



A compare and contrast task focuses on **similarities and differences** between two or more aspects. The task should contain an introduction with a thesis statement, a body where the comparisons and contrasts are discussed, and a conclusion.

Step by step

- Because this is a compare and contrast essay, both the similarities and differences should be discussed. This will require analysis on your part, as some topics will appear to be quite similar, and you will have to work to find the differing elements.
- Transitions are important in compare and contrast essays, where you will be moving frequently between different topics or perspectives.
 - Examples of transitions and phrases *for comparisons*:
as well, similar to, consistent with, likewise, too
 - Examples of transitions and phrases *for contrasts*:
on the other hand, however, although, differs, conversely, rather than.
- Consider how you will present the information. You could present all of the similarities first and then present all of the differences. Or you could go point by point and show the similarity and difference of one point, then the similarity and difference for another point, and so on.
- It is tempting to just provide summary for this type of paper, but analysis will show the importance of the comparisons and contrasts. For instance, if you are comparing the role of the women in *Othello* to material in your exam, you have to show points that need further investigation or are of particular interest
- When drawing comparisons or making contrasts, be sure you are dealing with similar aspects of each item. To use an old cliché, are you comparing apples to apples?
 - Example of poor comparisons: *“In comparing Shakespeare to a modern pop singer, we find that Shakespeare’s works lack the catchy tunes and mass appeal that modern pop songs have.”*

This example does not compare similar items. It is not a clear contrast because the sentence does not discuss the same element. It is like comparing apples to oranges.)
 - Example of analogous comparisons: *“When comparing Shakespeare’s tragedies to his comedies, we can observe distinct differences in tone, themes, and character development. While his tragedies, like ‘Hamlet’ and ‘Macbeth,’ delve into themes of ambition, betrayal, and the human condition, his comedies, such as ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ and ‘Twelfth Night,’ explore themes of love, mistaken identity, and humor.”*

Here, methods are clearly being compared, allowing the reader to understand the distinction.
- Always back up your statement with reference and incorporate the quote into your text (strong argumentation).



Language help

Composing similarities

- Both texts share...
- Similarly, they both...
- In the same way,...
- A common thread between these texts is...
- Likewise,...
- They exhibit a parallel...
- There is a striking resemblance in...
- Both authors convey...
- Correspondingly,...
- They both address...

Comparing differences

- In contrast to...
- Conversely,...
- On the other hand,...
- In sharp opposition to...
- While one text highlights..., the other emphasizes...
- A notable disparity can be seen in...
- Differently from...
- In a stark departure from...
- In contradistinction to...
- Unlike the first text, the second text...

Identifying specific points

- One notable aspect of the first text is...
- The second text, on the other hand, focuses on...
- An interesting point of divergence is...
- When it comes to..., the first text argues...
- In terms of..., the second text presents a contrasting view...
- The primary contention in the first text revolves around...
- On the contrary, the second text's central argument centers on...
- An important distinction lies in their respective views on...
- While the first text prioritizes..., the second text gives more weight to...
- It is important to note that...

Composing similarities

- The first text posits that..., which consequently leads to...
- As a result of..., the second text argues...
- The cause-and-effect relationship in the first text can be summarized as...
- This leads to the conclusion that...
- The consequences of these differing viewpoints are...
- It is evident that the first text's perspective contributes to...
- Conversely, the second text contends that..., resulting in...

Identifying emphasis

- The primary emphasis in the first text is on...
- A key focus of the second text is...
- The overarching theme of the first text centers around...
- In terms of emphasis, the second text highlights...
- The main thrust of the first text is...
- In contrast, the second text places greater emphasis on...
- Both texts underscore the importance of...

Comparative analysis phrases

- When comparing these two texts, it becomes clear that...
- A comparative analysis reveals that...
- In a side-by-side examination of the texts, one can discern...
- By juxtaposing these two texts, we can discern...
- In summary, the comparison between these texts illustrates...
- Overall, the contrasting elements in these texts shed light on...
- Taken together, these texts offer a nuanced perspective on...