

COMPARISON ESSAY

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Assignment: Write an essay comparing two items that have both similarities and differences. Use the point-by-point method.

In our daily and work lives, we compare things all the time. For example, you face choices every time you shop for food or decide which movie to watch in order to relax. Recently, you moved from your home country to a new place and a new culture. Many new choices face you and your classmates. Suppose that you are a reporter for your class newspaper telling your fellow students about two possible choices (homestay or apartment? cell phone plans? major requirements? university programs? movies to watch? books to read? restaurants to visit?), or pretend that you are a worker helping your business compare two possible items (musicians or sports teams to support? works of art to buy? computer systems to use?). In *Greater Essays*, p. 56, 77, 80-81, you will find other suggestions for a topic.

Remember: Whatever items you choose to write about may be quite different from each other, but they must have at least a little similarity. On the other hand, they may be quite similar to each other but they must have at least one difference.

1. CHOOSING A TOPIC: LIST THREE POSSIBLE THINGS TO WRITE ABOUT:

A. ITEM 1

/

ITEM 2

/

Will this topic work? Try this topic out by brainstorming a list of differences and similarities:

(See other side of page)

B. ITEM 1

/

ITEM 2

Will this topic work? Try this topic out by brainstorming a list of differences and similarities:

C. ITEM 1

/

ITEM 2

Will this topic work? Try this topic out by brainstorming a list of differences and similarities:

You will need at least 1 difference and 2 similarities, or you will need 2 differences and 1 similarity. Which topic seems best to write about? _____

Hint: You may need to find out more about your items. You may do some research about them in the next few days. **Be sure to keep a list of the website addresses or other sources that you use.**

Teacher signature: _____ (if you change your topic, be sure to talk to your teacher)

Sample Point-by-Point Essay:

Morons

The novel called A Wrinkle In Time by Madeleine L'Engle asks if morons have their own personalities. Do Charles Wallace and Meg, who are called "morons" by people all around, have their own personalities? The answer is in the positive. Albeit both students and teachers in their school and people who surround them, think they are stupid, they live their own lifestyle, and show their characteristics to people. Let us compare the calmness, intelligence, and love for their father between Meg and Charles.

First of all, the most apparent feature, which is also the biggest difference, is calmness. While Charles and Meg are facing intractable problems, Meg behaves more impulsively, yet Charles is calm. As they got to the edge of Camazotz, Meg was eager to rush into the town and said to Charles and Calvin, "Let's hurry, please! Don't you want to find Father?"(Ch.5) The words show that she is impatient and impulsive. She did not even know where her father was; moreover, it was probably a hazardous location in which her father was confined. In contrast, Charles is fairly calm, which does not conform to the behavior of a five-year-old child. He responded affirmatively that he wanted to, but not blindly and wondered how they would help Father if they did not know what they were up against. "It's obvious we've been brought here to help him not just to find him,"(Ch.5) Charles proceeded before Meg could say anything. What he said firmly demonstrates that he is a calm, rational person. His thought is coherent and persuasive. To sum up, Charles is calmer than Meg.

So incredible is Charles Wallace's intelligence that it differentiates him from Meg. However, this does not mean that Meg is not wise; it is because Charles's wisdom is distinct. "It was his mother's mind, and Meg's, that he probed with frightening accuracy,"(P.6) reveals that Charles has a super power about reading minds. Furthermore, when the Mrs.Ws talked to the three children, Meg could not understand very well, while Charles could. It was Mrs.Whatsit who suggested that the three children wander around so that Charles could translate her words to the others.(Ch.4) On the other hand, Meg learned many Math skills from Father when she was little, so she is actually smart enough to be a normal people, but she does not have the intuition like Charles's. She tried to let what the Mrs.Ws said make sense in her mind, while she could not do it as well as Charles did. Overall, they are still rather diverse in their own intelligences.

Meg and Charles are parallel as well because they are sister and

brother. Their love for Father is deep and everlasting. "Kids, this is it!"(P.48) Charles's voice quivered with excitement. As soon as Charles found a method to reach Father, he became very excited. This proves his thick love for Father. Likewise, in Camazotz, Meg wanted to look for Father desperately and recklessly, which also exposes her love for Father. According to these actions, it is obvious that they love their father so much.

In conclusion, Meg and Charles are more different; they are unique. One person will never be perfect, but two people with different characteristics and ideas cooperate; then, they step forwards to perfection. If Meg and Charles can melt together as they grow older, they will become a formidable power.

Works Cited:

L'Engle, Madeleine, A Wrinkle In Time, Bantam Doubleday Dell Books, New York:1962.

My comments: Overall, this is a stellar example of a point-by-point comparison essay. Your thesis is sound and well-supported by examples. Your control of academic vocabulary, advanced punctuation, and complex sentence structure is strong (keep working on "albeit" and spelling errors). You successfully mixed the past tense for past events with the present tense for describing characteristics. You worked hard to include my corrections into this final typed draft. Very good work!

COMPARISON ESSAY

NAME: _____

2. BRAINSTORMING THE TOPIC

Now that you have chosen a topic, read through your brainstorm. Are there more similarities? more differences? or about the same number of each? Will you conclude that your items are more similar than different? Or will you conclude that they are more different than similar?

You will be writing a point-by-point comparison essay. So choose the three points of comparison (or “qualities” or “characteristics”) that you will use to compare your items and list them here. For instance, you could choose to use “loyalty” as a point of comparison, and you could describe how one character in a movie is very loyal to his friends but how the other character lies to his friends and betrays them. You could choose “cost” as a point of comparison when you compare two monthly cell phone plans.

My topic is: _____

My points of comparison are:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Teacher Signature: _____

COMPARISON ESSAY**NAME:** _____**3. TAKING NOTES ON YOUR COMPARISON ITEMS**

Now find out enough about your items in order to write a detailed essay. Be sure to keep an accurate list of your resources.

ITEM 1 (Important facts/details/examples)	Which Point of Comparison?
ITEM 2	

List of Resources (note internet addresses or book titles so that your teacher can find them if necessary):

Teacher Signature: _____

4.
OUTLINE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Create an outline for your **Comparison Essay** on this page. You may need to add more points or paragraphs. Add more pages to this one.

TOPIC: _____

I. Introduction (paragraph 1)

A. Interesting Hook:

B. Connecting Information:

C. Thesis Statement (decide whether you will say the two items are more similar, more different, or equally similar or different): _____

II. Body (Use the **point by point method** of comparison)

A. Paragraph 2 (first point of comparison) topic sentence: _____

1. (Details about Item 1 with regard to this point.)

2. (Details about Item 2 with regard to this point.)

3. Transition sentence:

B. Paragraph 3 (second point of comparison) topic sentence: _____

1. (Details about Item 1 with regard to this point)

2. (Details about Item 2 with regard to this point)

3. Transition sentence:

C. Paragraph 4 (third point of comparison) topic sentence: _____

1. (Details about Item 1 with regard to this point)

2. (Details about Item 2 with regard to this point)

3. Transition sentence:

III. Conclusion (paragraph 5)

Restated Thesis: _____

Suggestion, opinion, or prediction:

Teacher Signature: _____

5. GATHERING VOCABULARY FOR YOUR ESSAY

Name: _____

Once you've chosen your topic, gather the major words you will need to write about your topic. Using a dictionary and a thesaurus can help. Also be sure you know the different forms of your major words. Ask your teacher and classmates for help too! For example:

Topic (part of speech?)	Synonyms	Other forms of the word (part of speech?)
take a trip (verb)	journey, _____, _____, _____, _____	nouns: traveller, _____, _____, _____
basketball athletes (noun)	competitors, _____, _____, _____	verbs: they play, they shoot, they _____, they _____

Now take a few moments to gather words for your own essay. Use a thesaurus:

Topic/Major Ideas (part of speech?)	Synonyms	Other forms of the word (part of speech?)

Teacher Signature: _____

6. ROUGH DRAFT/FIRST DRAFT

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Now write your first draft on another piece of paper. Use your outline to guide you. Write in complete sentences. Don't worry; you will have many chances to change this!

Teacher Signature: _____

7. PEER EDIT

MY NAME IS: _____

THE PERSON I AM **PEER EDITING** IS NAMED: _____

Directions: Read the comparison essay.

1. Put a ***** by the part that is most interesting to you.

2. Put a **?** by anything you do not understand.

3. Summarize the **thesis** in one sentence: _____
_____.

4. One thing that the writer did very well was: _____
_____.

5. **Talk with the writer:** explain what is most interesting to you, what you like about their essay, and what you do not understand. Read them your thesis summary, and ask them if that is what they meant.

8. REVISING YOUR ROUGH DRAFT

NAME: _____

Look over your first draft. Place a check mark by each task below once you have completed it:

1. DOUBLE Underline your **thesis sentence**. Does it refer to similarities and differences and the points of comparison of your 3 body paragraphs? ____ Does it mention the two items you are comparing? ____
2. Underline all paragraph **topic sentences**.
3. Do you have **4 pieces of evidence in each body paragraph** (2 about one item and 2 about the other)? ____ If not, add more.
4. Are there too many short sentences? Combine some into longer ones. Make at least **3 compound sentences** (SV, + FANBOYS +SV). Make at **least 3 complex sentences** (Independent clause + Dependent clause).
5. Are there too many long sentences? Shorten a few to make **simple sentences** (SV).
6. Look at your adjectives and adverbs, can they be more interesting and specific? Are you repeating a word many times? Use its synonyms. Add at least **3 Vocabulary** words that we have studied in class. They are: _____, _____, and _____.
7. Underline each **transition (concluding** each paragraph) sentence -- do you have one for each paragraph? ____ Do they summarize the paragraph or provide a bridge to the next paragraph? _____
8. Have you used and underlined at least **6 linking or introductory transitions** (in addition, also, furthermore, moreover, then, therefore, thus, as a result, consequently, for example, for instance, in other words...)? Circle the words on this page that you are using.
9. Have you used and underlined at least **2 transitions showing contrast** (however, on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, on the contrary, in contrast)? Circle the words on this page that you are using.
10. Have you used and underlined at least **1 subordinating conjunction showing contrast** (although, even though, though, whereas, while)? Circle the words on this page that you are using.
11. Have you used and underlined a **subordinate conjunction of time** (after, as, as soon as, before, since, until, when, whenever, while)? Circle the word on this page that you are using.
12. Check your **verb tenses**. You should be using all past or all present tense verbs, with a very few exceptions. Which verb tense are you mainly using? _____
13. In your concluding paragraph, DOUBLE underline the sentence that **restates your thesis**.
14. Does your concluding paragraph predict, suggest, or state an opinion? ____ If not, change it. You should have at least 5 sentences in this paragraph. Don't make it too short. How many sentences are in your concluding paragraph? _____
15. Think about your title: is it interesting? or does it build curiosity? ____ If not, change it.
16. Check your essay. **Remove the following words: good, bad, a little, a lot, interesting, it, thing, etc., and so on.** Write more exciting, descriptive words in their place.
17. Remove all **contractions** from your essay. For example, "can't" should become "cannot".
18. At the bottom of your essay, skip one line. Then write:

Works Cited:

Below that write the website addresses or full titles of any resources you used. We will study how to properly cite resources in our next essay; for now, write enough so that I can find your resource in the library or online.

Make all these corrections on your first draft, then rewrite it very neatly.

Teacher Signature: _____

9. REWRITTEN DRAFT FOR GRAMMAR READAROUND **NAME:** _____
DATE: _____

TITLE: _____

Teacher Signature: _____ (Use more pages as necessary)

Now proofread your essay for grammar, punctuation, and spelling. See if the sentences flow smoothly. Make any last corrections based on the grammar read-around by your peers. Bring all of these pages to class to write your final essay in class.