

## Comparing and Contrasting

**What is it?** When you **compare** things, you look for ways that they are alike. When you **contrast** things, you look for ways that they are different.

**How to do it.** As you read, first identify the things that you want to compare. Next, list all the ways that they are alike. These similarities may be stated or they may be implied. Then list all the ways in which the things differ. These too may be state or implied. Organizing similarities and differences in a Venn diagram will let you compare and contrast at a glance.

**Try it.** Read the passage below. Identify the similarities and differences. Write the similarities in the overlapping area of a Venn diagram. Write the differences in the spaces on either side.

*Athens and Sparta were both city-states of ancient Greece. Yet they differed greatly. Located near the sea, Athens grew large and powerful through trade. Athenians were eager to travel and exchange ideas with others. They made their city a center of art and culture.*

*Sparta, on the other hand, was an inland city. Spartans did not trust outsiders or their ideas. Instead of trade, they used their armies to take what they needed from their neighbors. Spartans valued strength and simplicity. They produced soldiers rather than artists and thinkers.*

