

# A Real Porker

story by Simon Cooke | illustrated by David Legge

Engaging critically  
ACELY1698 | EN3-6B

**Compare** the story with a classic novel covering similar themes.

The story *A Real Porker* has a number of similarities with E. B. White's novel *Charlotte's Web*. Demonstrate to students how to compare and contrast fiction texts in order to develop a deeper understanding of both.

Provide students with a summary of *Charlotte's Web*. Suggested summaries include:

- [Charlotte's Web by E.B. White \(Book Summary\) - Minute Book Report](#)
- [Charlotte's Web, Adapted By: Jennifer Frantz, Read By: Angelina Jean](#)
- [Charlotte's Web](#)

Ask students to provide a summary of *Charlotte's Web* using the [Story Elements](#) graphic organiser (found on page 7 of the document). Then read *A Real Porker*. After reading, students should complete a new Story Elements graphic organiser.

Through comparing their two graphic organisers, students identify similarities and differences between the texts. Key similarities include character names (Wilbur and Spider) and some narrative content (both pigs face slaughter, animal/insect inventiveness rescues them). Key differences include some narrative content (Charlotte saves Wilbur, whereas Orville saves himself) and the resolution of the stories. These could be collated on a [Venn Diagram Template](#) projected on the whiteboard.

As an extension task, conduct a closer comparison of texts by doing a close reading of an extract from each text. Compare the characterisation of the fathers and the characterisation of Wilbur and Fern; the style of writing, including the use of dialogue; and similarities in the ideas expressed in both texts. Suggested extracts include:

- *Charlotte's Web*, Chapter One, pages 1-3. From: "Where's Papa going with that axe?" to "A little girl is one thing, a little runty pig is another."
- *A Real Porker*, paragraphs 1-4. From: "Pigs aren't pets," to "... Orville would be just another slab of meat."

To consolidate understanding, provide students with a range of connectives, such as those on the [Example Connectives/Conjunctions List](#). Using the connectives as a building block, students write a range of sentences comparing the two texts using the knowledge recorded in their graphic organisers and class notes. For example: *Charlotte's Web* is a text about a pig that faces slaughter, additionally *A Real Porker* also tells the story of a pig that outsmarts humans and survives. Whereas Wilbur has the assistance of the spider Charlotte, Orville forms a survival plan all by himself.

# Idiomatic expressions

In the story 'A Real Porker', Wilbur and Spider use an idiomatic expression that has been changed to fit the pig-obsessed culture of Hogtown: 'thumbed a lift' becomes 'trottered a lift'.

On the lines below each idiomatic expression, create a Hogtown version that reflects that community's pig-centredness.

1. Every dog has his day.

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2. That cost me an arm and a leg.

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3. Don't put all of your eggs in one basket.

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4. Thumbs up—good to go.

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Now, come up with your own idea for a community with a specific focus e.g. soccer, astronomy, singing or tap-dancing. Think of some common expressions you know and write them in the left-hand column, then create your new version in the right-hand column:

My community is focussed on: \_\_\_\_\_.

Standard expression	My new version