Not as Different as One Would Think

All countries are unique. Obviously, countries are different from one another in location, size, language, government, climate, and lifestyle. Some countries, however, share some surprising similarities. In this case, Brazil and the United States come to mind. Some may think that these two nations have very little in common because they are in different hemispheres 1. On the contrary, the two countries share many similarities

One important similarity between Brazil and the United States is their massive size. Both Brazil and the United States are extremely large countries. Brazil covers almost half of the South American continent. It has a land mass of nearly 3.3 million square miles (8.5 million square kilometers) and is home to cosmopolitan 2 centers such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Due to its size, few Brazilians can say that they have traveled extensively within the country’s borders. Like Brazil, the United States takes up a significant portion of its continent (North America). It extends from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean and has a land mass of 3.1 million square miles (8 million square kilometers), not including Alaska, Hawaii, and other territories. It is home to world-famous cities such as Los Angeles and New York. As a result of its size, it is fair to say that many people in the United States have not visited much of their country.

Another similarity between Brazil and the United States is the diversity of the population. Brazil was colonized 3 by Europeans, and its culture has been greatly influenced by this fact. However, Brazilians’ identity was influenced by many other cultures as well. Brazil is a “melting pot” of many ethnic groups that immigrated there and mixed with the indigenous 4 people. The United States also has a diversity of ethnic groups, from the Native American population and early colonists from northern Europe to slave groups from Africa. Later immigrants from the Mediterranean, Asia, and South America added to the diversity of its citizens. The mixture of cultures and customs has worked to form ethnically rich cultures in both countries.

Finally, both countries share an important value: individualism. Brazil works hard to defend the concept of freedom of choice. Citizens believe that they have the right to do and be whatever they desire as long as they do not hurt others. This attitude was introduced in the 1930s and 1940s by Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas. He was responsible for establishing an individualistic government that helped modernize and industrialize the country. Individualism is also at the core of the culture in the United States, dating back to the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. Both documents focus on individuals’ many rights. Some people may believe that the desire for individual expression is disruptive and can make a country weak. However, the ability of people to be whatever they want is an asset to both countries.

Although Brazil and the United States have many differences, they also have remarkable similarities in their size, ethnic diversity, and core values. Some people believe that their culture and country are without equal. However, as with these two countries, a closer inspection shows that cultures everywhere have more in common than not.

**1.** What is the main purpose of this essay?

**Ans:** The main purpose of this essay is to compare and contrast Brazil and the United States. The essay emphasizes that both countries have surprising similarities, yet they are also unique from one another.

**2.** Which three things (points of development) about Brazil and the United States does this essay compare?

**Ans:** The above essay compares the size, ethnic diversity and core values of Brazil and the United States.

**3.** What method of organization does the writer use—point-by-point or block?

**Ans:** The writer uses point-by-point method of organization.

**4.** What is the hook for this essay?

**Ans:** All countries are unique. Obviously, countries are different from one another in location, size, language, government, climate, and lifestyle.

**5.** Underline the thesis statement. Is the thesis restated in the conclusion? If yes, underline the sentence that restates the thesis.

**Ans:** The thesis statement is restated in the conclusion.

**6.** In Paragraph 2, the author describes the size of Brazil and the United States. List the supporting information the writer uses.

**Ans:** The following are the supporting details used by the writer to describe the size of Brazil and the United States:

1. Both Brazil and the United States are extremely large countries.
2. Brazil covers almost half of the South American continent.
3. It has a land mass of nearly 3.3 million square miles (8.5 million square kilometers) and is home to cosmopolitan 2 centers such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.
4. Due to its size, few Brazilians can say that they have traveled extensively within the country’s borders. Like Brazil, the United States takes up a significant portion of its continent (North America).
5. It extends from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean and has a land mass of 3.1 million square miles (8 million square kilometers), not including Alaska, Hawaii, and other territories.
6. It is home to world-famous cities such as Los Angeles and New York.

**7.** Reread the concluding paragraph. Does the writer offer a suggestion, an opinion, a question, or a prediction?

**Ans:** In the concluding paragraph, the writer doesn't offer a suggestion, an opinion, a question, or a prediction. Instead, in the conclusion the writer recaps the main points and emphasizes the notion that cultures worldwide share more similarities than differences.