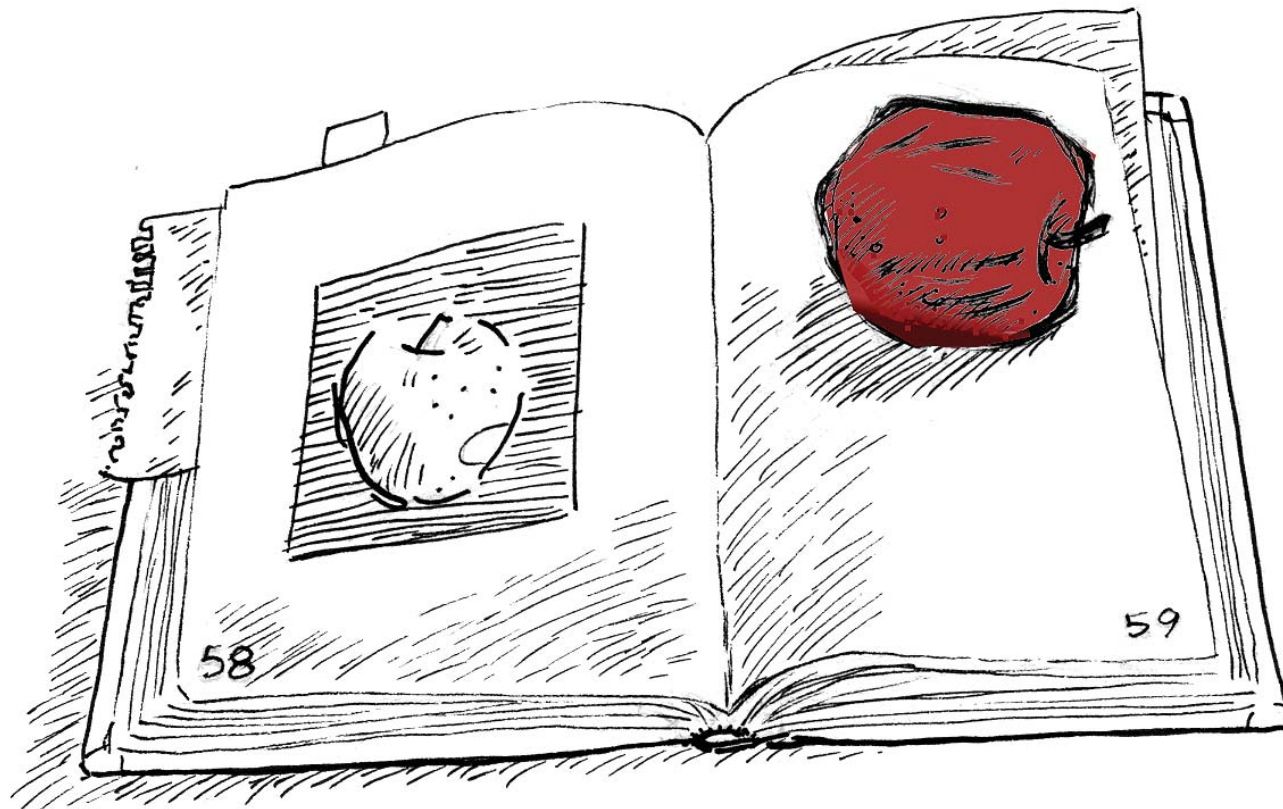


Comparison / Contrast



Comparison / Contrast Mode

Next to Narrations, Compare/Contrast essays are the easiest to use.

Uses a basic premise: you find any similarities and differences between a selection of elements and compose your paper around the items.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

Three possibilities result:

- discover the benefits of one element over another
(such as a typical advertisement on television)
- re-enforce a common theory about the contrasts between two elements
(such as showing two subjects that will always be opposed)
 - Democrat / Republican
 - Capitalism / Communism
 - Atheism / Theism (Faith)
- **or** possibly find a similarity between two unrelated sources
(as a means to provoke further discussion or studies)
 - William Clinton and George W. Bush
 - classical music and classic punk rock

Comparison / Contrast Mode

Either way you approach it, this form of essay is rather malleable:

- the entire output can be a comparison,
- *or* only listing of contrasts,
- or a combination of both.

Remember, do not state the obvious. It is a cliché when using phrases such as:
“many differences and many similarities exist between two subjects.”

Comparison / Contrast Mode

Strategies for using this form of essay:

- Make sure there exist some form of obvious similarity between your subjects to begin with. You do not want your paper to wander off into pointlessness comparing two distinctly different subjects.

Find your purpose, and remain focused:

- There should be an end result in your analysis within the paper.
- In other words, if you are comparing two programs to use in the school program you want to be able to recommend one over the other.
- If the two subjects are seemingly unrelated, you will want to draw an analogy between the two objects to show how a similarity actually exists.
- Formulate a strong thesis which names the subject, shows your paper's focus and type of essay (comparison, contrast, or both), and states your main point.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

Important Items to Consider:

- When organizing your points to compare and contrast, be sure to discuss how these elements operate.
- Most importantly, do not forget to use a parallel approach. If you provide five paragraphs on one subject, devote the same space for the second subject, regardless of your findings.
- You need to be consistent between the two unique elements.
In other words, you are to remain **fair and balanced**.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

Transitions

- As with any other pattern, transitions alert the reader to the pattern of choice.

- Use obvious, diverse transitions between paragraphs.
 - > Because you will be shifting between two different subjects, you need to move through the essay without jolting your reader unexpectedly.
 - > Common transition phrases:
 - comparison: likewise, in addition, also, in the same manner, similarly
 - contrast: on the other hand, however, but, alternatively
 - > These keep the reader aware of your strategy throughout the essay or individual paragraphs.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

Remember this pattern can be used in a formal research paper, however it should not compose the entire project.

Research papers should combine many patterns, and not be limited to only one pattern in particular.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

A good rule of thumb to follow with this pattern:

- When using a full comparison paper, you should mention a few differences but focus mainly on the numerous similarities.
- Yet, when using a full contrast essay, you should mention a few similarities but keep more of the focus on differences between the subjects.

Using these two strategies builds readers' interest in the material and keeps them guessing what direction you will take the paper.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

Subject by Subject (Block Format):

- When writing short essays, the block format works easiest.
- The writer in these cases devotes one paragraph to discuss one subject, then the second paragraph is devoted to the second subject.
- You then alternate between the two subjects offering equal space to each.
- The introduction and conclusion need to show *both* subjects.

Introduction for Subject by Subject (*papers under five pages*)

A. Begin with a sentence that will catch the reader's interest.

- state why the comparison/contrast is important

B. Name the two specific subjects and say either:

- they are (very) similar, in general terms
- or (very) different, in general terms

> Such statements act as your thesis declaration.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

- ***Again, do not use the following expression:***

“the two subjects have many differences and many similarities.”

The reader already knows this.

- ***You can say that***

“despite the differences the subjects are rather similar...” ***or***

“despite the similarities the subjects are rather different...”

Comparison / Contrast Mode

New Body Paragraphs for Subject by Subject

- A. The next series of paragraphs only describe features of the first subject.
- B. Include examples proving the similarities and/or differences exist.
 - Do not mention the second subject in detail.
 - Do concentrate on the uniqueness of the first subject.
- C. Do not forget, from this point forward, each new discussion point could be a paragraph onto itself

Subsequent Body Paragraphs for Subject by Subject

- A. The next series of paragraphs must begin with a transition showing you are comparing the second subject to the first.
- B. For each comparison, use compare/contrast cue words such as:
like, similar to, also, unlike, on the other hand.
- C. Again, be sure to include examples proving your analysis.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

Conclusion/ final paragraphs for Subject by Subject

- A. Give a brief, general summary of the most important similarities and/or differences.
- B. Restate the thesis in different words, which reaffirms your findings.

Never repeat topic points using the same wording.

Your most important information is shown in your conclusion.

This strategy is called a **deductive resolution**.

We will be discussing this concept more in depth at a later time.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

There are two types of Comparison/Contrast papers.

1. Subject by Subject
2. Point by Point

Both techniques require the author to utilize a parallel, balanced approach.

Comparison / Contrast Mode

There are two types of Comparison/Contrast papers.

1. Subject by Subject
2. Point by Point

Subject by Subject

- short papers, six pages or less, can follow this type of process for the pattern without causing the reader many problems
- each subject contains a separate essay onto themselves; however, each subject covers the same structure and format

Comparison / Contrast Mode

There are two types of Comparison/Contrast papers.

1. Subject by Subject
2. Point by Point

Subject by Subject

- short papers, six pages or less, can follow this type of process for the pattern without causing the reader many problems
- each subject contains a separate essay onto themselves; however, each subject covers the same structure and format

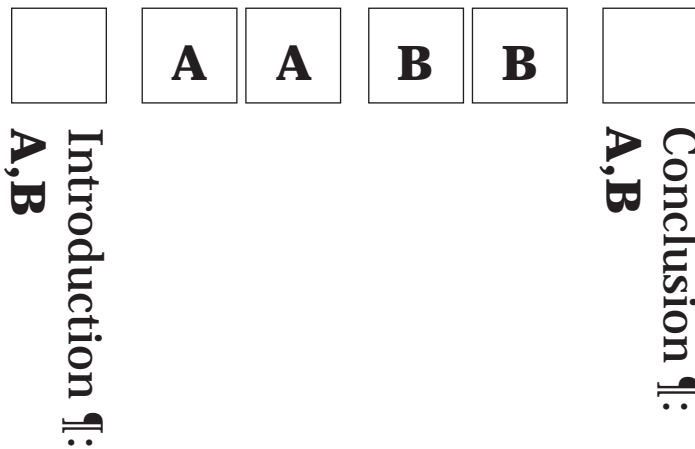
Point by Point

- good for long papers, seven or more pages
- uses an outline logic which provides equal time for both subjects within one paragraph at a time

Comparison / Contrast Mode

Subject by Subject

- short papers, six pages or less, can follow this type of process for the pattern without causing the reader many problems
- each subject contains a separate essay onto themselves; however, each subject covers the same structure and format



Point by Point

- good for long papers, seven or more pages
- uses an outline logic which provides equal time for both subjects within one paragraph at a time

