Comparing and Contrasting

Learning the Skill

When you compare and contrast information, you evaluate two or more subjects. To compare the subjects, you look for things that are similar. To contrast the subjects, you look for differences. You can use this skill to help you make connections so you can analyze a relationship.

Practicing the Skill

Directions: Read the information below, and answer the questions.

In North America, the countries of Spain, France, and Great Britain were the primary contenders for territory. Spain was concerned by the spread of British and French settlers. When the American colonists declared their independence in 1776, Spain provided financial support and supplies. Bernardo de Gálvez, the Spanish governor in Louisiana, gave the colonists access to the gulf port in New Orleans. This allowed the colonists to ship guns, ammunition, and food on the Mississippi River.

Then, in June 1779, Spain declared war on Great Britain and Spanish troops joined in the fighting. Gálvez was appointed to lead the Spanish troops. There were some men from Texas who joined in the fighting. The territory was not responsible for sending men because of its small population. The primary role for Texas was to provide cattle to feed Gálvez’s troops. Soldiers escorted Texas ranchers and vaqueros from the presidio as they transported the herds from Goliad to East Texas and Louisiana.

Spanish troops battled the British throughout the Gulf Coast region. They defeated the British at Manchac, Baton Rouge, Natchez, Mobile, Pensacola, and New Providence in the Bahamas. The British troops were unable to come up from the south and surround the American colonists. And, in 1783, Gálvez helped with the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the Revolutionary War.

After winning the war, the American colonists were free to write their Constitution and establish a government for the new United States. Unlike the Texas colonists under Spanish rule, the Americans no longer had to follow British rule. The Spanish territories of Texas and Louisiana bordered a new country, not a set of colonies. For his role in the war and in the peace process, Gálvez was honored by the U.S. Congress. In Texas, Galvezton, now Galveston, was named for Bernardo de Gálvez.
Mexico Becomes Independent

1. **Defining** What is the topic of this passage?

2. **Identifying** Who can be compared and contrasted in this passage?

**Applying the Skill**

Reread the passage. Complete the Venn diagram by listing details that compare and contrast Spanish Texans and the American colonists during and after the American Revolution.

American Colonists

Spanish Texans
Critical Thinking Skills Activity  <i>cont.</i>  

Mexico Becomes Independent

3. **Draw Conclusions** Why would Spanish Texas want to help the American colonists?

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