

Lesson 7: Independent Writing: Similarities between Two Schools



CCS Standards

- **W.2.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.
- **W.2.5:** With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.
- **SL.2.1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.2.1a:** Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- **SL.2.1c:** Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.
- **L.2.2:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.



Daily Learning Targets

- I can write about the similarities between my school and the school that I researched using details from my notes. (SL.2.1a, SL.2.1c, W.2.2, W.2.5, L.2.2.)

Ongoing Assessment

- During Work Time B and Work Time C, use the Informative/Explanatory Writing Checklist to document students' progress toward W.2.2 and L.2.2 (see Assessment Overview and Resources).

Agenda

1. **Opening**
 - A. Engaging the Learner: Working with Our Writing Partners (5 minutes)
2. **Work Time**
 - A. Engaging the Writer: Note-taking Activity (10 minutes)
 - B. Independent Writing: Information about Similarities (25 minutes)
 - C. Revising and Editing: Information about Similarities (10 minutes)
3. **Closing and Assessment**
 - A. Pinky Partners: Sharing Our Work (10 minutes)

Teaching Notes

Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- In this lesson, students use their notes from their Comparing and Contrasting Research note-catcher as they write the next part of their “The Most Important Thing about Schools” book: information about similarities between two schools. (W.2.2)

- Similar to Lesson 6, during the Closing students give kind, specific, and helpful feedback to their classmates based on the writing they have done during this lesson. (W.2.5)
- How this lesson builds on previous work:
- In Lesson 4, students took notes in their Comparing and Contrasting Research note-catchers. Students will use these notes to help them write parts of their “The Most Important Thing about Schools” books.
- In Lesson 5, students analyzed a model of “The Most Important Thing about Schools” book. They will revisit parts of this model to begin writing their own books.
- In this lesson, students have various opportunities to work with their writing partners to write parts of “The Most Important Thing about Schools” book: They practice turning their notes into complete sentences orally before writing the sentences in their books. They also have a chance to revise and edit sections of the book with their writing partners. (SL.2.1, W.2.2)
- This lesson once again embeds the revising and editing of particular parts of their writing as a regular routine. At the end of Work Time B, students are reminded of the habit of character perseverance, and they are asked to think of the strategies they used yesterday to help them persevere during writing.
- Continue to use Goal 1 and 2 Conversation Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation.
- Areas in which students may need additional support:
- In Work Time B, students use their Comparing and Contrasting Research note-catcher to write information about similarities in complete sentences. For students whose notes aren’t as clear, you may encourage them to use the public notes about the school they have researched and their own school to support their writing.
- In Work Time B, consider providing a personal Interactive High Frequency Word Wall for students who frequently misspell the same words.

Teaching Notes

Down the road:

- In Lesson 8, students will finish drafting their books by writing their conclusion. In that lesson, they also will spend time revising their entire “The Most Important Thing about Schools” book with a partner. Students will continue producing their performance tasks by writing and drawing information about similarities between the school they researched and their own school.
- In Lesson 9, students will edit their entire books. They will share these published books at the Celebration of Learning.
- During the Celebration of Learning in Lesson 10, students also will present their Readers Theater scripts from Unit 2. They will practice their plays in Lesson 9 of this unit. If you want students to have additional practice, you may want to find other parts of your day to give them time to rehearse.

In advance:

- Preview the think-aloud in Work Time B to familiarize yourself with how to model writing information about similarities with students.

- Prepare:
 - Strips for the note-taking activity by cutting out the individual strips, one for each student. It is okay if strips are duplicated. (see supporting materials)
 - Directions for Note-taking Activity (see supporting materials)
 - Kind, Specific, and Helpful Feedback sentence starters (see supporting materials)
- Review the Pinky Partners protocol. (Refer to the Classroom Protocols document for the full version of the protocol.)
- Post: Learning targets, Writing Partners anchor chart, Important Book Parts anchor chart, and Turning Our Notes into Sentences anchor chart.

Technology & Multimedia

Consider using an interactive whiteboard or document camera to display lesson materials.

- Work Time B and C: Students complete and revise their book using a word processing tool, for example a Google Doc.
- Work Time B and C: Students use Speech to Text facilities activated on devices, or using an app or software like Dictation.io (<https://dictation.io/speech>)

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 2.I.A.1, 2.I.A.3, 2.I.B.5, and 2.I.C.10

Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs with opportunities to work closely with paragraph structure, building on their understanding one sentence at a time. In this lesson, students will focus on their sentences about similarities. Students continue to benefit from the activities and visual resources that establish paragraph structure and sequence from prior lessons.
- ELLs may find it challenging to keep pace with the class as they work to plan and write each sentence of their books. Consider providing additional writing time to accommodate students who may need more time to process language. Alternatively, during Work Time C, consider working with a small group of students to complete any unfinished writing.

Levels of support

For lighter support:

- Provide students with familiar structures from the Language Dive from Lesson 2 to support writing: “Besides having standard classes like _____, _____, and _____, the students at the tent school played games and sang songs. So do we!”

For heavier support:

- If ELLs who need heavier support are placed together in the same research school team, provide them with scaffolded materials such as partially pre-filled templates of their “The Most Important Thing about Schools” books. Consider working closely with this group throughout the lesson and completing their focus statements and similarity sentences with them as shared or guided writing sessions.

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple Means of Representation (MMR):** During the Closing, students give helpful feedback to improve a partner’s writing. Some students may be unsure what aspect of their partner’s writing to comment on. It may help to generate a list of ideas and display this list before students talk with their pinky partners.
- **Multiple Means of Action & Expression (MMAE):** During Work Time A, students practice turning a note into a complete sentence with their pinky partners. Some students may need additional scaffolding with this task. As you circulate during this activity, provide differentiated models to emulate by modeling how to turn the note into a complete sentence with individual students and allowing them to verbally repeat the sentence you created.
- **Multiple Means of Engagement (MME):** During Work Time B, you will model how to write about similarities between schools. Students may need examples of how to problem-solve when they want to write a word with tricky spelling. Emphasize process and effort by modeling how to sound out a word with tricky spelling and demonstrate how to use environmental print to support spelling accuracy.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

New:

- helpful feedback (L)

Review:

- similarity, perseverance, kind and specific feedback (L)

Materials

- ✓ Comparing and Contrasting Research note-catchers (from Lesson 4; one per student)
- ✓ Writing Partners anchor chart (begun in Unit 2, Lesson 2)
- ✓ Directions for Note-taking Activity (one to display)
- ✓ Strips for note-taking activity (one strip per student)
- ✓ Important Book Parts anchor chart (begun in Lesson 5)

- ✓ Language for Comparing and Contrasting anchor chart (begun in Lesson 1)
- ✓ “The Most Important Thing about Schools” Book: Teacher Model (from Lesson 5; one to display; see Performance Task)
- ✓ Comparing and Contrasting Research Note-catcher: Teacher Model (from Lesson 6; one to display)
- ✓ Turning Our Notes into Sentences anchor chart (begun in Lesson 6)
- ✓ Informative/Explanatory Writing Checklist (for teacher reference; see Assessment Overview and Resources)
- ✓ Pinky Partners anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 6)
- ✓ Kind, Specific, and Helpful Feedback sentence starters (one to display)

Opening

A. Engaging the Learner: Working with Our Writing Partners (5 minutes)

- Invite students to bring their pencils and **Comparing and Contrasting Research note-catcher** and sit next to their writing partner in the whole group area. Once students are seated, ask them to place their pencil and note-catcher next to them.
- Remind students that yesterday, they got closer to being ready to share their “The Most Important Thing about Schools” books.
- Say:
“I noticed that working with your writing partners really helped you get your best work done. You were making sure to look at your partner and listen with care, and this collaboration helped you get your best work done.”
- Invite students to give their writing partners a high-five.
- Direct students’ attention to the **Writing Partners anchor chart**. Tell students that in addition to planning and thinking together, you want them to work on something else with their writing partners.
- Focus students on the second row and read it aloud, including both “Listen to and look at my writing partner’s work” and possible answers in the “Looks and sounds like” column.
- Invite students to whisper a response into their hand:
“What is one thing you will do to ‘listen and look at your partner’s work’ with your writing partners?” (handle my partner’s work gently, look at my partner’s writing)
- Invite a few students to share their responses with the whole group.
- Tell students that you are excited for them to plan and think with their writing partner, and to listen to and look at their partner’s work today.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- As students think about how they will listen to and look at their writing partner’s work, provide options for expression by inviting them to act out what they will do with their writing partner (handle partner’s work gently, look at partner’s writing). (MMAE)

Work Time

A. Engaging the Writer: Note-taking Activity (10 minutes)

- Tell students that in addition to working with their writing partners, they did something else as writers to write their “The Most Important Thing about Schools” book: They turned their notes into complete sentences, which is not an easy thing to do.
- Explain that you noticed students using these strategies to turn their notes into sentences: Choose one note.
 - Remind yourself what information that note tells you.
 - Practice turning the note into a complete sentence by saying it out loud.
 - Write this sentence down in your book.
- Tell students that before they continue writing their books, they are going to do a note-taking activity to get their brains ready.
- Display the **Directions for Note-taking Activity**. Explain to students that they will be receiving a strip of paper with a note on it that it is from one of the public notes anchor charts (for boat school, tent school, or doorstep school). Read aloud the directions:
 1. Put your pinky in the air. Find another student whose pinky is in the air and link pinkies with that person.
 2. Read the note that is on your strip of paper.
 3. Remind yourself what information that note tells you.
 4. Practice turning that note into a complete sentence by saying it out loud.
 5. Listen while your partner shares.
 6. Switch strips with your partner and find another pinky partner to share with.
- Model this activity with one student. Invite students to Think-Pair-Share and review how you used the steps with your partner. Invite students to ask any clarifying questions.
- Distribute **strips for note-taking activity**.
- Invite students to stand up and find a pinky partner to share with. Remind students that they should switch strips with this partner, and share one more time with a different pinky partner. When they are done, they should take a seat. Continue to display the directions for the activity so students can reference them as needed.
- Refocus whole group. Invite students to give themselves a pat on the back for working with different partners and turning the notes they had into complete sentences.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs: Display options for sentence frames that may be helpful for students as they turn notes into complete sentences. Examples:
 - “At the boat school, ____.”
 - “Students at the boat school ____.”
 - “The boat school ____.” (MMAE)
- As students practice turning a note into a complete sentence with their pinky partners, circulate and listen in for students who may need additional support.

Provide differentiated models to emulate by modeling how to turn the note into a complete sentence with individual students and allowing them to verbally repeat the sentence you created. (MMAE)

Work Time

B. Independent Writing: Information about Similarities (25 minutes)

- Tell students that now that they have had some time to warm up by turning notes into sentences, they are definitely ready to continue writing their “The Most Important Thing about Schools” books.
- Direct students’ attention to the **Important Book Parts anchor chart**.
- Remind students that yesterday, they wrote their focus statements and information about differences.
- Invite students to whisper a response into their hand and ask:
“What will we work on today?” (information about similarities)
- Direct students’ attention to the learning target and read it aloud:
“I can write about the similarities between my school and the school that I researched using details from my notes.”
- Tell students that this target should look very similar to yesterday’s target, but today they are looking for similarities rather than differences.
- Display pages 6–9 of **“The Most Important Thing about Schools” Book: Teacher Model** and read the following information aloud:
 - Schools around the world can be similar. Students in Xixuaú, Brazil use the internet to learn. So do we! In the school in Xixuaú, students learn math and science. This is a lot like what we do at our school! We learn math and science, too.”
- Invite students to give you a thumbs-up if these sentences make sense to them. (Look for students to give you a thumbs-up.)
- Invite students to give you a thumbs-up if this part of the paragraph does its job: describes two similarities between my school and the school I researched using details from my notes. (Look for students to give a thumbs-up.)
- Invite a few volunteers to share examples that show how they know this part of the paragraph does its job. (There are two similarities between our school the rainforest school.)
- Display page 2 of the **Comparing and Contrasting Research Note-catcher: Teacher Model** and say:
“Remember how yesterday I showed you how I used the notes from my Comparing and Contrasting Research note-catcher to help me think of the sentences I wrote about the differences between the two schools in my book? Today, I am going to work on finding similarities between the rainforest school and our school to include in my book.
- Display the **Turning Our Notes into Sentences anchor chart** and review with students.
- Begin your think-aloud:
 - “Right now, I know that I’m only looking for information in my notes about how the schools are similar, so I’m going to look at the page that says “Compare: How the Two Schools Are Similar.”

- “Let me remind myself of the notes that I took about how the two schools are similar. (Read through the notes and pictures in front of students from the “Compare: How the Two Schools Are Similar” table.)
- “I know that the book had two similarities, so I will want to pick two similarities between the rainforest school and our school. Just like yesterday, I will choose similarities that are important. Let me work on one similarity at a time. Hmmm ... first I think I will choose the detail that says ‘use internet.’ I think that is an important similarity.” (Circle this on page 2 of your Comparing and Contrasting Research Note-catcher: Teacher Model.)
- “Well, I know I can’t just write ‘use internet’ because that won’t make sense to the reader. I need to write complete sentences. For this note, I will write, ‘In the rainforest school in Brazil, students use the internet to learn.’ I wrote it right here, and drew a picture about that sentence. (Show students page 6 of “The Most Important Thing about Schools” Book: Teacher Model.)
- “Now that I wrote about that detail about the rainforest school, I need to include the detail about how that is similar to our school.”
- “I don’t think I should write the same exact sentence here. That isn’t what writers do. I think I will write a sentence that shows the similarity. I could write something like, ‘At our school, we use the internet to help us learn, too!’ or ‘We use the internet at our school, too!’ or I could write, ‘So do we!’ I think I will write, ‘So do we!’” (Show students page 7 of “The Most Important Thing about Schools” Book: Teacher Model.)
- Invite students to turn and talk to their writing partner, using the Turning Our Notes into Sentences anchor chart for ideas as necessary:

“What is one thing you noticed on pages 6 and 7 of the teacher model?” (The teacher looked for notes on how the schools are similar. She read through the notes again. She looked for two important similarities. She practiced turning the notes into sentences out loud.)
- Tell students that they are going to have a chance to use the notes from their Comparing and Contrasting Research note-catcher, and think about the sentences they will write about the similarities between our school and the school they researched.
- Tell students that after some think time, they will have a chance to share their information with their writing partners.
- Invite students to take out their Comparing and Contrasting Research note-catcher and use the notes from the “Compare: How the Two Schools Are Similar” table from their note-catchers.
- Direct students’ attention to the Turning Our Notes into Sentences anchor chart, and encourage them to follow steps 1 and 2 before they share with their partners. Invite students to circle the two similarities on their note-catchers that they are going to write about in their book.
- Once students have had time to think on their own and circle two similarities on their note-catcher, invite them to follow steps 3 and 4 from the Turning Our Notes into Sentences anchor chart with their writing partner.
- Once both partners have shared, refocus whole group and ask:

“What information will you include about the two similarities?” (Responses will vary.)
- Invite a few volunteers to share their thinking.
- Tell students they are almost ready to write and draw information about differences on pages 6–9 of their “The Most Important Thing about Schools” books.

- Remind students that yesterday they did a great job of using *perseverance* when writing became difficult.
- Invite them to Think-Pair-Share with their writing partners:
“What is one strategy you will use if writing becomes hard again? (Reread what I have written. Look more closely at my notes. Ask my writing partner for help. Take a few deep breaths.)”
- Tell students that all writers need to show perseverance when they’re writing, so you’ll be looking for them to use these strategies as they write. Transition students to their workspaces.
- Invite students to turn to page 6 of their “The Most Important Thing about Schools” book and begin writing and drawing.
- Circulate to support students as they write by directing them to the classroom supports (e.g., anchor charts, Interactive High Frequency Word Wall, etc.). Use the **Informative/Explanatory Writing Checklist** to gather data on students’ progress toward **W.2.2** and **L.2.2**.
- As students are working, ask a student who has written strong information about similarities if you can share his or her work with the rest of the class during Work Time C.
- After 15 minutes, tell students to return to the whole group area with their “The Most Important Thing about Schools” books.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For ELLs: Encourage students to use the Language for Comparing and Contrasting anchor chart from Lesson 1 to identify sentence frames that will support their writing. Invite students to practice using the frames with content from their notes. (Example: “The boat school and our school are similar because both schools learn about reading and math.”) (MMAE)
- When demonstrating writing about similarities, emphasize process and effort by modeling how to sound out a word with tricky spelling. Demonstrate how to use environmental print if students get stuck with spelling. (MME)

Work Time

C. Revising and Editing: Information about Similarities (10 minutes)

- Give students specific, positive feedback on their ability to write information about the similarities between two schools. (Example: “You chose similarities that are important. You turned your notes into complete sentences.”)
- Tell students that just as they did yesterday with information about differences, they will now revise and edit the writing they did today: information about similarities.
- Direct students’ attention to the Important Book Parts anchor chart. Point to the part of the chart on the left-hand column that says “Information about similarities between two schools.”
- Invite students to whisper to their writing partner and ask:
“What is the job of the part of our book that gives ‘information about the similarities between two schools?’” (describes two similarities between my school and the school I researched using details from my notes)

- Tell students that a writer is going to share her information about similarities in front of the class, and you want them to be listening to see if the “information about similarities” part of her book does its job. (This should be the student you identified and asked in Work Time B. Read this student’s focus statement.
- Invite students to give a thumbs-up if this information about similarities describes two important similarities using details from this person’s notes or the book. (Look for students to give a thumbs-up.)
- Invite students to read aloud their information about to their writing partners and make sure it does its job.
- After 5 minutes, refocus whole group.
- Tell students that they will now edit pages 6–9 of their books.
- Display page 6 of “The Most Important Thing about Schools” Book: Teacher Model and point out how the sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with the correct punctuation: a period.
- Model for students how to reread their focus statements aloud and edit their writing. If a capital letter is missing at the beginning of a sentence, show students how to cross out the first word and write it again with a capital letter at the beginning. If punctuation such as a period, question mark, or exclamation point is missing at the end of a sentence, show students how to reread their writing and place the correct punctuation at the end of the sentence.
- Invite students to stay in the meeting area to edit pages 6–9 of their books with their writing partners. Tell students to read their sentences out loud to their writing partners so they can help them edit their work.
- Use the **Informative/Explanatory Writing Checklist** to gather data on students’ progress toward L.2.2.
- As students are working, ask a student if he or she will be your writing partner during the Closing. Look for a student’s writing where you can share one thing he or she has done a good job of as a writer, and one thing he or she could do better.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For ELLs: Students may become overwhelmed or self-conscious as they edit and revise their work. To alleviate the stigma of making mistakes and to reinforce kind, helpful, and specific feedback, consider working closely with a small group of students who would benefit from additional guidance during the editing and revising process. (MME)
- For students who may need additional support with self-monitoring: Create a writing checklist for them to use that includes: read to see if it makes sense, check for capital letters, and check for punctuation. (MMAE)

Closing and Assessment

A. Pinky Partners: Sharing Our Work (10 minutes)

- Invite students to join in giving some silent applause for their hard work today as writers!
- Tell them they are going to use the Pinky Partners protocol to share their work with a partner. Remind them that they used this protocol in Lesson 6, and review as necessary using

the **Pinky Partners anchor chart**. (Refer to the Classroom Protocols document for the full version of the protocol.)

- Tell students that like yesterday, when a partner shares his or her work today, they are going to give *kind and specific feedback*. Remind students that kind and specific feedback tells writers one thing they did a good job of in their writing.
- Tell students that after they give kind feedback, they will also give *helpful and specific feedback*. That is feedback that tells writers what they could do a better job of in writing, but it is still kind.
- Remind students that they have all worked very hard on their writing, and that it is important to remember this when they are giving feedback so they don't hurt people's feelings. It is also important to remember that we all have ways in which our writing could be better. Tell students that you are going to model giving helpful and specific feedback to a classmate, and you want them to watch how the feedback is helpful AND kind.
- Select a student volunteer to model with you. As the student shares, share one thing he or she did well with the writing, and one thing he or she could do better. Examples:
 - "You did a good job of ____."
 - "Would you consider ____?"
- Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group:

"What did you notice about how feedback was given? (The teacher named one good thing about her writing and one thing that could be better. The teacher didn't tell the writer she had to change her writing; the teacher just gave her a suggestion.)"
- If productive, cue students to listen carefully:

"Who can repeat what your classmate said?" (Responses will vary.)"
- Display the **Kind, Specific, and Helpful Feedback sentence starters** and read them aloud. Encourage students to use these sentence starters as they give feedback to their classmate. Remind students that they should be looking for how writers described two important similarities between their school and the school they researched using details from the book.
- Guide students through the Pinky Partners protocol, encouraging them to use the displayed sentence starters.
- Ask students to return to their seats in the whole group area.
- Tell students that they will continue working on their books tomorrow.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs: As students share, notice instances in which students make errors in subject/verb agreement. Identify the error and recast the sentence correctly. Invite students to repeat. (Example: "I heard you say, 'The boat school *have* books.' I think you meant to say, 'The boat school *has* books.' Now you say it!") (MMAE)
- After students model pointing out one thing about their partner's writing that could be improved, maximize transfer by generating a list of ideas for what aspects of their partner's writing to comment on. Write this list on the board or chart paper so students can refer to it as they talk with their pinky partner. (MMR)