



COMPARATIVE STUDY WORKSHOP

Post Primary - Senior Cycle English

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Comparative Language



We have included samples of comparative language below. However, it is important to remember that this is not the only vocabulary that we should be developing. Moreover, while it is useful to employ comparative language, transitional words in themselves are not comparison. They are only the **framework for connections** to be made.

Comparative Language Signifying Similarity

Similarly

This is echoed to a similar extent in____,

as

In the same way

In like fashion,

The scene mirrors

Comparatively,

Accordingly,

We are presented with an equally.....

When we turn to __, again we find that

This compares well with

Just as...., so too..

The same ___ underpins___ in...

In common with

What the texts share

Likewise,

Correspondingly,

In the same manner,

In addition,

Equally noticeable

_____mirrors _____in the sense that..

Comparative Language Signifying Contrast

Contrarily,

In spite of,

Nevertheless

Whereas

In contrast,

On the one hand,

On the other hand,

Dissimilarly

This differs from

In contradistinction to__

Nothing like this is evident in_____

On the contrary,

Notwithstanding,

Conversely,

At the same time,

While this may be true

Contrasted with

Unlike what we see in....

In a different manner

___takes a different approach

PDST Blended Learning Resources



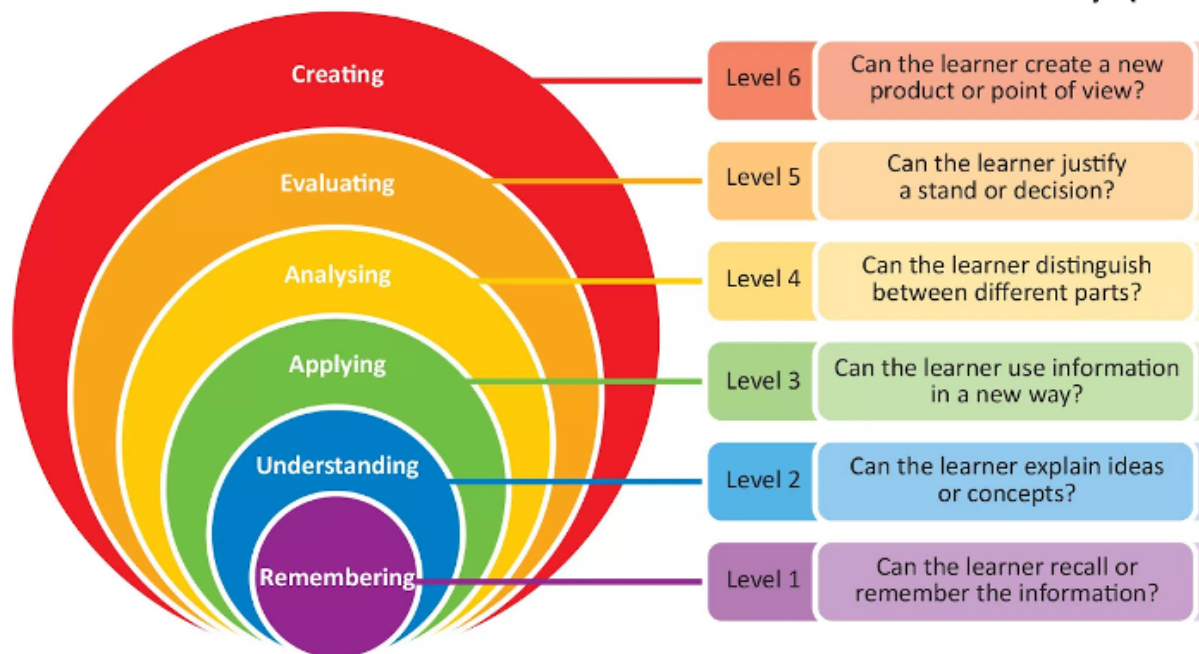
Your attention is drawn to the blended learning supports available on the PDST website. Blended learning models, in line with our curriculum, place the students at the centre of the learning process and encourage an enquiry approach. The PDST blended learning website has many resources to support blended learning, available on

<https://sites.google.com/pdst.ie/blended-learning/home>

Students make meaningful and thoughtful connections to the world around them by asking questions, conducting research and formulating informed decisions using technology tools that are as authentic as the problem they are tackling. The power of digital technology tools lies in their ability to provide opportunities for students to communicate, store, retrieve, manipulate, visualise, analyse and share information with teachers, classmates and other students and experts outside of the classroom in a global context.

Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy of cognitive learning objectives is familiar to most teachers. The taxonomy explores the Cognitive process. Asking questions develops cognitive (thinking) skills. This models and **improves the development of ideas, imagination and creativity.** The taxonomy begins with lower order thinking skills of Knowledge, Comprehension and Application and extends to higher order thinking skills of Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation.



Here are some sample comparative-based questions relevant to each area of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Level 1: Remembering

Rearrange the key moments in sequential order.
Describe what occurred in a key moment.

Level 2: Understanding

Paraphrase a key moment in the text.
Give examples of conflict in the text.

Level 3: Applying

What would happen if the characters rejected the norms of their society?
Have you had any similar experiences to the character in this scene?

Level 4: Analysing

Find four moments in the text where the norms of society affecting the protagonist are evident.
Is the relationship between the family in the text a positive or negative relationship?

Level 5: Evaluating

Debate whether the character acted responsibly or irresponsibly in this scene.
How would you feel if you were in the character's situation?

Level 6: Creating

Can you devise a solution to the character's predicament?
If you were the character, how would you react to this issue?

Comparative Modes

Comparative modes “*give a definite structure and direction to the comparative study*” (Leaving Certificate English syllabus, p. 18). Comparative modes can be used to anchor dialogic discussion and critical literacy tasks in the Comparative Study classroom.

The Higher Level modes are:

- a theme or issue
- a literary genre
- the cultural context
- the general vision and outlook.

Cultural Context:

The cultural context is the world of the text. Questions that students may consider analysing for this mode include:

- how does the cultural context and the values of society affect the lives of the characters?
- does this have a positive or negative influence on the actions of the characters?
- who is powerful in society? Do they use this power in a positive or negative way?

Theme/ Issue:

A theme or issue relates to an issue or theme that is prevalent in each of the texts. When studying the texts, questions that students may consider analysing for this mode include:

- how is the theme or issue introduced in each of the texts?
- do characters influence how the issue or theme develops in the text?
- is the theme or issue resolved at the conclusion of the text?

Literary Genre

Literary genre refers to the way in which a story is presented. In order to appreciate literary genre, it is critically important to understand the manner in which films, dramas and novels differ. Questions that students may consider analysing for this mode include:

- how are the characters created and presented in each text?
- how is suspense and tension created in each text and how does this inform the development of the texts?

General Vision and Viewpoint:

The general vision and viewpoint refers to the author's presentation of life in the text. While this may be optimistic or pessimistic, there may also be a realistic vision of hope presented in the text which characters can aspire to. Questions that students may consider analysing for this mode include:

- is the text opened in a positive or negative manner?
- which challenges do the characters encounter in the text?
- are relationships in the text destructive or constructive?

The Ordinary Level Modes are:

- specific themes eg. love, race, prejudice, violence, etc.
- social setting
- relationships
- hero, heroine, villain

Specific Themes eg. love, race, prejudice, violence, etc.:

Consider a theme that is prevalent in each of the texts. Questions that students may consider analysing for this mode include:

- how is this theme introduced?
- what implications does this theme have on the lives of the characters? How does it affect their daily lives and their decisions?
- does it prompt the character to make any important decisions?
- how is the theme resolved at the end of the text?

Social Setting:

This refers to the world of the text and incorporates attitudes and values such as the roles of men and women, and matters of class and race. Questions that students may consider analysing for this mode include:

- where and when is the story set?
- what is significant about the world of the text?
- who is powerful in society?
- what is the role of religion, family or women in society?
- what is different about this life to that of today's life in Ireland?

Relationships:

Relationships in the texts can reveal a lot about characters and about the norms and values of the society that they live in. Consider what makes relationships significant within the text.

Questions that students may consider analysing for this mode include:

- how is the relationship introduced in the text?
- what challenges does the relationship face?
- what decisions do the characters make that may affect the relationship?
- how does the relationship end?

Hero/ Heroine/ Villain:

The hero, heroine or villain is not always the protagonist of the text, but is central to the story. Questions that students may consider analysing for this mode include:

- how is the hero/ villain introduced?
- what are the values of the hero/ villain?
- how does their behaviour affect the lives of other characters in the text?

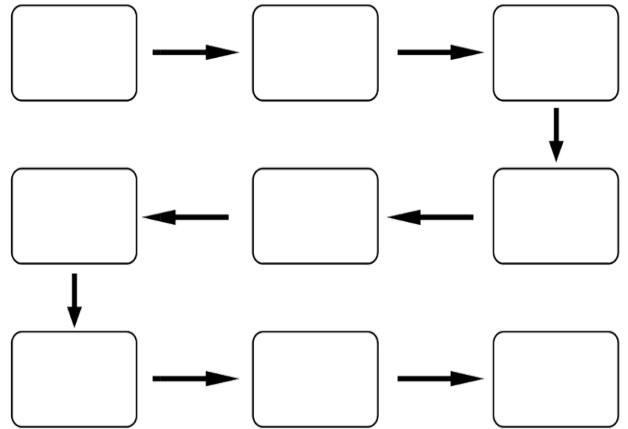
Promoting Student Engagement with Key Moments

Sequence Chart

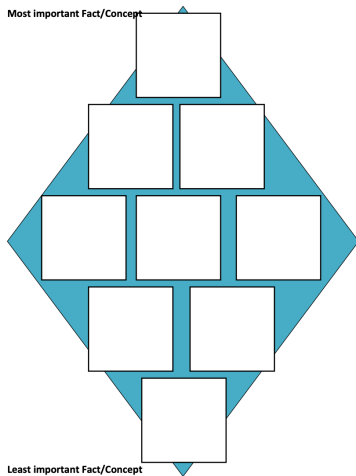
To track plot development, one possible strategy is to make a **sequence chart** for each text, recording the key moments in order. This supports students in **visually making sense** of how events unfold in their reading. In turn, this will help them to construct a cohesive and logical flow to their writing.

To examine similarities and differences in structure, the sequence charts for each text can be compared.

A blank sequence chart has been included at the end of this workbook for use with your own students.



Diamond 9 Ranking Activity



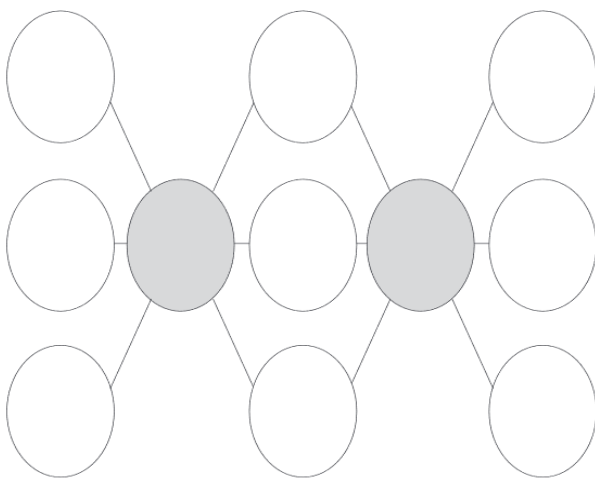
The Diamond 9 activity can develop the **speaking and listening skills of students** and can also develop students' understanding of how particular key moments highlight facets of the text's cultural context.

In this activity, students work together to place nine pieces of information **in order of importance**. You may also consider giving students more than nine pieces of information to work with. In this instance, students have to identify nine areas of priority in advance of establishing their order of importance.

You may consider using this activity to develop the **critical thinking** of students both with regard to the key moments of their texts, and with regards to aspects of the particular modes they are exploring. This may also be suitable for use with a different facet of Leaving Certificate English, such as poetry.

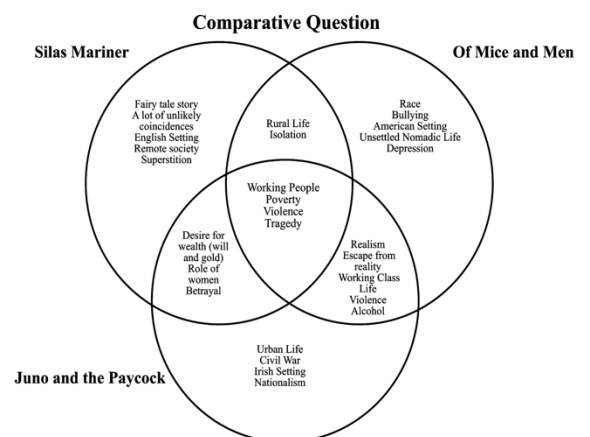
Identifying Similarities and Differences using a Comparison Organiser

Graphic and symbolic representations of similarities and differences enhance students' **understanding of content and deepen knowledge**. Initially, teachers need to model for the students how to complete a graphic organiser to compare and contrast, explicitly talking about the types of information that go into the different sections. Then teachers need to guide students through the process. Eventually, our goal is for the students to be able to complete the graphic organiser on their own, placing information in the correct places. Through the activity, drawing upon similarities and differences, students are enabled to gain a deeper, more profound understanding of their texts.



The Double-Bubble diagram (left) can be used to compare **two texts**. A blank Double-Bubble diagram can be found on page 15 of this booklet. A Double Venn diagram can also be used to compare two texts. This can be found on page 16 of this booklet.

Unlike the Double-Bubble diagram or Double Venn Diagram, a Triple Venn diagram can be used to compare **three texts**. An example of this in use for a Comparative Question is on the right. A blank Triple Venn diagram can be found on page 17 of this booklet.



Comparison Matrix

The Comparison Matrix can also support students in identifying similarities and differences between texts. The process of filling out the Comparison matrix structures students' thinking in relation to the texts and the particular mode, forcing them to spend time **thinking deeper on the most relevant content**. As these matrices begin to be filled, they are a great resource for revision and development of ideas. They may never be fully filled as:

- new comparisons can always be found
- students can constantly revisit and develop more depth in their comparisons.

This strategy is especially effective when the learning requires **deeper analysis** to examine subtle similarities and differences between **relevant ideas or concepts** and results in a **deeper understanding of the people, places, things, or ideas being studied**. Since it can contain a lot of information that has been organised into categories, the matrix is a quick way for students to interpret a large quantity of data and see patterns of similarity and

difference. Label the matrix at the top of the page based on the mode the matrix will be focused on. Along the left side of the page, list each of the points of comparison regarding the particular mode. Across the top, list the names of the texts. Determine how (if at all) each text listed at the top, related to the points of comparison listed in the rows, and place findings in the relevant matrix space. Continue to evaluate and mark each object in the column. Look for similarities by noting patterns of X's and look for differences by noting blank boxes. Encourage students to discuss similarities and differences and draw conclusions.

| | Text 1 | Text 2 | Text 3 | Similarities and Differences |
|--|--------|--------|--------|------------------------------|
| How is the world of the text introduced? | | | | |
| In what way is society structured? | | | | |
| What is the mood/ atmosphere of the text? How is the mood/ atmosphere created? | | | | |
| Who controls the world of the text? How does this control manifest? | | | | |
| How do central characters fit into their society? | | | | |

Three Questions Formative Assessment Strategy

Assessment is formative when either formal or informal procedures are used to gather evidence of learning during the learning process, and are used to adapt teaching to meet student needs (NCCA, 2015).



The **Three Questions Strategy** is a formative assessment strategy. When reading a student's work and seeing something the student should reflect on, the teacher puts a **numbered circle** at that point in the text.

Underneath the student's work the teacher **writes a question** relating to the **first numbered circle**, writes a question for the **second question** and the **third**.

This technique is particularly effective because it creates more work for the receiver than the giver, it **moves the learning forward** and it **allows for differentiation**.

However, in order for the feedback to be used formatively, the students **must respond to the questions asked**.

Consider the sample comparative introduction paragraph below. Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of this sample comparative introductory paragraph, what would you write as formative assessment using the Three Questions strategy?

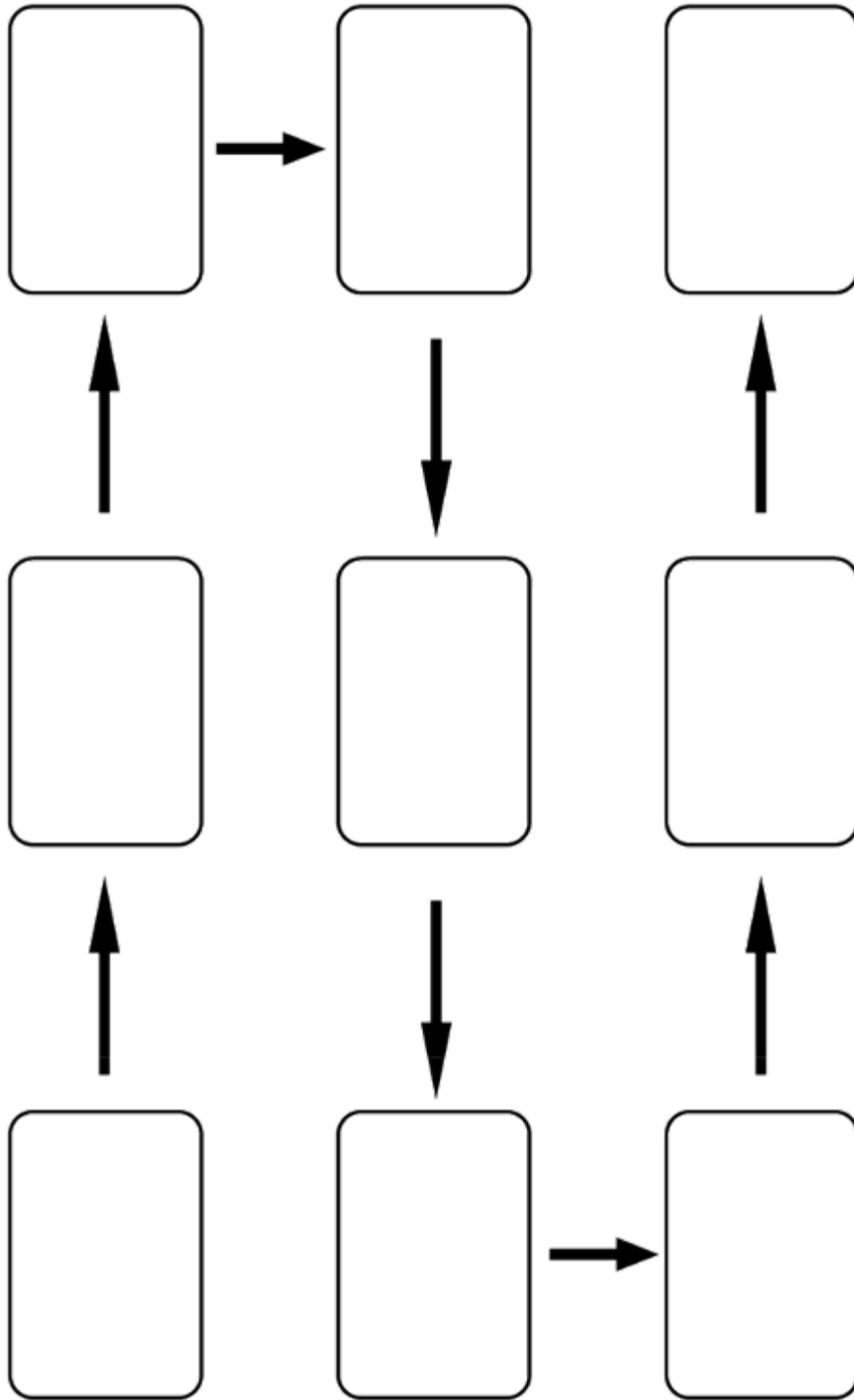
Question:

Important moments in texts can reveal the general vision and viewpoint of those texts.

Introductory Paragraph:



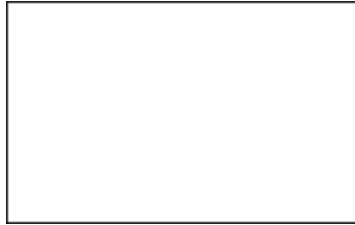
Yes, key events and their impact helped me to clarify the general vision and viewpoints of my texts studied. I studied three different texts. In Brooklyn, Ellis emigrated to America to improve her life. The general vision and viewpoint of the text here was one that I found encouraging. Unlike Brooklyn, the general vision and viewpoint of the drama "Philadelphia Here I Come" was significantly bleaker. I found this slightly depressing. The general vision and viewpoint of my studied novel, "The Spinning Wheel" was also very gloomy.

Sample Sequence Chart



Diamond Nine Template

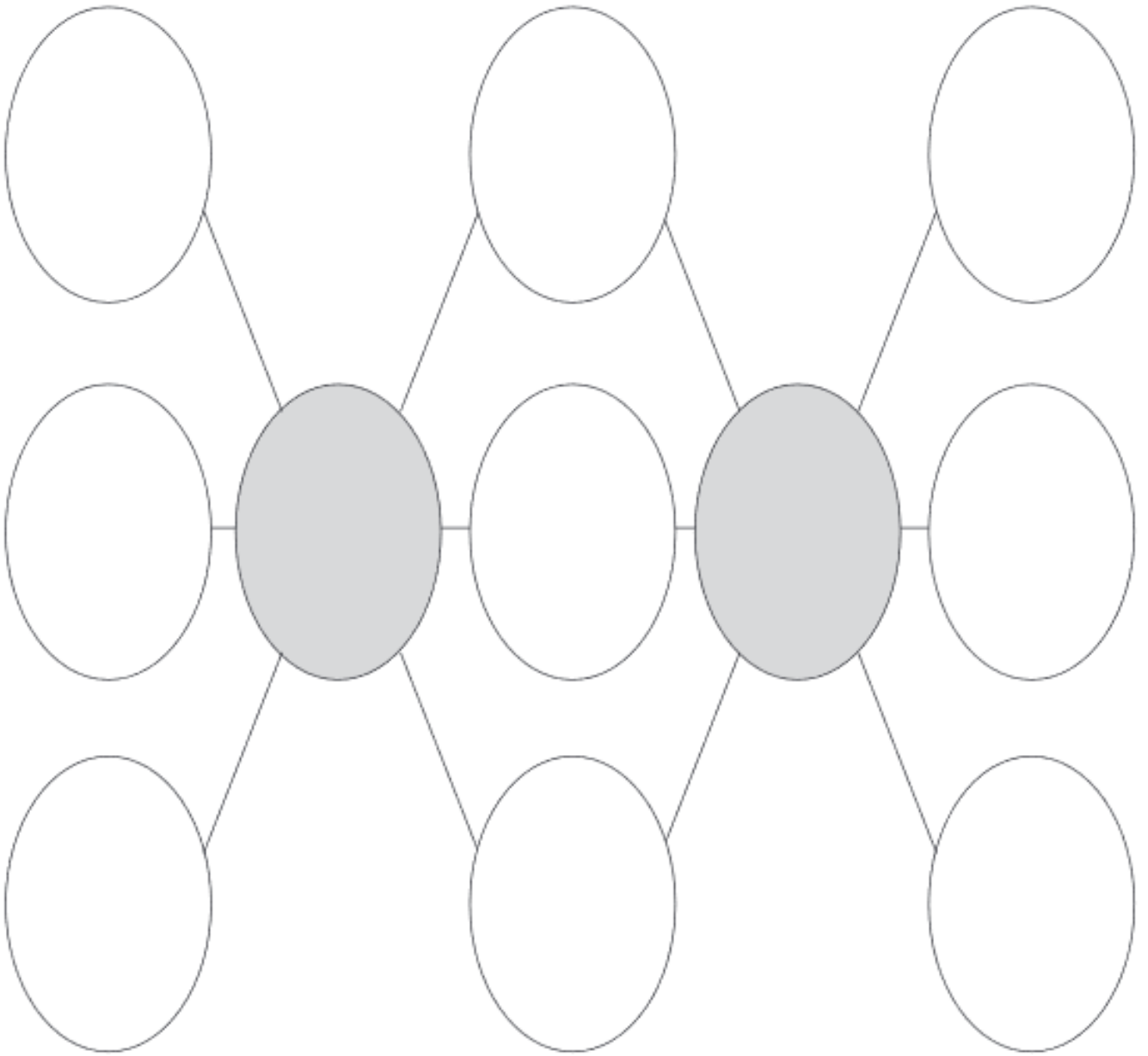
Most Important:



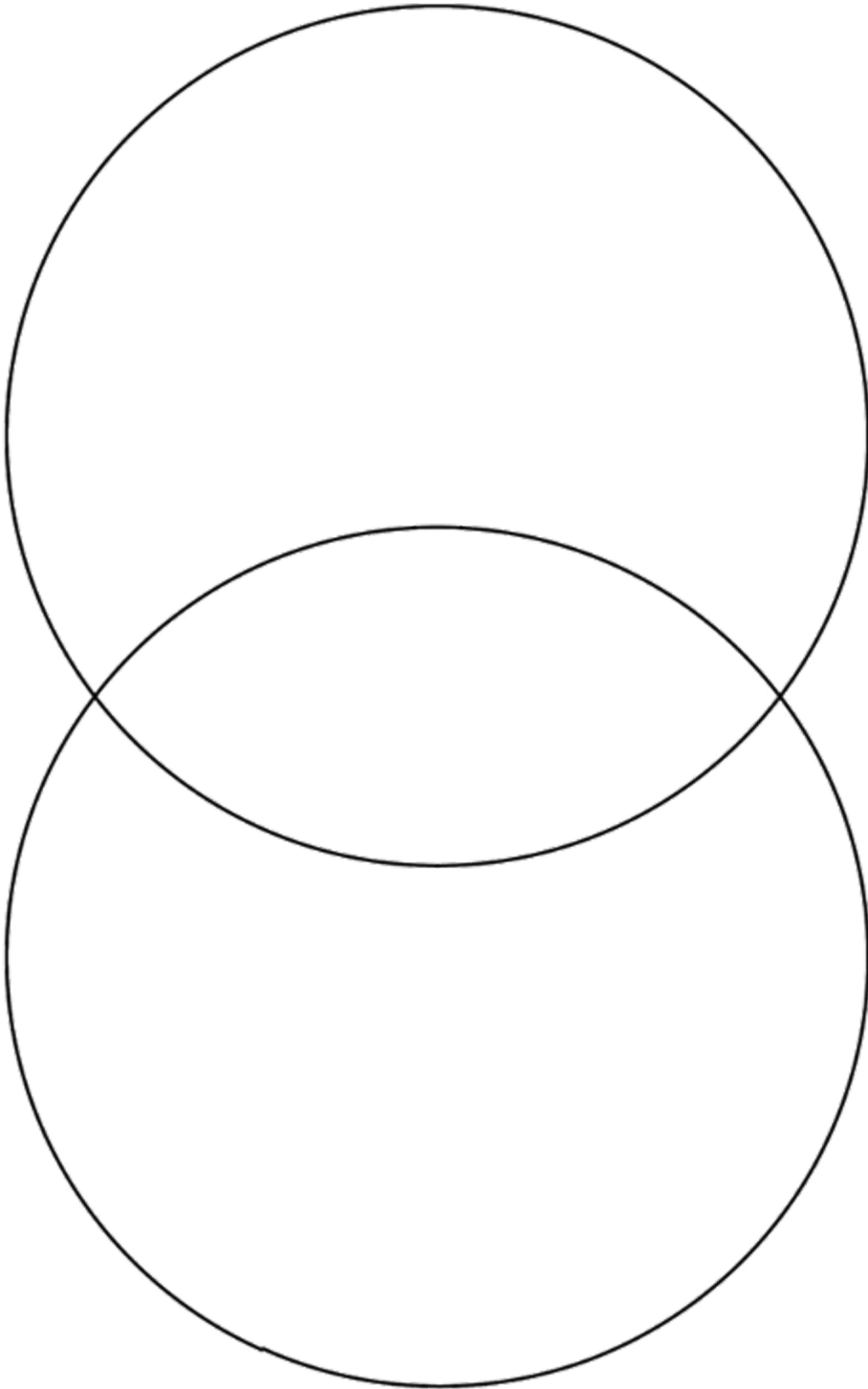
Least Important:



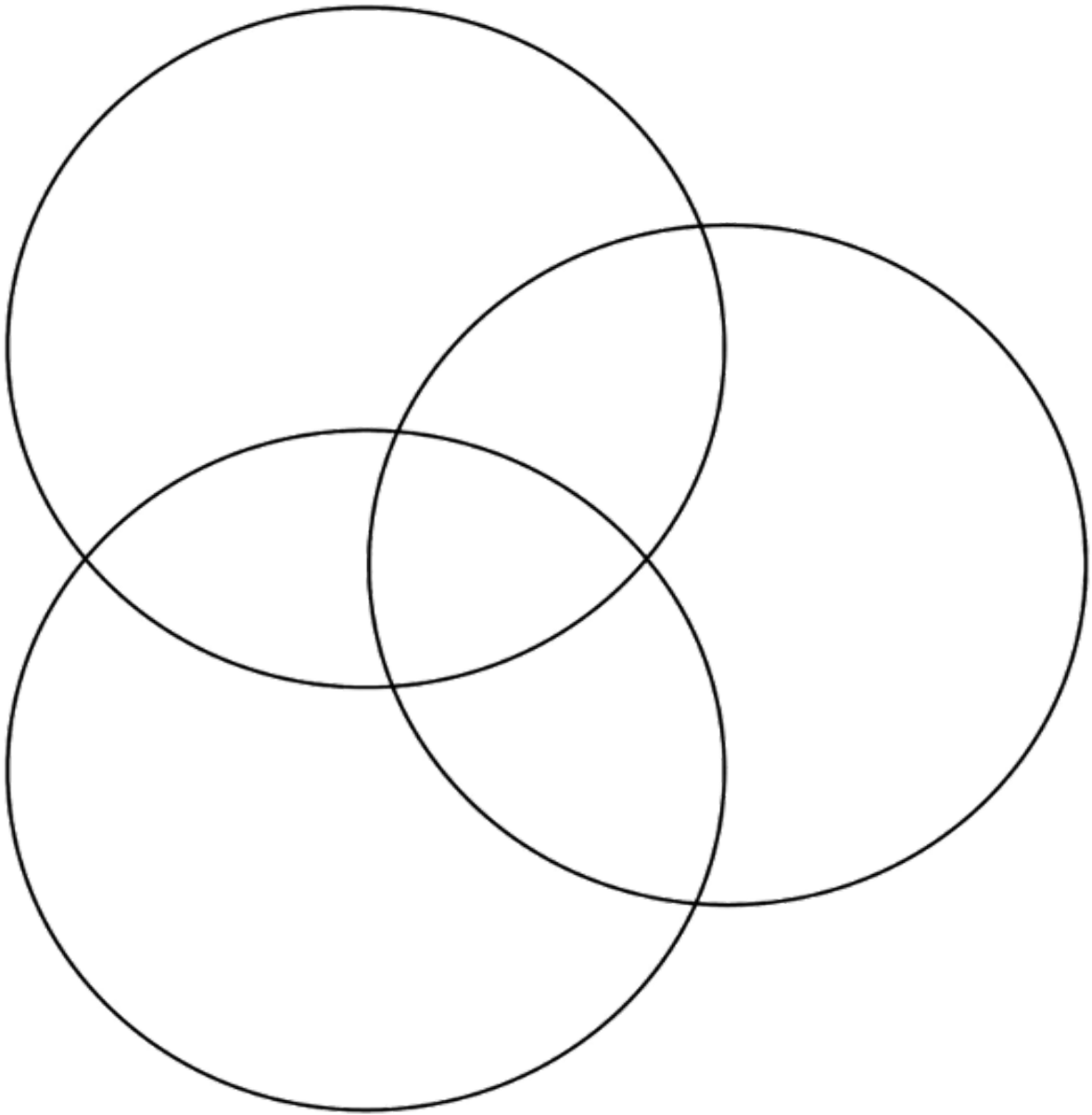
Double-Bubble Diagram



Double Venn Diagram



Triple Venn Diagram



Sample Comparison Matrix

| | Text 1 | Text 2 | Text 3 | Similarities and Differences |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|------------------------------|
| Statement One | | | | |
| Statement Two | | | | |
| Statement Three | | | | |
| Statement Four | | | | |

References

NCCA. n.d. Glossary. NCCA. Viewed 17 October 2020.

<<https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/glossary>>

NCCA (1997). Leaving Certificate English Syllabus. Dublin, Ireland. NCCA.