

Responding to Comparison/Contrast through Writing:

The Sketch-n-Write

Two-sentence summary: After studying vocabulary words or concepts that have similarities and differences, students create a two-sided Sketch-n-Write for two or more words (or concepts). On the right-hand side of the Sketch-n-Write template, they create an original explanation of the word/concept; on the left-hand side, they create an original non-linguistic representation of their written explanation.

Background knowledge needed: The Sketch-n-Write encourages deeper thinking by asking students to create and then explain personal connections, both visually and verbally. The Sketch-n-Write writing assignment relies on student-generated explanations and visual representations that are NOT supposed to be *literal*.

WHAT'S LITERAL? Imagine a student using the Sketch-n-Write to explain how a PLANET compares to a MOON. If the student was being literal, he could easily copy a picture of a moon and planet on the left-hand side, then paraphrase the definition of these two terms from notes from a glossary. Students need to be taught to be non-*literal* for this assignment.


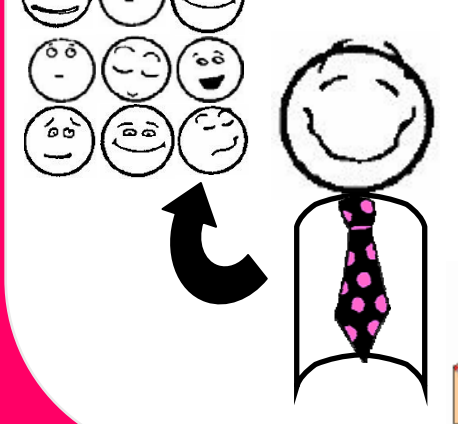
WHAT'S NON-LITERAL? A student using the Sketch-n-Write properly might make a connection like this one. He might write, "A moon orbits around a planet, like how my dog runs all around me when I come home from school, and how he thinks I am everything in his universe because I feed and play with him. A planet revolves around a sun, which is way bigger, like how I revolve around my trust in my family or my belief in my religion. Those things are way bigger than me, so they're like my 'star,' and my little dog is my 'moon,' because he just thinks I am the best thing in his world." This student's pictures should reflect the ideas he has written about here and not be literal representations of a planetary or lunar sketch.

Comparing/Contrasting: The Sketch-n-Write should encourage connections between words and how they relate to the learner as well as how they relate to each other. When assigning Sketch-n-Writes, be sure to assign vocabulary words or concepts that can connect to each other as well as to the learner.

Differentiating Instruction Ideas: Some students do better with this assignment if they complete the writing first. Other students create better writing if they have drawn their ideas out first. Encourage both types of thinking.

A thought on the writing task: Encourage correct writing! If you are planning to post your Sketch-n-Writes in your classroom, be sure the students have edited their writing before posting. Rough drafts can be completed on students' own paper, then transferred to the Sketch-n-Write template after students have had a partner or two look over their writing.

Sketch-n-Write example

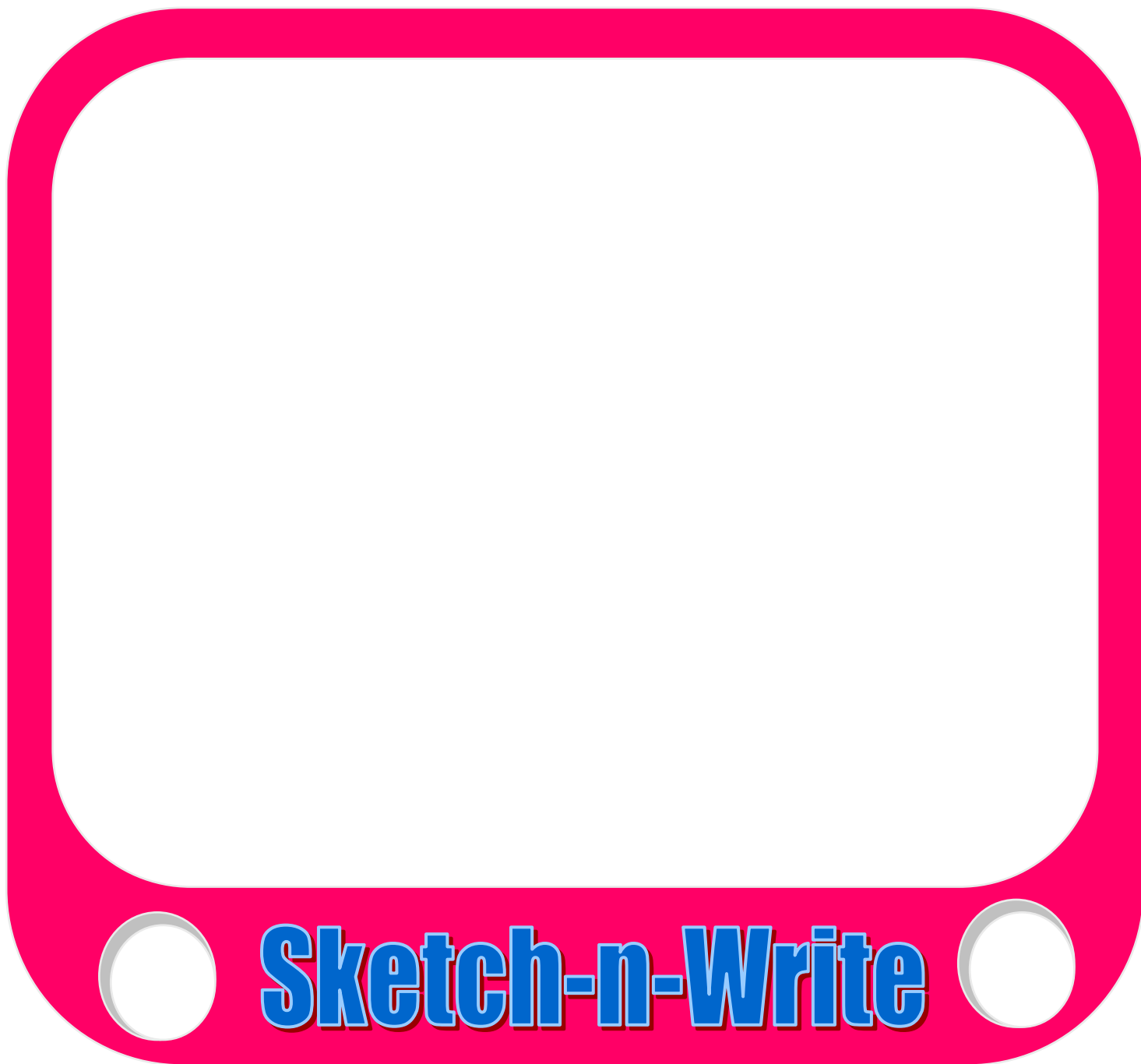
	<h3>Judicial Review</h3>	<p>The judges are not elected. They are appointed. They serve lifelong terms and have the power to overrule our elected officials and declare what's constitutional and what's not.</p>
vs.		
	<h3>Representative Govt.</h3>	<p>Representative government is all elected by the people for the people and is about choices that benefit us, once people who listen to us. Our representatives make bills and eventually laws to fulfill our needs.</p>

Sketch-n-Write

Draw on the left side. Write on the right. Be sure to show how your two topics are similar and/or different.

For a free blank template of the Sketch-n-Write, visit <http://writingfix.org> and look on the *Writing Across the Curriculum Page* for the "Comparison & Contrast" section.

Sketch-n-Write Activity



Draw on the left side. Write on the right. Be sure to show how your two topics are similar and/or different.