

Essay # 3 – Comparison and Contrast Essay

Comparison = similarities

Contrast= differences

The comparison-contrast method is closely related to the idea of studying a definition, because ‘definition’ aims at the description of a particular thing by identifying its properties while also isolating it from everything else. Comparison-Contrast is also closely allied with Plato’s idea that we learn a thing best by reference to its opposite; that is, one way of finding out what a thing is to find out what it is not.

Choosing a Topic - Your first task is to decide where to place your emphasis. Comparing one or two elements of a literary work is easier and more effective than comparing every element of each work. For example, you may wish to concentrate your comparison and contrast on imagery, or mood, or style.

Don’t try to compare dissimilar things. Compare like with like: idea with idea, characterization with characterization, imagery with imagery, point of view with point of view, problem with problem.

FIRST ONE, THEN NEXT METHOD

*** A common, but inferior way to compare- contrast is to make your points first about one work and then do the same for the other. This method makes your paper seem like two big lumps, and it also involves repetition because you must repeat the same points as you treat your second subject. This method is only satisfactory.

INTERLOCKING METHOD

***** The superior way is to treat your thesis in its major points and to make references to the two writers as the reference illuminates your idea. Thus you would be constantly referring to both writers, sometimes within the same sentence, and would be reminding your reader of the point of your discussion. Also, your reader is not required to refer back to the previous paragraph to see what you did there.

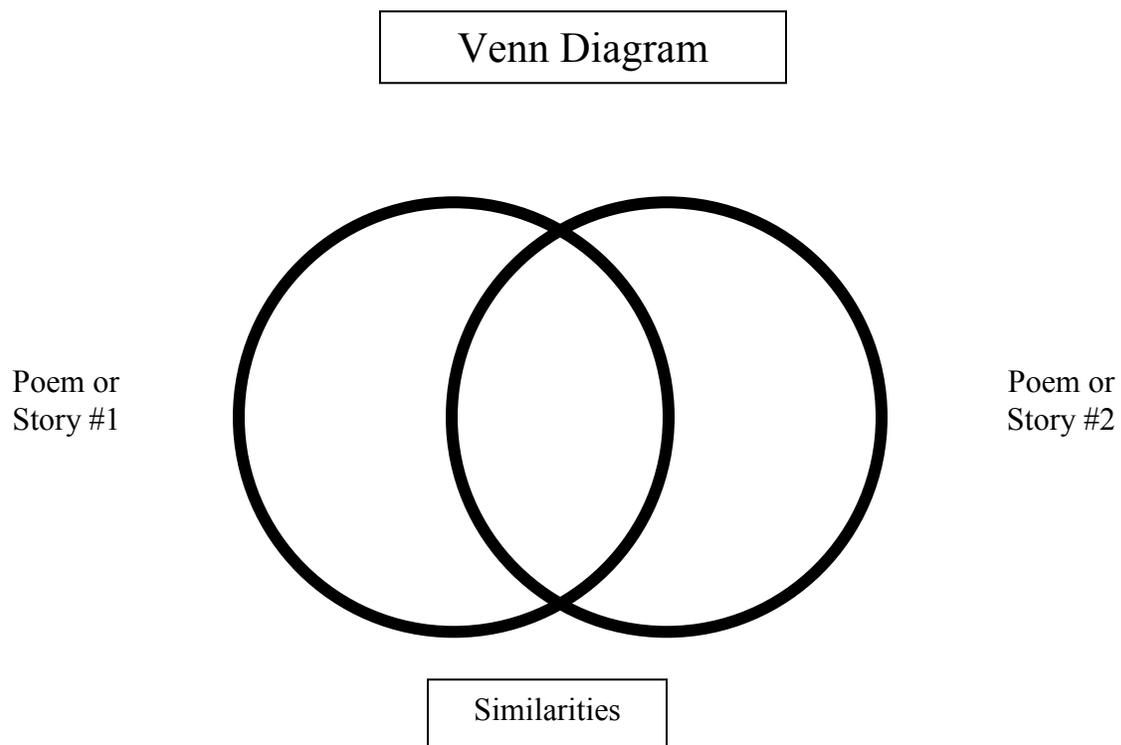
A Venn Diagram

A Venn diagram can help you organize your ideas for a comparison and contrast essay. To sketch a Venn diagram, draw two intersecting circles.

-In the part where the circles intersect, jot down any similarities in the literary works.

-On the left side, write down the unique qualities of story or poem #1.

On the right side, write down the unique qualities of story or poem #2.



Preparing an Outline

Once you have sketched your Venn Diagram and written the first draft of a thesis statement, it is time to prepare your outline.

To prepare an outline for a comparison and contrast essay, use your Venn diagram to write topic sentences for each paragraph. It is important that each paragraph contains an analysis of both of poems /stories you are writing about. Don't write a whole paragraph about just one of the poems.

Strategies for Writing Your Essay

Identify the title and author of the poems/ stories in your introductory paragraph.

Use the present tense to write about them poems/ stories.

Use quotations from the poems/story to support your points.

SIGNAL WORDS FOR COMPARISON AND CONTRAST ESSAY

IF your essay is coherent, your reader should be able to follow your train of thought. The chart below gives some examples of words that link ideas.

also	in contrast with (or to)
equally	on the other hand
Just	unlike
Just as	different from
like	although
likewise	even though
similarly	whereas
similar	while
	however

Compare and Contrast Essay- First one, then next method outline

Paragraph 1: Thesis Statement- Although UBC and SFU are both good choices for academic students, U.B.C. is a better choice for outgoing and active students who wish to take advantage of a wide range of extra curricular opportunities.

Paragraph 2: Topic Sentence: UBC has a fine academic program

- 5 Nobel Prize winners
- strong masters programs
- excellent science programs
- law school and medical school
- Arts 1 program

Paragraph 3: Topic Sentence: SFU also has a fine academic program

- excellent engineering program
- highly regarded coop programs
- strong education program

Paragraph 4: SFU offers extra curricular activities

SFU examples: list examples here

Paragraph 5: UBC offers a wider range of extracurricular programs

UBC examples: bigger, wide ranging list here

Paragraph 6: Conclusion:

Compare and Contrast Essay- Interlocking method outline ***** Superior

Paragraph 1: Thesis Statements: The Toyota Matrix and Mazda 3 offer drivers similar options in the same price range; however, the Toyota Matrix's service costs and re-sale value make it the better choice for the discerning young buyer.

Paragraph 2: Both cars come with great standard options.

Examples: They both have great stereos
Matrix: 6 CD, mp3, 6 speaker BOSS system.
Mazda 3: 6 CD, mp3 6 speaker Blaupunkt system
They both come with front and side air bags
They both have the same cargo space
They both have similar horse power and handling
They both have similar gas mileage

Paragraph 3: They both have a similar price tag.

Matrix \$28,000 after taxes
Mazda 3 \$26, 900 after taxes

Paragraph 4: The Matrix has lower average maintenance costs and a higher resale value.

Maintenance cost: Mazda 3- \$1100 per year
Toyota Matrix \$675.00 per year

Resale Value: After 5 years:

Mazda 3 55% of original purchase price
Toyota Matrix 68% of original purchase price.

Paragraph 5: Conclusion:

S
U
P
E
R
I
O
R

M
E
T
H
O
D