

Lesson Plan: Gaston and his family: An introduction to compare and contrast essays for elementary students

- Overview

In Kelly DiPucchio's *Gaston*, illustrated by Christian Robinson, a bulldog who doesn't fit in with his poodle family meets a poodle in a family of bulldogs. When the two decide to switch places, they realize they still don't quite fit in. No two people are exactly the same, but that's okay! In this lessons, students will learn about compare and contrast essays and how to create one using their friends and family as inspiration.

- Resources & Preparation

- Materials and Technology

- The book, *Gaston* by Kelly DiPucchio
- White board, markers
- Paper and writing utensils

- Instructional Plan

- Student Objectives:

- List similarities and differences between Gaston and Antoinette
- List similarities and differences between student and student's sibling or friend
- Craft a compare/contrast essay from student's list.
- Illustrate the essay.

1. Read *Gaston* by Kelly DiPucchio together as a class.
2. Discuss similarities and differences between the main characters, Gaston and Antoinette. List these on the board.
3. Define essays: a short piece of writing on a particular subject. Explain that there are different types of essays (narrative, descriptive, etc.). "Today, we will be writing a compare and contrast essay."
4. For practice together as a class, turn your Gaston/Antoinette lists into a short essay.
5. Have students think about one of their own siblings or best friends and brainstorm a list of similarities and differences between themselves and their chosen subject.
6. After brainstorming, have students convert their lists into an essay. Student essays should contain an intro paragraph, a comparison paragraph, a contrasting paragraph, and a conclusion. (The length of each paragraph will depend on students' grade level and writing ability.)
7. Complete the project by having students draw a picture of themselves beside their sibling or friend.

- Additional Resources

- For humor and entertainment value, choose a few <https://awkwardfamilyphotos.com/> to share with the class.