# English Instruction Plan – 9-Compare and Contrast Texts

**Primary Strands: 9.4 Reading**

**Integrated Strands: 9.6 Writing and 9.8 Research**

**Essential Understanding:**

* Understand through collaboration and discussion that connections can be made between real events, people, and places to fictional conflicts, characters, events, and settings.
* Understand through reading and analyzing a text that similarities between nonfictional details and fictional details can lead to an overarching message or theme.
* Understand that research and evaluation can lead to further thematic connections emphasizing that an author’s message/theme can transcend time, cultures, and art forms.

**Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:**

* Discuss, through collaboration, personal, text-to-text, or real-world examples that emphasize the sub-topics of ambition.
* Read, interpret, draw inferences, and analyze a fictional text for literary techniques that contribute to an overall theme and purpose.
* Recognize the use of literary elements and how those literary elements contribute to the overall meaning and thus theme of the text(s)
* Research and gather details within informational texts with emphasis on a particular historical or current figure that emphasizes characteristics of ambitious behavior.
* Create a cumulative project that demonstrates similarities and differences between the thematic topic addressed in the fictional text and the informational texts.

**Primary SOL:**

9.4

* c. explain how themes are connected across texts.
* J. make inferences and draw conclusions using references from the text(s) for support.
* k. compare and contrast details in literary and informational nonfiction texts.
* L. use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process.

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:** 9.6Use textual evidence to compare and contrast multiple texts.

9.8 Evaluate and select evidence from a variety of sources

**Academic Background/Language**: students should have prior knowledge of identifying, understanding, and explaining themes through reading and analyzing fictional texts. If students do not have prior knowledge of theme, then it is recommended to introduce the literary term and guided practice prior to this lesson.

**Materials**

* Printed copies of “The Most Dangerous Game” by Richard Connell
* Post-it notes
* Poster paper
* Pens/pencils
* Highlighters
* Laptop computers
* Access to Google, Popplet, You Tube, or Lucid Chart (free)
* Access to Google Classroom, Schoology, or other learning management software (if these software programs are not used by the school, responses can be provided on paper or a Word document)

**Student/Teacher Actions: What Should Students be Doing?**

**Part I**

* The teacher will post four large sheets of white poster-paper around the room. On each sheet of paper, the following questions will be placed in the center:
  + Define ambition in your own words.
  + What personally drives/motivates you?
  + Does ambition ever lead to negative consequences? If so, how?
  + Provide an example of a famous celebrity, sports player, historical figure, or individual who exhibits strong ambitious behavior. How is/was this person ambitious?
* The teacher will group students into groups of three to four and station each group at a question. Each group will be given three post-it notes and will be instructed to discuss the question amongst themselves and then post two-three agreed-upon responses. The groups will then rotate to another post and repeat this process until all questions have been visited by all groups.
* Following this activity (often termed as the Carousel Activity), the teacher will instruct each group to a poster and have them observe the variety of responses posted. The teacher will instruct the students to select two responses that represent a different perspective or a creative/thought-provoking response. The teacher will facilitate a discussion with the whole class asking groups to share one of the responses they selected and why they selected them.
* Following, the teacher will instruct the students to return to their desks and distribute the short story, “The Most Dangerous Game” by Richard Connell.
* The teacher will then display a clip from the movie, *The Hunger Games*. The clip should focus on when Katniss is trying to survive in the arena when the game is taking place. An effective clip to emphasize a connection between this and “The Most Dangerous Game” in terms of ‘ambition needed to survive’ is the clip titled “The Cornucopia Bloodbath.” It can be located at the following YouTube address: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7EIW_C0-9c> Please be aware that this clip does contain some moments of violence and may not be suitable for all students. Please view the material before showing to the students.
* Before showing the clip, the students should think about and be ready to discuss the following question as they are observing the clip from the movie: You are Katniss during this specific moment. Your ambition is to survive being hunted by other people. How do you feel? What do you do? What are your strategies for survival?
* Since there have been extensive pre-reading activities, the teacher should initiate a very short, brief discussion on some ideas that were brainstormed (no longer than five minutes)
* The students will then read “The Most Dangerous Game” answering text-dependent questions at stopping points determined by the teacher.
* Following the story, have students revisit the Carousel Questions and in groups of two, have them think-pair-share the questions modified as:
  + How would Rainsford and General Zaroff define ambition? Would their definitions be different? How so?
  + What drives General Zaroff’s ambitious nature? What drives Rainsford’s? Do either of their ambitious qualities lead to negative consequences for others or for themselves?
  + Identify and explain an overall theme for this story focusing on the topic of ambition. What is the story saying about it? What is the message?
* As a closing/culminating activity, students should demonstrate their understanding of the above questions by submitting their responses on a digital platform. For example, if Schoology or Canvas is used, students could post selected responses in a discussion style format prompting other students to agree or disagree with explanations as to why. This would require the teacher to create the discussion board prior to the lesson, selecting two or three of the questions above as highlighted discussion questions. You may also do this as a class discussion, using whiteboard space, or via another option where technology may not be available.

Part II

* The teacher should initiate a review of the reading of “The Most Dangerous Game” by sharing a selection of responses from the culminating activity. The teacher should invite the responses that are shared to be extended upon/elaborated if the student desires to do so. The teacher could also facilitate extensions/interpretations from other students.
  + For example, “Alicia posted this fantastic response (insert discussion response).
    - Do you agree or disagree with her perspective? Why?
    - How do you all respond to this perspective? How could we elaborate on her points made in her response?
* Also, the teacher should revisit the themes determined from the prior day. Students may brainstorm themes such as
  + An overly ambitious nature can lead to greed and then destructive consequences.
  + Ambition, when preserved can lead to positive outcomes.
  + What drives ambition can lead to positive or negative results.
* Following, the teacher will invite students to revisit and activate their prior knowledge from this question (see initial carousel activity): Provide an example of a famous celebrity, sports player, historical figure, or individual who exhibits or has exhibited strong ambitious behavior. How is/was this person ambitious? Have students respond in a manner that fits the class setting such as journaling, class discussion, discussion board post, etc.
* The students will be instructed to research their example. If they are wanting to select a different figure, provide the following individuals as suggestions:
  + Joan of Arc
  + Napoleon
  + Alexander the Great
  + Ganges Khan
  + Thomas Edison
  + Abraham Lincoln
  + Walt Disney
    - (note: some of the above individuals will align with World History I standards/content. Encourage new ideas as well)
* The students should focus on researching the accomplishments and mistakes of their selected individual due to their ambitious nature. The following articles highlight some of the above listed figures and will guide students who struggle with research:
  + “Napoleon Bonaparte: Revolutionary or Tyrant?” which can be located on [www.commonlit.org](http://www.commonlit.org) at <https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/napoleon-bonaparte>
  + “Joan of Arc: France’s Young Tragic Hero” <https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/joan-of-arc-france-s-young-tragic-hero?search_id=22927941>
  + “The Life and Achievements of Thomas Edison” <https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/the-life-and-achievements-of-thomas-edison?search_id=22927995>
* As a culminating activity, students will create a product that demonstrates an analysis of the theme of ambition using both “The Most Dangerous Game” and information on their researched figure. Students will describe the determination of their researched individual and compare it to Rainsford’s or General Zaroff’s driven behaviors in “The Most Dangerous Game.” As they conclude, students should discuss their analysis of what this instructional plan has revealed about the role of ambition.
  + The following platforms can be used to create or share the product:
    - Google Slides
    - Podcast (using a voice recorder)
    - Microsoft Power Point
    - Popplet
    - Lucid Chart
    - iMovie
    - An in-class presentation or poster exhibit
    - A Socratic discussion

**Additional Connection to a Classical Text.**

* Connections to excerpts from *The Odyssey* to emphasize the similarities between Odysseus’ ambitious nature to the characters in “The Most Dangerous Game”
* The mythical story of “Icarus and Daedalus” to emphasize theme and character similarities.

**Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative)**

* Diagnostic
  + Carousel activity: student-driven discussion and responses to poster questions to provide insight and extent of student knowledge on the topic of ambition.
* Summative
  + Close-reading questions during the reading, discussion, and analysis of “The Most Dangerous Game” to monitor comprehension and understanding of the text.
  + Post-reading analytical questions connecting the characters’ ambitious character traits to the pre-reading activity; posted to a digital forum such as Schoology or Google Classroom (students should demonstrate connection, insight, analysis, and examples supporting their responses)
* Formative
  + Culminating activity/analysis product on the theme of ambition.

**Writing Connections:**

* Group responses to carousel questions
* Close-reading responses to questions during the reading of “The Most Dangerous Game.”
* Short-answer responses posted to a digital forum as a post-reading activity to “The Most Dangerous Game.”
* Written segments of final product.

**Extensions and Connections (for all students)**

* (If reading and analysis of story does not conclude during one lesson) Write a short letter from the perspective of a character in “The Most Dangerous Game.” As the student writes in first person, have them include their thoughts, feelings, and ideas for next steps as the character. Offer the students the ability to share their letters as a review of the reading the following day.
* Illustrate a map of the island to include all important setting details and Rainsford’s escape.
* Create a murder-mystery activity as an initial activity where students work within groups to gather evidence. Have students use this evidence as they are reading the story to determine the victim (General Zaroff is recommended to be the victim)

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* Provide questions for the Carousel Activity on a digital platform such as Nearpod or Pear Deck.
* Have students work in small groups to develop a response poster to the post-reading questions for “The Most Dangerous Game.”
* Modify close-reading questions to reduce number of questions for students with disabilities.