a result
since	so
the reason for	outcome
on account of	finally
bring about	consequently
created by	for this reason
give rise to	therefore
contributed by	hence
due to	then



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Miles Ahead

By Eddie Bass

I needed a run. I needed to run several miles because of some of the tension and worry I had brought home after visiting my 90-year-old mother in the hospital. So late in the morning of that chilly January day, I put on my running clothes and headed out. I planned to do about 10 miles.

I live in the country, and so I run on two-lane country roads. At that time of the day, on account of no traffic, I can run and think—or not think if I choose. About halfway through my first mile, with my mind scooting back and forth between my mom and my job, I was startled by a bump against my leg. The bump was created by a large and very friendly dog, who apparently decided that I needed company on my run. He had no collar or other identification.

I have always loved dogs. I had one when I was a kid, and my wife and I had owned three together. But it had been a few years since the last one had gone on to doggy heaven, and in the meantime we had become cat people. I had, however, thought about getting another dog when I retired, and retirement was coming up soon. This dog, however, had a more urgent agenda because he had either been dumped, or he had run away. He needed a home now. And here came this human slogging down the road, easy to catch up with. Maybe this was someone to live with—who knows? What's to lose?

At first I tried to get the dog to go back to wherever he'd come from. "Go home, doggy! Stay! No!" to which he responded with a play-bow and a madly wagging tail. Finally, I gave up and headed on down the road, hoping that he'd drop off. Within another half mile, it was clear that he was there for the long run, so to speak, and down the road we went together.

He had good road skills. When a car came by, he headed into the nearest yard where he teased other dogs, flushed cats from their hiding places, and marked light poles and fence posts. None of these side trips kept him from straying far from me. After about 10 miles, I turned into my driveway, accompanied by my

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new companion, whose tail was still wagging but whose tongue was now hanging out. How could I not reward that kind of dedication? So I gave him some water and some dry cat food. He vacuumed them up, and then sat down next to me and leaned against my leg. He looked up at me as if to say, "Hey, guy! You need a dog, and I need a home. Whattaya say?" I think I was hooked right then and there. But like a good citizen I canvassed the neighborhood to see if he belonged to anyone. I put him in my truck and drove around showing him to folks. I watched the lost-dog notices in the paper. I notified the local vets. No takers, he was mine if I wanted him. And I did, for he and I had bonded. Therefore, I took him to my vet for a checkup and shots, just to make it official.

There was, of course, the question of a name. I'm a jazz lover and a Miles Davis fan, and I needed to honor the distance my new friend ran with me. Finally it came to me in a flash—Miles!

Now, almost eight years later, Miles is a family member. His jobs include keeping our cats in line, patrolling the yard for squirrels, greeting all visitors with a butt-sniff, and—most importantly—getting me out of bed for a run in the morning!

But the story doesn't end there. About six months later Miles and I were on our morning run. He suddenly stopped by a patch of woods, ears in the alert position. In a moment I heard what he had first noticed—the meowing of a kitten. The little cat was up a small pine tree, but he came down and, fearlessly, approached me and my 70-pound escort. Miles, no great friend of cats, seemed fascinated. Later that morning I brought the kitten some food and water and came back the next day with a cat carrier. Hence, we adopted Tigger, and he and Miles became best buddies.

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Follow Simple, Written Instructions and Diagrams

One stop on the road to literacy…

LEVEL 3
RC7

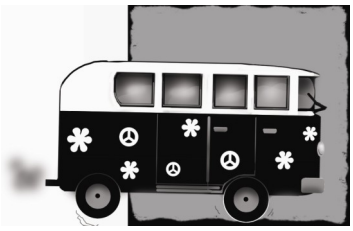
The Outcome

The student will follow simple, written multi-step instructions and diagrams.

Why Go There?

Explain to your student that a good reader pays careful attention to instructions and diagrams.

How To Get There



Introduce your student to following instructions and diagrams by having her complete the following two activities. Encourage your student to follow one direction at a time and check results against the diagram.

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Make an Origami Hat

Materials:
one large rectangular piece of paper
some tape

Directions:

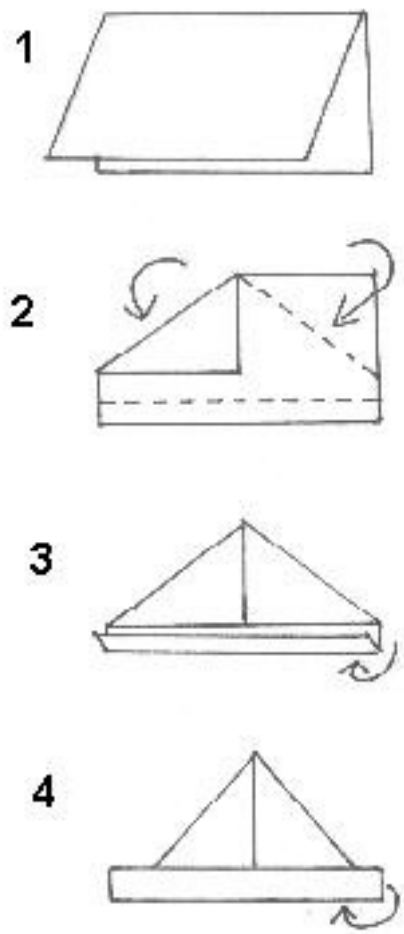
Step 1: Fold the piece of paper in half, so you have a rectangular piece of paper with the folded edge at the top.

Step 2: Fold in the corners as in the diagram so the edges meet to form two triangles.

Step 3. Fold up the bottom edge of one side of the paper so it meets the bottom edge of the two triangles. Flip the paper over.

Step 4. Fold up the bottom edge on the other side, with the fold line running along the bottom edge of the triangles.

Note: Use tape to hold the hat together if necessary.



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How to Tie a Necktie

Materials: tie
mirror

Directions:

1) Looking in the mirror, loop the necktie around your neck so the wide end is on the right and the narrow end is on the left. Pull the wide end down so it is about 12 inches below the narrow end.

2) Then cross the wide end over the narrow end.

3) Bring the wide end back underneath the narrow end.

4) Wrap the wide end back over in front of the narrow end again.

5) Then, pull the wide end up and through the loop around your neck.

6) Keeping the last loop loose, bring the wide end down through the front loop.

7) Finally, tighten the knot to the collar by holding the narrow end and sliding the knot up.

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