

Responding to Comparison/Contrast through Writing:

The Di-Ku and/or the Tri-Ku

Two-sentence summary: A *Di-Ku* is a pair of haikus that discuss two items that have been compared and contrasted by the writer; both haikus use a similar word or phrase to showcase a similarity between the two items. A *Tri-Ku* is a trio of haikus that can be used when three items are compared and contrasted; again, a similar word or phrase is found in all three haikus.

Background knowledge needed: Students will need to be familiar with the haiku's structure. A traditional haiku has three lines and seventeen syllables; the first line has five syllables, the second line has seven, the third line has five. Traditionally, a haiku tries to compare something to nature, but this is not always necessary, especially when writing the haiku to serve as a summary to learning a concept.

There is a variation to the seventeen-syllable haiku: the seventeen-word haiku. This variation still has three lines, but instead of 5-7-5 syllables, the poem has 5-7-5 lines.

A traditional 17-syllable Haiku:

Amoeba

*Amoebas changing, (5)
Like horizon's clouds at dawn, (7)
Run, run on false feet. (5)*

Variation: the 17-word Haiku:

Amoeba

*He suffers from it...pseudopodia. (5)
His false feet move him, feed him, (7)
But he wants real Nikes. (5)*

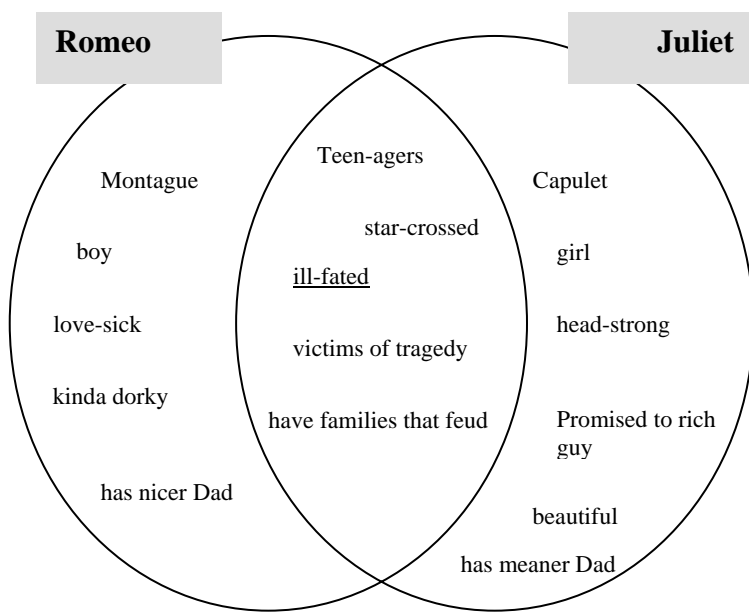
Comparing/Contrasting: When you have two or three vocabulary words, characters, or concepts that can be compared, have students complete a Venn Diagram. Stress the importance of brainstorming some highly interesting comparisons in the shared portion of the Venn; one word or phrase from the shared area will appear in the Di-Kus or the Tri-Kus students will write, and without an interesting shared comparison, the poems can be rather dull.

Differentiating Instruction Ideas: Students can brainstorm and write their haikus together, they can brainstorm together then write their haikus independently, or they can brainstorm and write independently. A genuine haiku makes a connection back to nature or the natural world, often through simile or metaphor; your more sophisticated writers can be challenged with this type of haiku requirement.

A thought on the writing task: After students have brainstormed, show the Di-Ku and Tri-Ku models on the next page. Be sure your students see and understand why a word or phrase is highlighted in each single haiku. Be sure they see that there are two variations of the haiku they can choose from.

Di-Ku Example:

Two haikus that show similarities and differences between two words or concepts



Di-Ku Haikus: (traditional with syllables)

Romeo Montague:

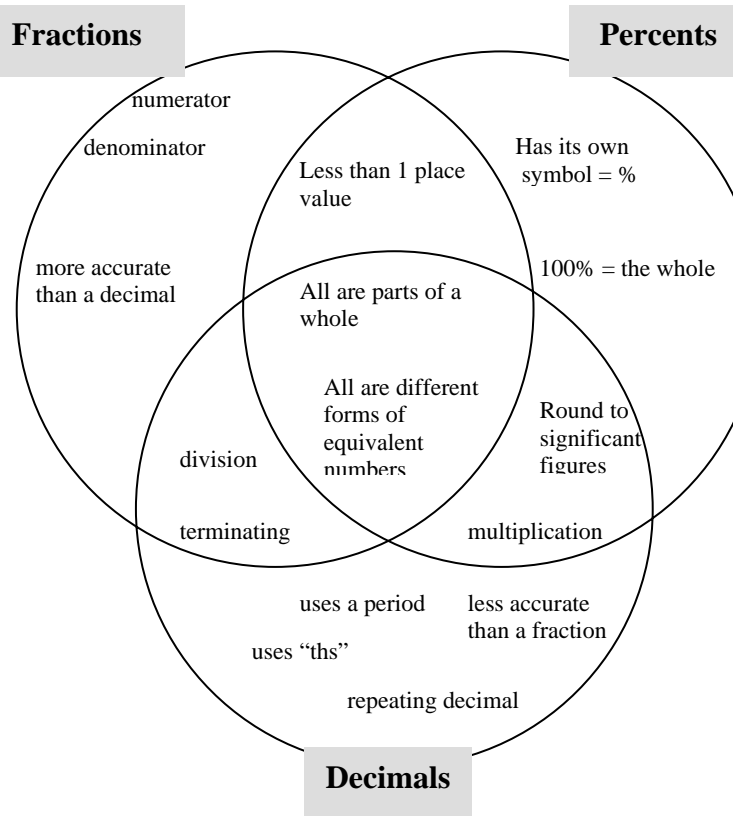
ill-fated hero
Foolishly thinks love can win.
Feuds and stars...too strong.

Juliet Capulet:

ill-fated flower
Blossomed too soon. Family
is the most stubborn.

Tri-Ku Example:

Three haikus that show similarities and differences among three word or concepts



Tri-Ku Haikus: (variation with 17 words)

Fractions:

This part of the whole
Is more accurate than a decimal point.
Numerator on top, denominator below.

Decimals:

Not lisp^{ing} with our "ths,"
We are also part of a whole number.
Adding? Line up the points!

Percents:

Here's our special symbol ...%
Like decimals, we help round "sig figs."
Part of the whole 100%.