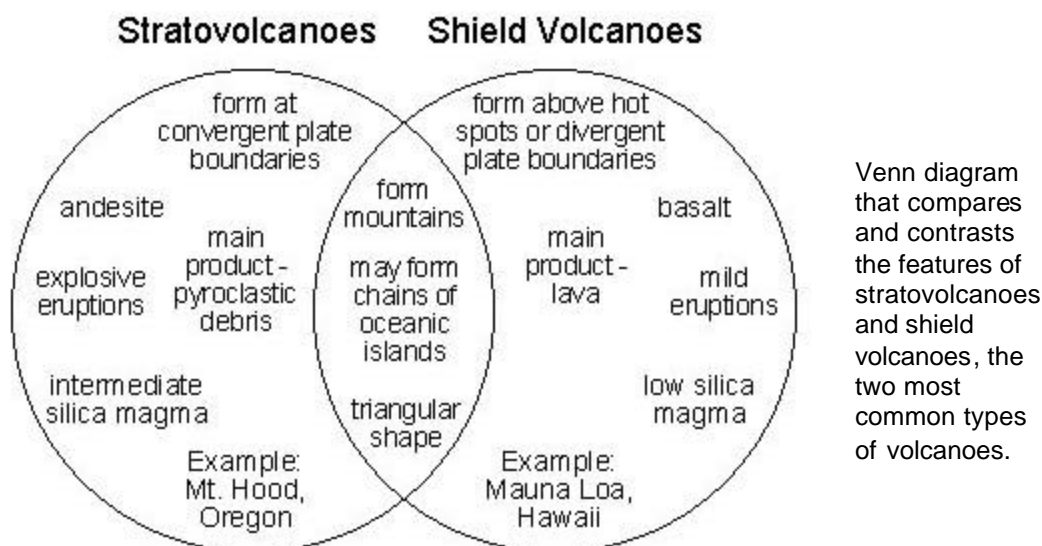


Classroom Assessment Techniques: Venn Diagrams

What is a Venn Diagram?

Venn diagrams are composed of overlapping circles, usually two or three circles, and represent a graphical method for comparing and contrasting the characteristics of natural features or phenomena. Such diagrams represent an opportunity for students to identify the characteristics of classification systems or to analyze the key components of complex sets of features.



How to use Venn Diagrams

- 1. Identify two or three features or phenomena with both similarities and differences.** Most topics lend themselves to such straightforward analysis. Examples of possible comparisons could include: hurricanes vs. tornadoes, Manet vs. Monet, Jefferson vs. Washington, Earth vs. Venus.
- 2. Identify differences.** Write differences in main parts of adjacent circles. Differences can be listed directly or numbers or letters can be assigned to topics that are discussed more fully below or beside the diagram.
- 3. Identify similarities.** Note similar features in the overlap area between circles. Similar characteristics can be listed directly or numbers or letters can be assigned to topics that are discussed more fully below or beside the diagram.
- 4. Identify features that don't fit either set.** Characteristics that don't match either data set may be placed outside the circles. For example, limestone, a type of sedimentary rock, could not be placed inside either circle above but would lie outside the boundaries of the diagram.
- 5. Alternatives.** Instructors may choose to give students a numbered list of characteristics that could then be placed in the correct locations on a blank Venn diagram.