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Comparison essay

WRITING

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
C1_1071W_EN

LANGUAGE
English

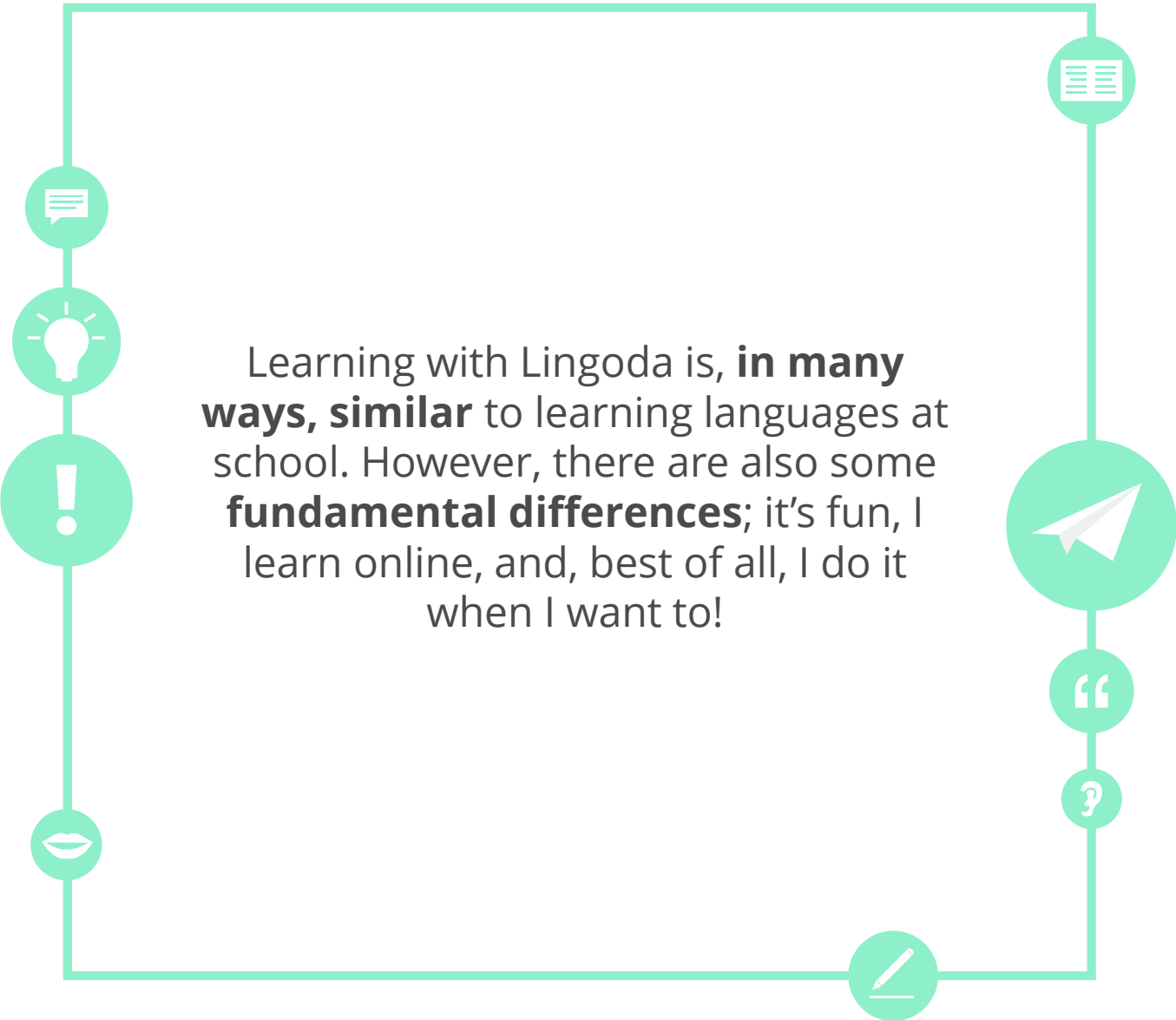




Goals

- Can recognise and recall the most important elements of a comparative essay.
- Can successfully structure a comparative essay in one of two ways, by object or by characteristic.





Learning with Lingoda is, **in many ways, similar** to learning languages at school. However, there are also some **fundamental differences**; it's fun, I learn online, and, best of all, I do it when I want to!



Topic review

- In the next slides, we will review some of the topics that you covered throughout this unit.
- As you read through this review, start thinking of which topics you might like to write about for your essay. Also start considering phrases and vocabulary you might want to use!



We've covered so much material!

bud of promise
prodigy
heartrending
hauteur

Unit 1: Beethoven and Mozart

- Examine the lives of Beethoven and Mozart with a focus on the similarities and differences in their upbringing.



Beethoven: hated music as a child; kept an air of mystery about his person; had a rich background; went deaf.



Mozart: adored music and playing instruments, even as a child; was extroverted and precocious; came from poor origins.

Unit 1: Soul Music in the USA

- Read a text about the development of soul music as a genre in the USA and beyond.
- 1950s: gospel music and rhythm and blues came together to conceive soul.
- 1960s: the **golden era** of soul.
- 1970s: funk and psychedelic soul emerged.
- 1980s: RnB took centre stage as electronically-polished soul.
- Discussed similarities and differences between Northern and Southern Soul.

Can you remember the big names that we discussed?

Unit 2: Sisyphos

- Read a text on the myth of Sisyphos and discussed myth in general.
- Related myths to our everyday life and debated their relevance today.
- Discussed religious and philosophical ideas relating to the concept of retribution, including karma, heaven and hell, rebirth.



Can you remember the meaning of **Sisyphean**?

Unit 3: Dadaism

- Developed vocabulary and knowledge to speak more confidently about art and creative movements.
- Learned about Dadaism as a politically-motivated movement, developed around the period of WW1 by key figures such as Emmy Hennings and Marcel Duchamp, principally from their base in liberal Zurich.



nationalism
manifesto
capitalism
bourgeois

Duchamp's urinal was intended to spark a dialogue about the value of art. Dialogue was a significant component of Dadaism.

Unit 4: Van Gogh

- Learned about the life of Van Gogh, including his difficult childhood, career failures, family ties, ideals and artistic technique
- Discussed career goals and interrogated the concept of a career path; Van Gogh did not start painting until his late 20s!
- Discussed Van Gogh's famous depression, which led to his tragic death.



This lesson and the lesson on Beethoven and Mozart share the theme of childhood histories!

Unit 5: Poetry

- Discussed the poems **Desiderata** by Max Ehrmann and **The Spell of the Yukon** by Robert W. Service.
- Considered the use of poetic techniques, especially adjectives, in **Desiderata**.
- Compared the **themes** and **tone** of the two poems.



Desiderata: dull, placid, clear, ignorant, vain, humble, lonely, blind, greater.



The Spell of the Yukon: wholesome, unfold, sham, drudgery, sought, scrabble, exile, foe.



Discuss

In which lessons did you focus on
similarities and differences?
Did you like these lessons?
Why (not)?



Discuss

The theme of childhood emerged in relation to Beethoven, Mozart and Van Gogh

Can you identify similarities and differences between lesson topics?



Comparing and contrasting

- Comparing and contrasting is something that we do in our everyday lives all the time, without even realising it.
- In this lesson, we will work on comparing and contrasting in advanced, written English.



"The weather back home is **much better**..."



Warm up

Can you think of everyday situations in which you compare or contrast things? Why is comparison important? Use the examples below to help you.

travelling

gossip

work

weather



Warm up

Have a go comparing and contrasting the images below. There's no right or wrong – just give your opinion!





Choosing objects to compare and contrast

- First, we must choose topics or objects which make sense in comparison with one another.
- If two objects don't have enough in common, then the comparison might not make sense.



Sometimes, things are just too different to compare and contrast. Does it make sense to compare healthy food and fast food?



The power of three

- Next, we can **brainstorm** the **characteristics** of our objects until we can identify the **three** most important ones to compare and/or contrast.
- We can see that our topic is **too broad** if there are so many characteristics that they become **overwhelming**.
- Can you continue the list, identifying appropriate topics and key characteristics of the objects of comparison within those topics?

Topic		Characteristics
Fruit	→	Sweetness, texture (hard, soft, smooth), place of origin
Techno clubs	→	Reputation on the techno scene (magazines, blogs, etc.), capacity, speaker quality
Camping spots	→	Surroundings (scenic? Lakeside? Woodland?), facilities (shower? Shop?), price
_____	→	_____



Writing Thesis Statements

- At the beginning of a compare & contrast essay, we usually include a thesis statement.
- In this statement, we identify both the topic of the essay and the three aspects of the topic which we intend to compare or contrast.

Berghain is the most highly esteemed techno venue in Europe on account of its untouchable reputation, unparalleled sound quality of its Funktion 1 speakers and relatively large capacity, in comparison with Tresor and Watergate.

I will argue that my generation was lucky to be born in the 20th century in contrast with the 19th century due to living conditions, freedom of speech, and education.



Identifying topics for compare-contrast essay

	TOO BROAD	TOO SPECIFIC	ACCEPTABLE
1. Writers of English literature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A comparison of the remains of Gothic architecture in Spain and Germany	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The colour of peppers in Barcelona and Madrid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Popular themes of 21 st century English literature written by women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Brainstorming characteristics

Brainstorm characteristics of the topics below. Then try to identify the three most important. Do any examples come to mind?

poetry

European capital cities

social movements



Brainstorm: your turn

Make your final decision on what you will write about. If you're still not sure, take another moment to discuss with your teacher. Figure out the characteristics of your subject and compile your ideas on each. You can use the headings below to help, if you need.

history

important figures

positive aspects



Structuring a compare-contrast essay

- There are two ways in which you can structure a compare-contrast essay.
 - First, you can discuss each object of comparison as a whole, before moving onto the second.
 - Second, you can travel from one characteristic to the second to the third, comparing both objects as you go.

By object	By characteristic
I. Introduction Thesis statement	I. Introduction Thesis Statement
II. Northern soul music in the USA A. Record labels B. Political impetus C. Present day relevance III. Southern soul music in the USA A. Record labels B. Political impetus C. Present-day relevance	II. Record labels A. Northern soul B. Southern soul III. Political impetus A. Northern soul B. Southern soul IV. Present-day relevance A. Northern soul B. Southern soul
IV. Conclusion	V. Conclusion



Comparison or contrast?



- Begin a comparison essay by identifying the similarities between the objects of comparison.
- Begin a contrast essay by identifying the differences between the objects of comparison.
- Never try to **both** compare and contrast in the same essay. For now, focus on discussing either differences or similarities between subjects. If you focus on differences, similarities will come up in the course of your discussion, and vice-versa.





Useful phrases for transition

in the same
way

likewise

similarly

by comparison

just as

however

by the same
token

despite

nonetheless

in spite of



by contrast



Review and make a list

What other useful vocabulary can you think of for comparing and contrasting in an essay? List some ideas.

A blank sheet of lined paper with a spiral binding on the left side, intended for listing ideas.



Soul Music in the USA

This text is an example of an introduction to a compare-contrast essay.

Introduction

Soul music in the USA in the 1960s and 1970s can be divided into two camps: the northern soul of Detroit and Chicago, and the southern soul of Memphis. Although both helped to shape the legacy of soul today and shared many similarities, there are three fundamental differences between them: the record labels under which they were both operating, their political impetus, and their present day relevance. This essay aims at an in-depth analysis of the differences between northern and southern soul during this time, and is divided according to the aforementioned differences.

Acknowledge the similarities in a comparison essay, and vice-versa!





Now over to you!

Plan the introduction of your essay. Your essay should take a topic from one or more of the lessons reviewed in the previous slides.

Take your thoughts from the previous brainstorm and try to organise them into an introduction. If you don't feel ready to write yet, summarise your introduction in bullet points as best you can.

Remember

Your thesis statement.

Note the differences and similarities of your chosen topic.

Explain what points you are going to make and in what order.



Soul Music in the USA

This text is an example of a paragraph of a compare-contrast essay, according to the “by character” structure.

Political Impetus

The soul that emerged from Chicago in the 60s and 70s was far more politically-charged than that which came out of the pop-focused South. Renowned for his politically themed tracks, Curtis Mayfield was one of the icons produced by Chicago-based label Vee-Jay Records. Meanwhile, Memphis label Stax Records was more focused on the launch of the pop-soul stars: Otis Redding and Aretha Franklin. That said, northern soul did not lack commercially successful stars; Motown Records in Detroit boasted stars such as Marvin Gaye and The Jackson 5. It therefore seems that northern soul complemented its pop success with political depth, while southern soul remained focused on boosting its record sales.

The first line of the paragraph should introduce the topic and your argument on the theme



Your turn!

Depending on which way you have decided to structure your essay, write three paragraphs of contrast or comparison. Remember to state your point about each topic and then back it up with your own thoughts and observations.

Again, if you're not ready to write the final draft, bullet points which follow the correct structure are fine!

Remember

Introduce the theme you will discuss at the beginning of each paragraph.

Finish your paragraph with a conclusion you have drawn from your comparison.



Soul Music in the USA

This text is an example of a conclusion to a compare-contrast essay.

Conclusion

On the one hand, as this essay has demonstrated, there are many similarities between the soul music that came out of Memphis, Detroit, and Chicago in 1960s and 1970s USA. Both the North and the South produced stars who, over time, have come to represent the genre: Curtis Mayfield, Otis Redding, The Jackson 5, Marvin Gaye, Aretha Franklin. However, differences in the nature of the northern and southern soul record labels, their political impetus and the present-day relevance of the two sub-genres remain paramount to a discussion on American soul music of this time period. Without an acknowledgement of these differences, we run the risk of merging two very distinct styles into one, semi-coherent whole for the sake of easy categorisation. It is vital to avoid losing the nuances which make soul music one of the most profound genres of music ever to have existed.



Explain the stakes:
why is it important
to acknowledge the
differences?



Back to you

Using the text above to help you, draft out your essay's conclusion. Remember to summarise the points you have made in the main body of your essay.



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?

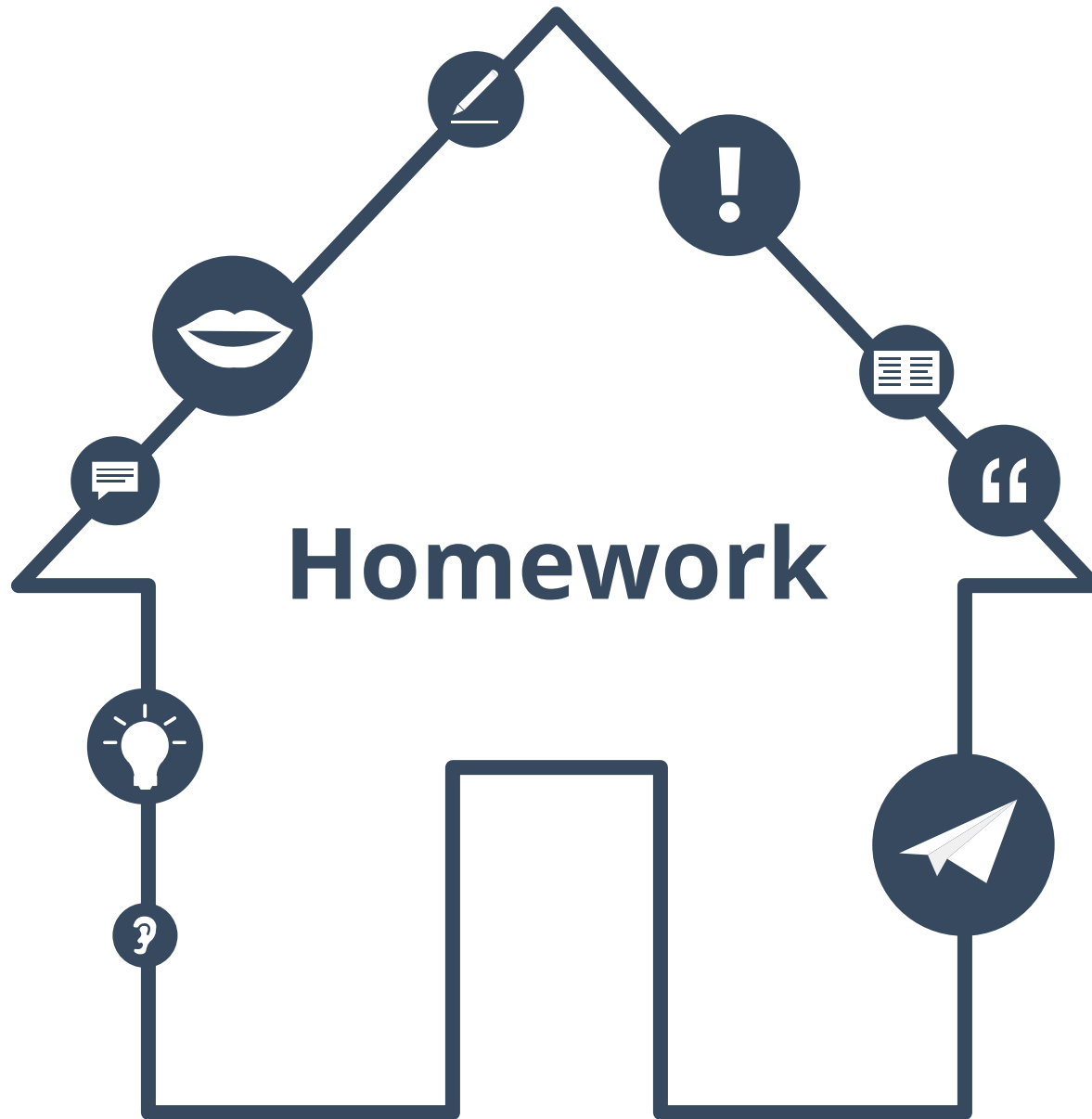


If you have time, go over
the most difficult slides again



Answer Key

Deciding a Topic
1) Too broad
2) Acceptable
3) Too specific
4) Acceptable





Finish your essay

Work on your notes from this class to finish your essay. Try going back to slides and notes from other lessons in this unit to find vocabulary and phrases to use which will really help your writing to stand out. Make sure to read over it at the end and correct any mistakes you might have made.

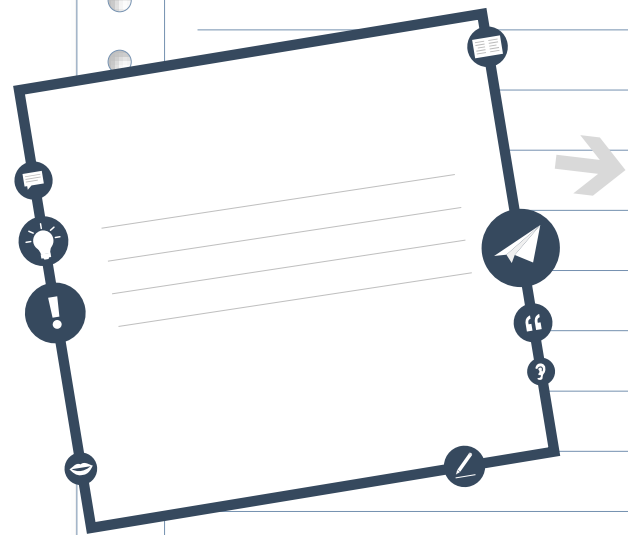
Good luck – you can do it!





Essay practice

Practise writing a second essay. If you wrote a comparison in the lesson, try a contrast essay. Do the two styles have any vocabulary in common?



In this essay, I plan to explain...



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