

# Lesson 5

## Comparing and Contrasting Characters in Drama



### Learning Target

When you compare and contrast what characters in a drama do and say, you can better understand how they move the story along.

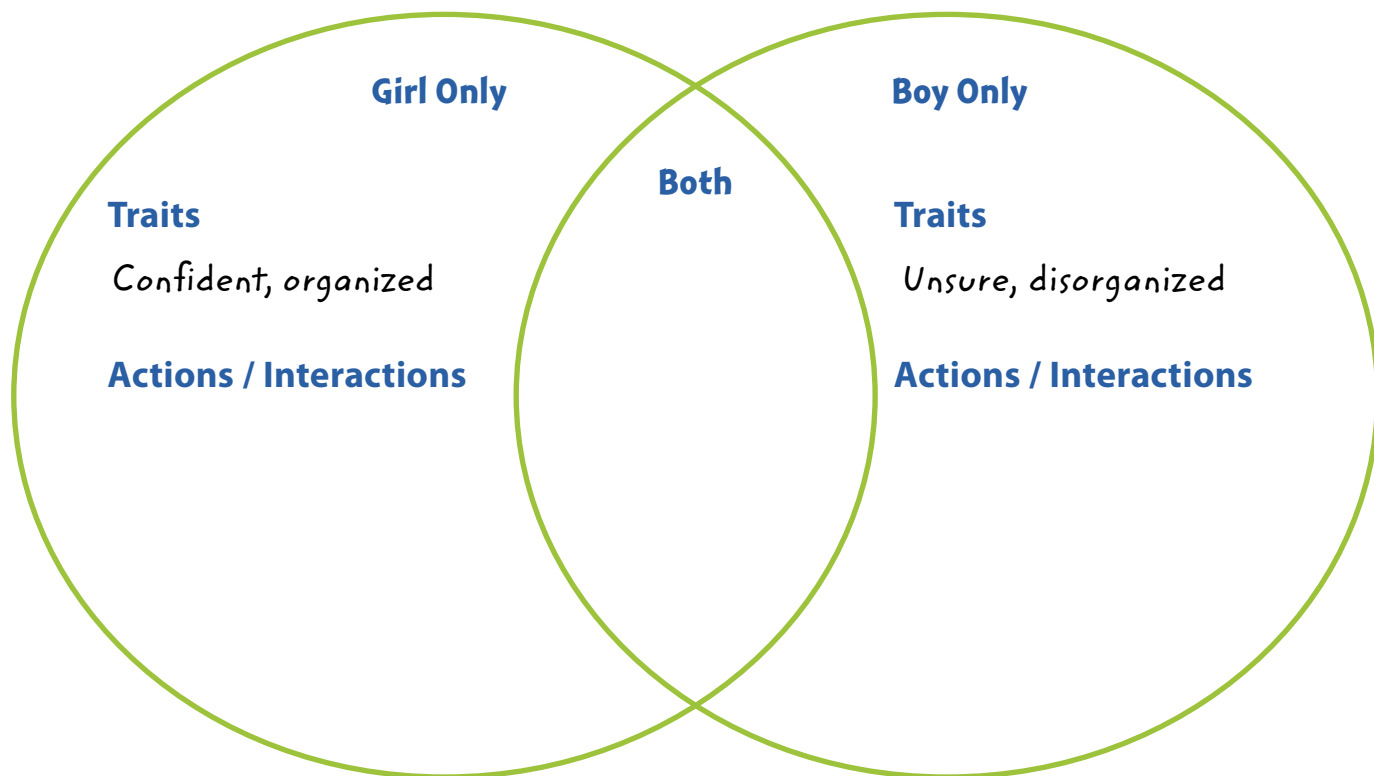
- **Read** In a **drama**, or play, you can learn about characters by reading or listening to the spoken **dialogue** between the characters. You can also read the **stage directions**, which are short notes that tell what a character is doing on stage.

You can get to know characters better by **comparing** and **contrasting** them. Identify what the characters do and say to each other, how they act, and how they look.

**Read the cartoon below. Think about what the girl and boy look like, how they act, and how they interact with each other.**



► **Think** What have you learned about comparing and contrasting characters? How are the boy and girl in the cartoon similar and different? What do they say and do? Use the *Venn diagram* to compare and contrast the characters.



- **Talk** Share your Venn diagram with a partner.
- What details from the cartoon did you use to compare and contrast the boy and the girl?
  - How did your comparison help you better understand each character?
  - How do you think the characters will interact next?



**Academic Talk**

Use these words and phrases to talk about the text.

- **compare**
- **contrast**
- **drama**
- **stage directions**
- **dialogue**

# KING ALFRED

retold by Richard Madsen

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## Cast of Characters:

ALFRED, an English King

CUDRED, an old peasant man

SWITHA, an old peasant woman

**Setting:** a humble cottage on a freezing night

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**NARRATOR:** It is January 871. Danish warriors have invaded England.

Alfred, an English King, has been separated from his army but seeks to rejoin them.

**ALFRED:** [*knocks at cottage door*] Hello! May a traveler find safety on this cold night?

**CUDRED:** [*suspiciously*] How do I know you are not some Dane in disguise?

**ALFRED:** [*nobly*] I promise thee, my friend, I am no Dane. I am their sworn enemy.

**CUDRED:** [*sighs, then opens the door*] Oh, very well, then. But you must sleep in the barn, not in the cottage. I suppose you must be hungry, then.

**ALFRED:** Oh, yes! I'd thank you for a crust of even the coarsest bread.

**CUDRED:** Bread? Bread is a luxury! We only have lowly oaten cakes, here.

**ALFRED:** Oaten cakes! I have always wished to taste an oaten cake. [*CUDRED stares at ALFRED in disbelief. They join SWITHA by the fire.*]

**CUDRED:** My wife, I've brought a guest to share our supper.

**SWITHA:** What? Who is this man? Why should I feed a beggar?

**CUDRED:** We are not so poor that we must refuse food to the hungry.

**SWITHA:** You soft-hearted fool. You will bring us to ruin, as has our cowardly king.

**CUDRED:** We must care for each other, Switha. Otherwise, what are we?

[*CUDRED gives ALFRED an oaten cake, then leads him to the barn.*]

**CUDRED:** The barn is small and cold, but it will keep you safe.

**ALFRED:** For a traveler in my condition, your barn is a palace. I thank you.

**CUDRED:** Sir, your speech is that of a nobleman. Are you an earl in disguise?

**ALFRED:** [*pauses, then decides*] Good sir. I am Alfred, thy king. I am in hiding from the invading Danes. But soon I shall rejoin my army and set our country free.

**CUDRED:** [*kneels*] My King! Sire, let us return to the cottage.

## Close Reader Habits

When you reread the drama, **underline** any words or actions that make each character stand out.

**Explore**

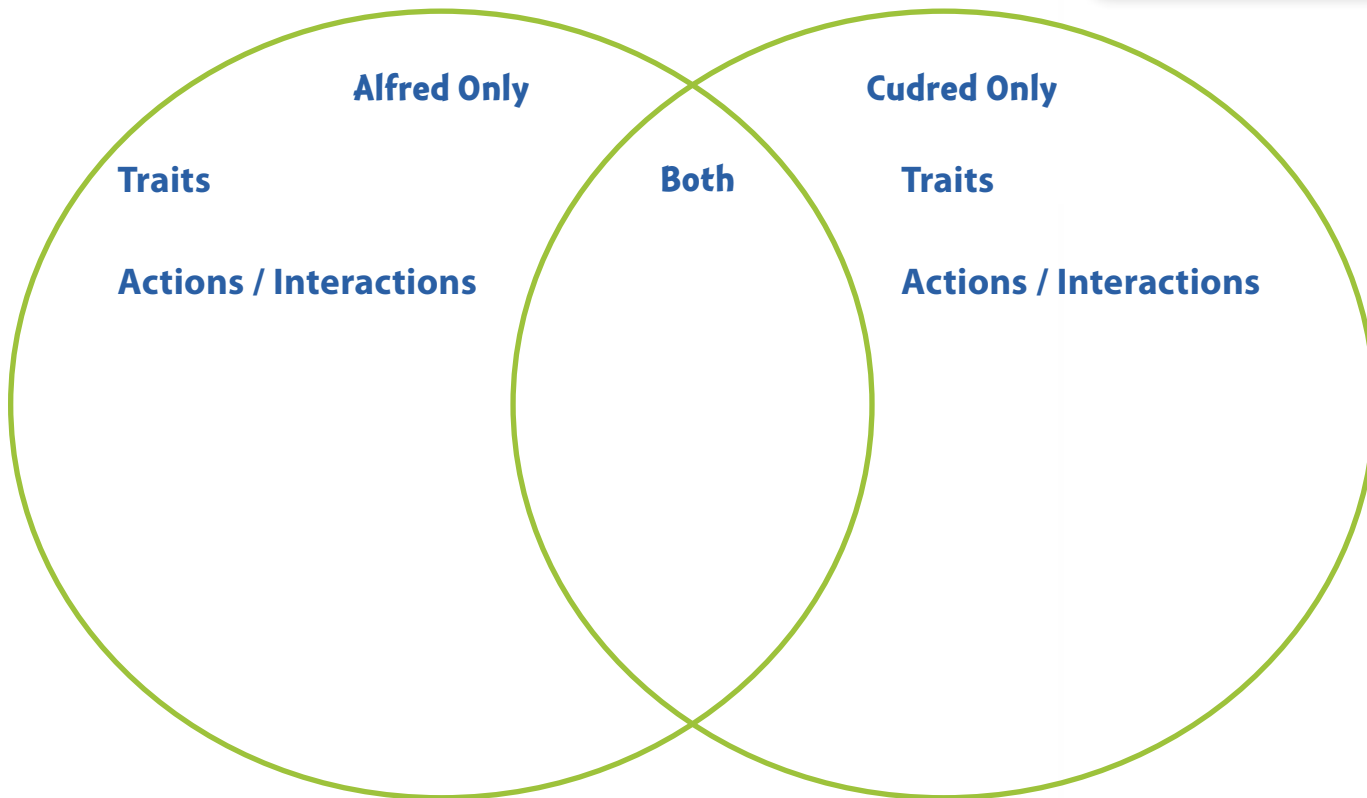
**In what ways are Alfred and Cudred similar and different?**



Look at what you underlined about what the characters say and do.

**Think**

- 1 Complete the Venn diagram below. Use it to identify the similarities and differences in the traits, actions, and interactions of Alfred and Cudred.



**Talk**

- 2 How would Alfred's interactions with Cudred have been different had Alfred not told the truth about who he is? Based on your discussion, decide whether you need to add or change any details in your diagram.

**Write**

- 3 **Short Response** Compare and contrast Alfred's and Cudred's traits, actions, and interactions. Include **two** details from the drama in your answer. Use the space provided on page 98 to write your answer.

**HINT** One way to start a compare–contrast answer is to tell how the characters are similar.



# Cornelia and Her Jewels

by Wendy Munro



- 1 **SETTING:** *Home of CORNELIA [Enter JULIA carrying a treasure chest.]*
- 2 **CORNELIA:** My dear Julia, I am so happy you have finally brought your jewels to show me.
- 3 **JULIA:** [*opens the chest*] See, here is my pearl necklace.
- 4 **CORNELIA:** How lovely! And what other gems have you? I greatly delight in seeing such beautiful jewels.
- 5 **JULIA:** Oh, me, too! Here are some rubies. And this is my finest jewel—a diamond bracelet! I like it best of all. But Cornelia, where are your jewels? All of Rome knows how rich your famous father, Scipio, was. Surely he gave you many fine gems?
- 6 **CORNELIA:** Oh no, dear friend. But hark! I think I hear my sons.
- 7 **CAIUS AND TIBERIUS:** [*running in*] Mother! Dear Mother!
- 8 **CORNELIA:** Tell me, Caius, what did you learn at school today?
- 9 **CAIUS:** We learned how Horatius guarded the bridge in the brave days of old. Wasn't that very noble, dear Mother?
- 10 **CORNELIA:** Of course, my darling. And what about you, Tiberius?
- 11 **TIBERIUS:** Our teacher told us of Grandfather Scipio and his great deeds during the war. Mother, how you must honor Grandfather!
- 12 **CORNELIA:** Yes, my son, such a life is a fine example for the young.
- 13 **CAIUS:** I shall try to be a brave man someday, too, dear Mother.
- 14 **TIBERIUS:** And I shall also try to be worthy of our noble family.
- 15 **CORNELIA:** Oh, my dear boys! Julia, they are my jewels, more precious than any gem.
- 16 **JULIA:** How I am ashamed of my vanity, dear Cornelia! What are all the gems in the world compared with these noble boys?

## Close Reader Habits

How do Julia and Cornelia feel about Cornelia's jewels? Reread the drama.

**Underline** sentences that show what each character thinks or feels.



A *drama* is also called a play. Like stories, plays include characters, settings, and a plot. The text of a play, called a *script*, uses stage directions. Stage directions tell actors how to move, speak, and act.

**Think** Use what you learned from reading the drama to answer the following questions.

**1** Which comparisons of Julia and Cornelia are true? Select **two** options.

- A** Julia thinks jewels are fun to admire; Cornelia does not.
- B** Julia is from a noble family; Cornelia is not.
- C** Julia does not talk about her children; Cornelia does.
- D** Julia believes history is important; Cornelia does not.
- E** Julia has many fine gems and jewelry; Cornelia does not.
- F** Julia is impressed by Cornelia’s sons; Cornelia is not.

**2** This question has two parts. Answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

**Part A**

How are Caius and Tiberius **most** similar?

- A** They like learning how Horatius guarded a bridge long ago.
- B** They enjoy history more than any other subject at school.
- C** They respect their grandfather and want to be like him.
- D** They think Horatius and Scipio were equally brave.

**Part B**

What sentence from the play **best** supports the answer in Part A?

- A** “We learned how Horatius guarded the bridge in the brave days of old.”
- B** “Wasn’t that very noble, dear Mother?”
- C** “I shall try to be a brave man someday, too, dear Mother.”
- D** “What are all the gems in the world compared with these noble boys?”

**Talk**

**3** Describe how Cornelia and Julia each feel about Cornelia’s jewels.

**Write**

**4 Short Response** Use evidence from the text to describe how Julia and Cornelia each feel about Cornelia’s jewels. Use the space provided on page 99 to write your answer.

**HINT** Sometimes two characters are more similar than they are different.







**WORDS TO KNOW**

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- **regarded**
- **sensation**
- **determined**

# from Amelia

by Louise Rozett, *Junior Scholastic*

## 1 PROLOGUE

2 **PROLOGUE NARRATOR:** In 1920, Amelia Earhart took her first ride in an airplane and fell in love with flying. She was 23. Flying was extremely dangerous in those days and considered a man's job. Earhart decided to take lessons anyway. Within a few years, she was regarded as one of the country's best female pilots. In 1927, when a young man named Charles Lindbergh flew solo across the Atlantic Ocean and became an overnight sensation, Earhart was ready to make her mark too.

## 3 SCENE 1

4 **NARRATOR A:** It is 1928. Earhart is in New York City to meet with George Palmer Putnam, who has just published a book by Lindbergh. Putnam is looking for a female pilot to fly across the Atlantic.

5 **AMELIA EARHART:** Pleased to meet you, Mr. Putnam.

6 **GEORGE PALMER PUTNAM:** I'll get right to the point, Miss Earhart. I'm told that you want to fly the Atlantic. Why?

7 **EARHART:** Why does a man ride a horse?

8 **PUTNAM:** Three women have died attempting the flight. If you make it, you'd be the first.

9 **EARHART:** I have a fondness for firsts, Mr. Putnam.



A photograph of George Palmer Putnam and Amelia Earhart in 1935.

- 10 **NARRATOR B:** Putnam explains that Earhart will become famous. But there's a catch.
- 11 **PUTNAM:** Bill Stultz will be the pilot. You'll be aboard.
- 12 **EARHART:** As a passenger?
- 13 **PUTNAM:** But you'd still be the first woman to fly across the Atlantic. People will remember it as your flight.
- 14 **EARHART:** My fraud, you mean! My dream is to fly the Atlantic, Mr. Putnam, but not like this.
- 15 **PUTNAM:** Think about it, Miss Earhart. This could win you more chances to fly.
- 16 **SCENE 2**
- 17 **NARRATOR C:** Swayed by the prospect of future opportunities, Earhart agrees to Putnam's plan. The pilot is to be Stultz, with Slim Gordon as navigator. Earhart is "commander" of the flight in name only.
- 18 **NARRATOR D:** On June 17, 1928, the trio is in Newfoundland, Canada, ready to depart for the transatlantic flight to Ireland. But . . .
- 19 **BILL STULTZ:** We've got a problem. This seaplane won't take off from the harbor.
- 20 **NARRATOR E:** A determined Earhart reduces the amount of fuel they are carrying. This makes the plane lighter. Finally, it soars.
- 21 **STULTZ:** Well done!



In June 1928, Earhart, Slim Gordon, and Bill Stultz flew this plane, named *Friendship*, across the Atlantic Ocean. This photo shows the plane off the coast of Wales, a country on the island of Great Britain.

- 22 **NARRATOR A:** Things are fine—until the radio goes out somewhere over the ocean. In these early days of aviation, equipment is unreliable.
- 23 **STULTZ:** We have no way to figure out wind speed or where, exactly, we are.
- 24 **SLIM GORDON:** We've been flying for 19 hours. We have one hour of fuel left.
- 25 **STULTZ:** If we land on the water now, we might get rescued.
- 26 **EARHART:** But we'll have failed. That's not an option.
- 27 **GORDON:** Wait. What's that?
- 28 **STULTZ:** Land! We've got land!
- 29 **NARRATOR B:** The plane touches down on the water near a small port town. News of its arrival spreads quickly. By the time the trio reaches shore, hundreds of people have turned out, applauding and singing.
- 30 **EARHART:** Is it Irish tradition to greet newcomers with song?
- 31 **REPORTER 1:** I couldn't say, Miss Earhart. This is Wales!
- 32 **REPORTER 2:** Are you proud to be the first woman to fly the Atlantic?
- 33 **EARHART:** I was just a passenger. But a woman will do this one day. This flight will get women thinking, I hope.
- 34 **REPORTER 1:** What has it got you thinking, Miss Earhart?
- 35 **EARHART:** That there's more to life than being a passenger.



This photograph shows Earhart on June 19, 1928, a day after her plane landed in Wales. Slim Gordon, wearing goggles, is on her left. Bill Stultz is on her right.



**Think** Use what you learned from reading the drama to answer the following questions.

**1** Based on how Earhart and Putnam act in the first scene, which of the following **best** describes how these characters are different?

- A** Earhart enjoys flying more than Putnam does.
- B** Earhart avoids danger more than Putnam does.
- C** Earhart is more concerned about fraud than Putnam is.
- D** Earhart is less interested in future flights than Putnam is.

**2** This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

**Part A**

Which of the following describes how Earhart’s behavior during the flight differs from that of Stultz?

- A** Earhart remains determined, but Stultz gives up completely and lands the plane in the water.
- B** Earhart remains determined, but Stultz strongly suggests landing in the water and getting rescued.
- C** Earhart wants to give up, but Stultz insists on trying to get the radio to work before landing.
- D** Earhart realizes that they must land, but Stultz insists that failure is not an option for them.

**Part B**

Choose **two** pieces of evidence from the text that **best** support the answer in Part A.

- A** “**STULTZ:** We’ve got a problem. This seaplane won’t take off from the harbor.”
- B** “**STULTZ:** We have no way to figure out wind speed or where, exactly, we are.”
- C** “**STULTZ:** If we land on water now, we might get rescued.”
- D** “**EARHART:** But we’ll have failed. That’s not an option.”
- E** “**EARHART:** I was just a passenger. But a woman will do this one day.”
- F** “**EARHART:** That there’s more to life than being a passenger.”





**3** In this activity, you will compare the characters of Earhart and Putnam. First, select **one** word that describes Earhart and **one** word that describes Putnam. Copy those words in the column labeled “Description.” Then complete the chart by copying one quotation that provides evidence for **each** description.

Descriptions	Evidence
daring	“This could win you more chances to fly.”
gentle	“But we’ll have failed. That’s not an option.”
scared	“But there’s a catch.”
convincing	“I have a fondness for firsts, Mr. Putnam.”

Character	Description	Evidence
Earhart		
Putnam		

**4** This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

**Part A**

Read this sentence from “Amelia.”

In these early days of aviation, equipment is unreliable.

What does the word unreliable mean as it is used in the sentence?

- A** not useful
- B** not dependable
- C** easily broken
- D** barely modern

**Part B**

Which detail from the drama **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- A** “This makes the plane lighter.”
- B** “Things are fine. . . .”
- C** “. . . until the radio goes out. . . .”
- D** “The plane touches down on the water. . . .”



**Write**

**5 Short Response** The drama states that Earhart was “commander” of the flight in name only. In what ways was Earhart as much in command of the flight as Stultz and Gordon? Use at least **two** details from the drama that support your response.

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**Learning Target**

**In this lesson, you compared and contrasted what characters did and said in dramas. Explain how you can use this skill to better understand how dramas tell their stories.**

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