

Compare and Contrast Essays 1

In compare and contrast essays, to compare means to show how two subjects are alike whereas contrast means to describe or explain their differences. In academic contexts, these essays are usually assigned to assess your knowledge of a particular subject. For example, you might be asked to write a compare and contrast essay between two competing theories or how your society is today versus how it was 50 years ago. In some cases, an assignment may only require you to show either only the similarities or only the differences.

When writing a compare and contrast essay, you can employ one of two structures - block structure or point by point structure. This worksheet focuses only on block structure. You can see a comparison of the two structures below.

Thesis statement: City University and State College have a number of similarities and differences.

Block	Point by Point
City University (CU) Paragraph 1: reputation and ranking Paragraph 2: facilities and environment State College (SC) Paragraph 3: reputation and ranking Paragraph 4: facilities and environment	Paragraph 1: CU versus SC reputation and ranking Paragraph 2: CU versus SC facilities and environment Paragraph 3: CU versus SC course offerings and curriculum

A. With a partner, discuss the main differences between block structure and point by point structure. Write notes about your findings below.

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B. Place the transition words and phrases into the table below according to their functions. Add two more transitions of your own for each function.

Similarly However Unlike Both ... and Likewise On the other hand

Whereas In the same way Just as While Although Neither ... nor

To Show Similarity	To Show Contrast

C. Read the example compare and contrast essay below and underline the transition words and phrases that show similarities or differences. Then, add any new transitions to the table in Exercise B.

Action sports, also known as extreme sports, are activities associated with a high level of risk. These sports often involve speed, and physical effort, and require specialized equipment. Two well-known examples of action sports are surfing and snowboarding. As they both involve standing upright on a board, many people perceive them as being very similar, but there are some notable differences between surfing and snowboarding.

Surfing is a recreational water sport in which a surfer rides waves in an upright position. Surfers use a board, typically constructed with a foam core and a hard fiberglass skin, to ride along the face of a wave. The movement of the surfer is generated from the force of waves as they move towards the shore. Surfing can be enjoyed year-round and is mostly done along the coasts of open bodies of water. To manoeuvre, riders need to place their weight centrally but also slightly over the back of the board. Moreover, surfers need to have their preferred foot positioned on the tail of the board rather than on the nose. While surfing is a very exciting and enjoyable sport, it involves many risks. For instance, drowning is an obvious danger, especially in large powerful waves, and all surfers dread an unexpected encounter with a deadly great white shark.

Snowboarding is a popular winter sport in which riders move down mountain slopes standing on a board attached to their feet. Like surfing, the most crucial piece of equipment is a board. However, snowboarders use a smaller board mostly made of wood. While surfing is normally thought of as a summer sport and snowboarding a winter sport, both can be enjoyed at most times of the year. Unlike surfing, snowboarding tends to be enjoyed in mountainous areas that are far from the coast. Another difference with surfing is that the movement and speed of a snowboarder are generated by gravity as it pulls the rider down the mountain. Similar to surfing, snowboarding requires balance and speed generation to perform manoeuvres. In contrast to surfing, to control the board, the rider needs to lean forward and adjust the weight of their front foot. In the same way surfing is risky, snowboarding presents some serious dangers. On the other hand, the risks are different. Snowboarders risk broken bones from crashing at high speeds and can be vulnerable to deadly avalanches.

In summary, while snowboarding and surfing share some similarities, they differ in some ways. They are both extreme sports that use a board, require balance and speed, and involve danger. Conversely, they vary in terms of the locations where they are enjoyed, the key materials used in the construction of boards, and the way riders position their feet. Whichever of these two activities one chooses, they are certain to be rewarded with fun and excitement.

D. Use the transition words and phrases from Exercise B to complete the sentences.

1. New York and Tokyo are large cities that are great places to visit.
2. coal oil is seen as a good long-term option for providing clean and safe energy.
3. Spanish is the native language for the citizens of twenty countries., Italian is the official language of only four nations.
4. a medical degree, a fine arts degree is not seen as providing good employment prospects.

E. Write sentences that compare or contrast the pairs of subjects using suitable transition words and phrases.

1. Online learning and face-to-face learning.

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2. High school and university.

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F. Choose two subjects for a compare and contrast essay and list their similarities and differences.

Subjects	Similarities	Differences

G. Create an essay outline to compare and contrast the two subjects.

Thesis Statement:

Subject One:

Point 1:

Examples:

Point 2:

Examples:

Subject Two:

Point 1:

Examples:

Point 2:

Examples:

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H. Now, use your outline to write an essay that discusses the similarities and differences between the two subjects. Remember to use transition words and phrases to show similarities and differences.

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