

Comparison Chart: Story and Theory—Key

Possible student responses:

Story	Theory
<p>The purpose of a story is to: <i>Explain how the world came to be how it is</i></p>	<p>The purpose of a theory is to: <i>Explain how the world came to be how it is</i></p>
<p>A story is usually based on: <i>Oral tradition passed down from generation to generation</i> <i>Knowledge of the Elders</i></p>	<p>A theory is usually based on: <i>Physical evidence and scientific method</i> <i>The knowledge and reasoning of scientists</i></p>
<p>Two characteristics of a story are: <i>It is not "proven" as true or untrue.</i> <i>It is about the past but it also tells about the present.</i> <i>It is not necessarily exactly like real life - fantastic things can happen.</i></p>	<p>Two characteristics of a theory are: <i>It is not "proven" as true or untrue, but scientists are usually searching for further information to help prove or disprove it.</i> <i>It is a way of explaining physical evidence.</i> <i>It is accepted until evidence is found to support a better explanation.</i></p>
<p>Stories are helpful in a study of the past because: <i>They tell us about people's cultures and beliefs.</i> <i>Their symbols inspire art and thought.</i> <i>They help us understand times for which we don't have direct evidence.</i> <i>They help us see connections between the past and the present.</i></p>	<p>Theories are helpful in a study of the past because: <i>They help us place things in logical order, or in order of time.</i> <i>They help us understand times for which we don't have direct evidence.</i> <i>They help us see connections between the past and the present.</i> <i>They give us a general idea of how old things are.</i></p>
<p>Our definition of story is: <i>(in students' own words)</i></p>	<p>Our definition of theory is: <i>(in students' own words)</i></p>
<p>The most important thing that story and theory have in common is: <i>(in students' own words)</i></p>	