

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 are 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 begin to recognise those that are subtler. An abstract comparison example may be using a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences between the Red Kangaroo and the Grey Kangaroo, rather than a direct comparison of images.

A process of comparing may include:

- determining the characteristics that are being compared
- identifying the similarities and differences
- summarising findings.

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 Prep–Year 6.

Compare in the Prep–Year 6 Australian Curriculum AS and CD

	English	Health and Physical Education	P–6 HASS	Mathematics	Science	Technologies		
						Technologies	Design and Technologies	Digital Technologies
Prep				AS CD	AS CD			
Year 1	CD			AS CD	AS CD			
Year 2				AS CD	AS CD			
Year 3				AS CD	AS CD	CD		CD
Year 4	CD			AS CD	AS CD	CD		CD
Year 5				AS CD	AS CD			
Year 6	CD			AS CD	AS CD			

Compare in the Prep–Year 6 Australian Curriculum AS and CD

	Languages							The Arts					
	Chinese	French	German	Indonesian	Italian	Japanese	Spanish	The Arts	Dance	Drama	Media Arts	Music	Visual Arts
Prep													
Years 1–2													
Years 3–4	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD	CD						
Years 5–6	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 1	Science	With guidance, they (students) compare observations with predictions and identify further questions.	compare observations with predictions and others' observations, consider if investigations are fair and identify further questions with guidance AC9S1105
Years 3–4	Technologies: Digital Technologies		generate, communicate and compare designs AC9TDI4P03
Year 5	Mathematics	They (students) interpret and compare data represented in line graphs.	conduct repeated chance experiments including those with and without equally likely outcomes, observe and record the results; use frequency to compare outcomes and estimate their likelihoods AC9M5P02
Years 5–6	Languages: German	They (students) compare language structures and features in German and English, using some metalanguage.	compare some German language structures and features with those of English, using some familiar metalanguage AC9LG6U03

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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