Chapter 11

Compare-and-Contrast Writing

Learning Goals

In this chapter, you’ll learn and practice how to:

1. Get started with compare-and-contrast writing
2. Write a compare-and-contrast paragraph
3. Read and examine student and professional essays
4. Write a compare-and-contrast essay

Getting There

- Compare-and-contrast writing helps readers gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of two subjects through analyzing the relationships between them.
- Compare-and-contrast writing allows you to examine the advantages and disadvantages of two subjects.
- Compare-and-contrast writing helps you discover the unique similarities and differences between two subjects.

Fastwrite 1

You need a new method of transportation. You’ve saved $5,000 and have narrowed your choice to the vehicles above. In a fastwrite, write about the similarities and differences of the two. Write as much as you can, as fast as you can, for five minutes.

Fastwrite 2

Individual sports have a number of similarities and differences. In a fastwrite, compare and contrast football and tennis (or two other sports). Write as much as you can, as fast as you can, for five minutes.

Complete these Fastwrites at mywritinglab.com
Getting Started in Compare-and-Contrast Writing

In its simplest terms, compare-and-contrast writing details the similarities (the comparisons) and the differences (the contrasts) between two people, places, or things. Beyond reporting the similarities and differences of two subjects, compare-and-contrast writing may propose that one subject is superior to the other in specific ways, that both subjects are equal in importance, or that one subject is far less important.

Compare-and-contrast writing does the following:

- uses a particular pattern of organization
- highlights specific qualities or conditions
- offers a clearer understanding of two subjects

You make comparisons and contrasts every day. You might compare and contrast:

- two cell phone service plans
- an associate degree in science and one in arts
- an in-home babysitter and a daycare facility

When you explore the similarities and differences between two subjects, you and your readers to gain a deeper understanding of the two.

Patterns of Development: Alternating and Divided

You may write compare-and-contrast essays or paragraphs using one of two patterns of organization: alternating pattern or divided pattern.

In the alternating pattern for essays or paragraphs, you compare and contrast the two subjects, point for point. Here is Brittney’s paragraph that uses an alternating pattern:

Zippy Cell and Quick Call cell phone service plans are similar, but Quick Call is the right choice for me. Both require a two-year contract and have comparable monthly fees. Zippy’s calling plan is $59.99 per month, compared to Quick Call’s $49.99 per month. Zippy Cell’s plan includes unlimited weeknight minutes after 8 p.m. and unlimited weekend minutes. Likewise, Quick Call has some unlimited night and weekend minutes, but its nights start at 9:00 p.m. Texting options with Zippy are fairly limited at either $13 for up to 1,000 messages per month (continued)
Outlining your paragraph sentence-by-sentence gives you a view of the supporting details in an alternating pattern and is a good method for checking the paragraph for balance.

Sentence-by-sentence examination highlights the format. This lets you check for balance and find places that need more support.

A divided pattern is also known as a side-by-side pattern or whole-to-whole pattern.

Here is the same comparison and contrast in a divided pattern:

Zippy Cell and Quick Call cell phone service plans are similar, but Quick Call is the right choice for me. Adopting a Zippy Cell service plan requires a two-year contract at $59.99 per month. This plan includes 1,000 anytime minutes and unlimited weeknight minutes starting at 8:00 p.m. and unlimited weekend minutes.

Likewise, Quick Call has some unlimited night and weekend minutes, but its nights start at 9:00 p.m. and it offers only 900 anytime minutes.

The texting options with Zippy are fairly limited at either $13 for up to 1,000 messages per month or $24 for unlimited texting.

The three texting plan options with Quick Call are $6 for 300 messages, $12 for 900 messages, or $26 for unlimited texting.

Because I text more than I talk on the phone, I’ve opted for Quick Call with unlimited texting.
minutes. The texting options with Zippy are fairly limited at either $13 for up to 1,000 messages per month or $24 for unlimited texting. The Quick Call cell phone service also requires a two-year contract but is only $49.99 per month. Though Quick Call’s plan has only 900 anytime minutes, it offers some unlimited weeknight minutes starting at 9:00 p.m. and unlimited weekend minutes. Subscribers also have three texting plan options to choose from: $6 for 300 messages, $12 for 900 messages, or $26 for unlimited texting. Because I text more than I talk on the phone, I’ve opted for Quick Call with unlimited texting.

Using a sentence-by-sentence outline gives you a view of the supporting details in a divided pattern.

B = both subjects   Z = Zippy   Q = Quick Call

B—Zippy Cell and Quick Call cell phone service plans are similar, but Quick Call is the right choice for me.

Z—Adopting a Zippy Cell service plan requires a two-year contract at $59.99 per month. This plan includes 1,000 anytime minutes and unlimited weeknight minutes starting at 8:00 p.m. and unlimited weekend minutes. Texting options with Zippy are fairly limited at either $13 for up to 1,000 messages per month or $24 for unlimited texting.

Q—The Quick Call cell phone service also requires a two-year contract but is only $49.99 per month. Though Quick Call’s plan has only 900 anytime minutes, it offers unlimited weeknight minutes starting at 9:00 p.m. and unlimited weekend minutes. Subscribers also have three texting plan options to choose from: $6 for 300 messages, $12 for 900 messages, or $26 for unlimited texting.

B—Because I text more than I talk on the phone, I’ve opted for Quick Call with unlimited texting.

In the last sentence of the paragraph, Brittney explains why, for her, Quick Call is the better choice.
Using Venn Diagrams

Compare-and-contrast paragraphs and essays assist readers in understanding the differences and similarities between two subjects. Often, this allows readers a deeper understanding of each subject and a better understanding of each subject’s significance.

In the topic sentence or thesis statement, you need to make clear

- what two subjects you are comparing and contrasting
- why their similarities or differences are important

Keegan has this topic sentence:

While an associate's degree in science and one in arts both appeal to me, the degree in arts is better for me.

You can prewrite about areas of similarities and differences in several ways. In compare-and-contrast writing, some find that creating a Venn diagram is helpful in prewriting and in organizing the structure of their paper. A Venn diagram is a drawing of two intersecting circles; the circles note features that are either unique or common to two concepts.

In exploring which associate degree to pursue, Keegan created this Venn diagram:

11.1 Brainstorming with a Venn Diagram

**Directions:** Spend three to five minutes creating a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts your life as a fifteen-year-old student with your life as a student today. Use as many details as possible to note the similarities and differences. When you’re finished, share your Venn diagram with your writing group. As a group, discuss each Venn diagram.
Deputy Chief Earl Brandon, Lt. Chip Stauffer

With over fifty years’ experience between them, Deputy Chief Earl Brandon (left) and Lt. Chip Stauffer (right) are two police officers who know the importance of writing well. While many might think the job of a police officer is constantly filled with exciting action, that job is also filled with the action of writing. As Brandon and Stauffer note, precise and detailed writing is a crucial part of their job to protect and serve.

Police Writing Process

“Our goal is to keep people safe,” says Deputy Chief Earl Brandon, “and to do this, we have to arrest criminals, keep them arrested, and get them convicted.” Yet a lot goes into the process of arresting those who break the law, and part of that process is writing. The patrolman’s and the investigator’s writing is crucial in arresting and prosecuting criminals. Officers enjoy the excitement of getting criminals off the street, but as Lt. Chip Stauffer says, “Fifteen minutes of fun is two hours of paperwork to law enforcement.”

Clarity The patrolman’s report has to tell a story that anyone can pick up, read, and then visualize about what was taking place. Officers have to be careful with pronouns, and maybe follow each pronoun with a name or identifier. Also, verb tenses and order of events have to be accurate so readers know what happened, when it happened, and what actions follow what other actions. An office or a detective should always review and revise a report. Reviewing and revising are equally important in turning in the clearest report possible.

Description/Details An officer’s notes should be as detailed as possible. Being vague or ambiguous won’t help anyone—especially that officer. Always asking who, what, why, where, when, and how can help fill in the details. Not only should officers record names, addresses, jobs, and personal information, they should also note all that’s going on around them.

When it is time for an officer to type up a report, the notes should be laid out chronologically. Then the report should be typed, proofread, revised, checked for accuracy, reviewed, and revised again. We stress repeatedly checking for accuracy throughout the revision process.

Following this process of drafting will help an officer remember the report. For example, an officer may have responded to a traffic accident, made an arrest, taken a suspect to jail, cleared a car wreck, and then responded to another crime or two before he or she can get back to the office to write that first report from his or her shift.

Accuracy Details are vital. They are what make a field report or a criminal investigation report clear. The more detailed your report, the more accurate your report. The more accurate your report, the better that report will serve you, your superiors, the investigation team, and possibly the prosecutor’s office. There’s nothing more embarrassing than going to trial and having a defense attorney question your report because it wasn’t clear.
A training video we’ve used shows Officer Buck Savage—a police officer whose reports are scrawled on the backs of matchbook covers and always lack detail—get hammered by a defense attorney because his report is one sentence on a scrap of paper.

**Note-Taking**  When you can’t remember what happened with a specific incident, you need your notes to help. If you don’t have good notes, you open yourself up to questions about your report’s reliability. Of course, you can’t write down every word witnesses say or record in rich detail every observation, so using trigger words can help. Trigger words help you remember a specific piece of information, person, or scene. They also might identify a witness or remind you of some specific detail.

In the training video, Buck Savage’s poor note-taking skills don’t help him remember any details about an incident. After just a few questions from the defense attorney, the case is dismissed. Trainees always get a laugh when they see Buck Savage, but they get the point, too: poor note-taking could damage a police officer’s credibility and cause others to question his integrity.

**Revision**  Once a report is complete, the officer should compare information in the report to notes in the field. Each detail in the report should match some note or trigger word written in the field. If officers can put notes and the incident report side by side and tell which note or trigger words led to which bit of information in the report, they have an accurate and reliable report.

No matter what officers write, like a field report or an administrative memo, they should ask co-workers to read it over before they submit it. Co-workers should check for clarity and details, noting questions about any missing or confusing information. Anything officers submit should read well and flow correctly.

**Heads Up!**  Notice anything about this workplace peer review? It has the same purpose as your class peer review.

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**TECHNO TIP**

For more on Buck Savage, search the Internet for this video:
J.D. Buck Savage
"Saw Drunk Arrested Same"

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**TRY IT!**

For three to five minutes, write a description of what went on in the last meeting of this class. When finished, compare and contrast what you recorded with what those in your group recorded. Like police officers, compare both description and accuracy.

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**TAKE 1**

**Getting Started with Your Compare-and-Contrast Paragraph**

You may feel more comfortable writing a compare-and-contrast paragraph before you tackle an essay. If so, follow steps one through six below. If not, go on to Take 2 on page 241.

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**LEARNING GOAL**

Write a compare-and-contrast paragraph
Step One: Choose a Topic

If you have the freedom to choose the topic for your compare-and-contrast paragraph, remember that your purpose is to offer your readers a clearer understanding of two subjects, pointing out similarities, differences, or both. To begin searching for a topic, complete Ticket to Write 11.2 below.

11.2 Choose a Topic

Directions: Complete the following to start the process of choosing a topic. List as many subjects as possible for each of the following: Answers will vary.

- methods of cooking
- types of television shows
- forms of exercise
- types of natural disasters
- kinds of pets

Step Two: Generate Ideas

Before you choose which topic and subjects you will develop into your paragraph, first generate ideas on a few topics to discover what you know about those subjects. Discovering similarities and differences for different subjects will help you get a feel for which topic you want to develop.

Comparing Subjects

When comparing, you usually have two subjects that seem as if they have nothing in common. For example, if you were to compare how you speak with your friends and how you speak with your boss, you might have a list of qualities like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking with friends</th>
<th>Speaking with bosses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>use slang</td>
<td>use workplace terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>don't say anything that hurts feelings</td>
<td>don't say anything that hurts job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>really interested in what they say</td>
<td>pretend to be interested in what they say</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.3 Generate Ideas: Discovering Similarities

**Directions:** In Ticket to Write 11.2 you generated a list of subjects for five different topics. Choose two subjects from each topic and list their similarities. **Answers will vary.**

**Contrasting Subjects**

When contrasting two subjects, you focus on their differences. For example, if you were to contrast rural living with city living, your list might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject A: rural life</th>
<th>Subject B: suburban life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>long, winding roads</td>
<td>busy intersections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>few neighbors</td>
<td>people always outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quiet living, birds, cattle</td>
<td>noisy life, cars, voices, lawn mowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>starry nights</td>
<td>light pollution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.4 Generate Ideas: Discovering Differences

**Directions:** In Ticket to Write 11.2 you generated a list of subjects for five different topics. Choose two subjects from each topic and list their differences (contrasting qualities). **Answers will vary.**

**Step Three: Define Your Audience and Purpose**

When you compare and contrast two subjects, you give your readers a better understanding of the subjects. Your purpose could be to:

- convince readers that one subject is better than the other
- show readers that the two subjects are equal
- inform readers of the unique qualities of each subject

**Heads Up!** Sometimes these purposes overlap.

Once you determine your purpose, define an audience who would be interested in reading a compare-and-contrast paragraph on the pair of subjects you have chosen. Consider who, for example, might want to know the similarities and differences between an SUV and a four-door truck.
Getting Started with Your Compare-and-Contrast Paragraph

After writing your topic sentence, use your list of similarities or differences to compose the supporting details of your paragraph. You may discover that you don't need to include all the qualities you listed, and you may discover other qualities you hadn't thought of before. Keeping your audience and purpose in mind will help you decide which details you need most.

11.5 Define Your Audience and Purpose

**Directions:** Review the topics, subjects, and ideas you have generated, and choose one topic to become the focus of your compare-and-contrast paragraph. Write your topic and its two subjects, and answer the two questions below. Answers will vary.

Who is my audience?
What is my purpose for comparing or contrasting these two subjects?

Step Four: Draft Your Paragraph

Because paragraphs center on a topic sentence, review your purpose to focus your topic sentence. Include the purpose of the paragraph in your topic sentence.

11.6 Create a Topic Sentence

**Directions:** List your topic, purpose, and audience. Then, compose your topic sentence and share your work with members of your writing group. Ask if they agree that your topic sentence explains your purpose and is appropriate for your audience. Answers will vary.

After writing your topic sentence, use your list of similarities or differences to compose the supporting details of your paragraph. You may discover that you don't need to include all the qualities you listed, and you may discover other qualities you hadn't thought of before. Keeping your audience and purpose in mind will help you decide which details you need most.

11.7 Compose Supporting Details

**Directions:** Using the topic sentence you composed in Ticket to Write 11.6 and the ideas you generated in Tickets to Write 11.3 and 11.4, compose supporting details for your paragraph. Write the details and then share them with your writing group. Ask members if you have given enough details so that you fulfill the purpose you express in your topic sentence.
Step Five: Revise Your Paragraph

After you've finished your paragraph, save it, print a hard copy, and read it out loud, looking and listening for errors in grammar and content. Refer to the general Review Checklist for a Paragraph in Chapter 3, page 60, to make sure you revise as completely as possible.

**REVIEW CHECKLIST for a Compare-and-Contrast Paragraph**

- Is my topic sentence clear?
- Do my points of comparison and contrast align with my purpose?
- Do I hear any fragments or run-ons when reading out loud?
- Do all my complete thoughts have appropriate end punctuation?
- Is my paragraph appropriate for my audience?
- Does my purpose remain constant?
- Do any sentences or ideas seem off-topic?

Once you've made any necessary changes, save your work and leave it alone for a while. Then come back later, print out a new copy, and look and listen for errors again, referring to the general Review Checklist for a Paragraph in Chapter 3.

Step Six: Peer Review

You might think you've found all of your errors and made all of the improvements you can, but having someone else read your paragraph and offer suggestions will almost always improve your writing. This person is called your **peer reviewer**.

Your peer reviewer may use the Review Checklist for a Compare-and-Contrast Paragraph above or the general Review Checklist for a Paragraph in Chapter 3, or your instructor may provide a different checklist. You might or might not agree with suggestions you receive, but peer reviewers often find places for improvement or errors that slipped by you. Listen to or read closely your peer reviewers’ suggestions, and don't be shy about asking questions to clarify their ideas and suggestions.

**TICKET to WRITE**

**11.8 Peer Review**

**Directions:** Share your revised paragraph with your peer reviewers. Ask them to review your work using the Review Checklist for a Compare-and-Contrast Paragraph above and the general Review Checklist for a Paragraph from Chapter 3, page 60. Then ask them to record their suggestions for revision. Revise your paragraph, using any suggestions with which you agree.
Student and Professional Essays

Below are two compare-and-contrast essays. The first was written by a student and the second by a professional. Read these two essays and answer the questions that follow them.

Student Essay

My Family Thanksgivings
by Frances Moret-Koerper

After being gone from home for fourteen years, I know that part of me is turning into a Midwesterner. One special day when this change shows the most is on Thanksgiving. Every other year, my husband and I have gone to my home in Louisiana for Thanksgiving. While I miss the culture that was a part of my growing up in the South, I have grown to appreciate the Thanksgiving tradition of my in-laws.

My family down south and my in-laws here to the north always have the same types of activities before we eat our Thanksgiving meal. Back home at my Uncle Gaston’s farm, we enjoy horseshoes, skeet shooting, and, of course, football. The games and game-watching are always full of conversations about days gone by. Relatives pack into the den to watch the Saints. Meanwhile, outside, when the weather’s good, we toss horseshoes, Frisbees, and footballs back and forth in the front yard while relatives line up for their turn at shooting skeet in the back field. My husband’s family also gathers at his parents’ home in Michigan, and TV and sports play a significant part in the Thanksgiving Day meal here. Instead of the New Orleans Saints, though, the Detroit Lions are playing on three televisions throughout the house. If the snow is right, some of the kids go outside and build forts and snowmen until supper time, but usually everyone stays inside where it’s warm, visiting, reminiscing, and playing cards. We also listen to my husband’s cousin Delinda playing tunes on the piano in the living room, inviting all to sing along.

At each place, my families even eat at certain times. Back home, we have “dinner” at 1:00. People start showing up as early as 10:00 in the morning at Uncle Gaston’s so they can catch up with each other. Eating at 1:00 is convenient because the game usually doesn’t start until 3:00 or 4:00. It’s always a heartwarming day visiting my relatives, but especially my aunts and uncles who want to know about every detail of my life. Here in Michigan, on the other hand, the meal is referred to as “supper” and doesn’t start until about 4:00 p.m. There are many more children at my in-laws’ Thanksgiving and fewer older folks, so there’s a lot more action with kids running in and out of the house, watching movies upstairs, and playing games all over the place.
The Thanksgiving meals back home and at my in-laws' home have obvious similarities, but they also have pretty obvious differences. In both places, we enjoy the usual turkey, ham, cranberries, potatoes, stuffing, salads, and breads. Down home, the turkeys are always first smoke-roasted in Uncle Gaston's smokehouse and then in the kitchen oven. He also roasts a pig every year. My parents and aunts and uncles always bring many other dishes and entrées. Cranberry compote, sweet potato pies, collards, oyster dressing, cornbread, gumbo, red beans and rice, and gator are always on the buffet. At our Michigan celebration, the turkeys are all oven-roasted and are just as delicious as Uncle Gaston's turkey. A ham is baked, full of cloves, and smothered in mustard and brown sugar. Every year, my husband's family members, like mine back home, bring their special dishes: cranberry relish, sweet potato casserole, cornbread stuffing, yeast rolls, Waldorf salad, brats and red potatoes, and venison.

The travel home every other year grows more expensive, but I find something else I miss about home each Thanksgiving we have down there. Also, each year I find something new about my Michigan Thanksgiving that I look forward to every year we stay for Thanksgiving. If we have children one day, I hope they will recognize and be thankful for the differences and similarities that make up both sides of their family.

**A CLOSER LOOK**

Answer these questions about the essay:

1. What two subjects are the focus of the essay?
   - Thanksgiving celebrations with family in Louisiana and family in Michigan

2. Where is the thesis statement found?
   - The thesis statement is in the last sentence of paragraph 1.

3. Which of the following is not a purpose of this essay? a
   - a. to convince readers that one subject is better than the other
   - b. to show readers that the two subjects are equal
   - c. to inform readers of the unique qualities of each subject
   - d. to provide readers a clear understanding of two subjects

4. List three points of contrast that are the basis of this essay.
   - activities before the families eat, time the families eat, and food the families eat

5. List at least two differences (two contrasts) the writer details in paragraph 2.
   - Differences include weather, games the families watch, and outside activities

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**gumbo** a thick soup, usually containing okra and seafood or other meats
**Waldorf salad** diced apples, chopped celery, and chopped walnuts, mixed with mayonnaise
**brats** short for bratwurst, a type of sausage
**venison** deer meat
6. What is the topic sentence of paragraph 3?
   At each place, my families even eat at certain times.

7. Does the essay follow an alternating or divided pattern of organization?
   alternating pattern

8. List at least two differences the writer details in paragraph 4.
   the way foods are prepared and some of the types of food

9. In paragraph 3, what transitional phrase does the author use to introduce the contrast?
   on the other hand

10. What sentence in the conclusion reiterates the thesis or main idea of the essay?
    If we have children one day, I hope they will recognize and be thankful for the differences and similarities that make up both sides of their family.

The professional essay below compares and contrasts couples' food preferences and eating habits.

**Professional Essay**

What's for Dinner, Sweetie? Heartburn
You Say Tomato, She Says “Ew!”
How Couples Cope When Their Cooking and Chowing Styles Clash
by Elizabeth Bernstein

Ben Breeland slurps sauces, sucks on bones, smacks his lips and licks his fingers while eating. “You want to get the chipmunk effect,” says the software consultant, of stuffing his cheeks full of peanuts, his favorite food. Eating this way is a pleasure to him: He grew up with five siblings on a farm in South Carolina, where mealtimes were chaotic affairs and the sounds of loud eating were a sign of appreciation. But how does his wife feel about it?

“I struggle to keep my nerves intact,” says Jocelyn Breeland, a communications and marketing director for a trade association that supports people with disabilities. “When he swallows, he makes a drain-flushing sound. And he can make grapes crunch.”

In the beginning of their 23-year marriage, Ms. Breeland tried to change her husband's eating habits by nagging or kicking his leg under the table. Now she drinks wine to calm down, dines in another room, or rushes through her own food so she can get away from his noises as quickly as possible. And she shoots him a look: “It’s like a cartoon character, where her eyes bug...”
out and her mouth turns down,” says Mr. Breeland. “You feel like the worst person ever.”

Forget middle school. Spats over eating—where, when, how we do it—are just as likely to happen to grown-ups as children, especially grown-ups in a relationship, who eat together a lot. And in the adult world, the mess they leave tends to be emotional, rather than physical. Couples squabble over everything from how much mayo to put into the tuna salad to whether to order in or go out for dinner. Meat lovers vs. vegetarians? Organic vs. junk food? A spouse “gently” telling you to put down the Chunky Monkey Ben & Jerry’s? The possibilities for food to go bad in a relationship are endless.

Heather Hills likes to eat dinner early around 5 p.m. Her husband, James, wants to eat later, around 9 or 10 p.m. Making matters worse, the two differ in their cooking styles: He loves to take his time creating beautiful entrées, with special sauces and carefully chosen side dishes. She throws ground meat, frozen vegetables, and cream of mushroom soup into a casserole.

The nadir of the Hills’ battles? Chocolate-chip cookies. Mr. Hills prefers his flat and thin. His wife wants them cakey and thick. “There is always an argument,” says Mr. Hills, a travel blogger. “It’s usually resolved by the person who made them enjoying them and the other being ticked off.” (Ms. Hills has been known to get so mad after a flat batch comes out of the oven that she’s driven to the grocer to buy store-made cookies.)

When I asked people about the food fights they’d had with spouses or romantic partners, stories poured in. There were disputes over shopping lists, how closely to follow directions on a recipe, and exactly how brown a banana has to be before it becomes officially inedible.

One friend of mine told of her husband’s “garbage pail” dinners, which she described as concoctions straight out of a trash can. “He opens the fridge and yanks whatever he can grab—beans, cheese, Indian or Mexican leftovers, pasta—puts it together in the microwave or a frying pan, and douses it with whatever kind of sauce is around, which is usually some kind of curry sauce or maybe ketchup,” she says. This “nastiness” has made her wonder at times about the essence of her relationship, she says. “How can you not want to make someone you love happy with food?”

Sharing a meal—especially with candlelight and a bottle of rosé—can be loving and intimate. And, at least in the beginning of a relationship, we’re typically on our best behavior when we eat. (Ms. Breeland has memories of her husband “cutting his food and taking dainty mouthfuls” when they were dating.)

So why all the bickering? We shouldn’t need therapists to tell us that food cuts to a very basic issue of identity. It’s no coincidence that one of the earliest ways we demonstrate our independence is by asserting our food preferences. By demanding that others respect what we eat, we are demanding that they see us as individuals. So maybe we should pay a bit more attention to people’s eating habits when we first meet them. That’s what Kathy Schwartz did. The Seattle resident once ended a relationship with a man
because of the way he ate French onion soup. He had ordered a bowl one day at a restaurant, but found the typically stringy, melted Gruyere cheese to be a challenge. “After several attempts trying to twiddle the cheese into submission, he grabbed his knife and, samurai style, sliced through it,” says Ms. Schwartz. “It dawned on me that this was his approach to dealing with life’s challenges—to attack and pummel rather than negotiate, compromise, or find another less confrontational way.” She declined further dates.

Sara Walker, an interior decorator from Birmingham, Ala., admits she grew up enjoying a very limited palate: chicken fingers, mac and cheese, pizza, and peanut-butter crackers. “I never even ate a sandwich,” she says.

In college, she met her husband, Chris Walker, who hails from the Mississippi Delta and loves food: steak, tamales, catfish, game. He became the first person in her life to challenge her on her poor eating habits. A few months into their relationship, as the couple became more serious, Mr. Walker came up with a possible solution: He sent her to a therapist to get over her food aversions. The counselor had Ms. Walker make a list of the foods she refused to touch—her No. 1 offender lettuce, along with green beans, grapes, and spaghetti sauce—and helped her introduce them into her diet. How’d it go? Well, recently Ms. Walker ordered a salad to start. And then her entrée? Another salad. She’s now a fan of green beans and asparagus. She has learned to love steak. There’s just one problem: She’s learned that her husband isn’t really all that adventurous of an eater after all. For example, he likes his quesadillas plain—she throws beans, corn, salsa, and chicken into hers.

Now when it comes to eating habits, she says: “I am starting to pass him.”


A Closer Look

Answer these questions about the essay:

1. Onomatopoeia is the use of words that echo the sound they indicate. In the first sentence, the author uses what onomatopoetic verbs?
   slurps, sucks, smacks

2. Why does Ben Breelond eat the way he does?
   eating that way “is a pleasure to him” (paragraph 1)

3. The thesis statement comes in paragraph 4. What is the thesis statement?
   Spats over eating—where, when, how we do it—are just as likely to happen to grown-ups as children, especially grown-ups in a relationship, who eat together a lot.

Gruyere a firm, nutty cheese
pummel strike, pound
palate taste, appetite
Mississippi Delta the northwest part of the state of Mississippi, lying between the Mississippi and Yazoo rivers
aversions dislikes, distastes
quesadillas tortillas filled with a mixture, folded, and usually fried
4. In what three ways are the food habits or preferences of Heather and James Hill contrasted?
   They like to eat dinner at different times, have different cooking styles, and like different types of chocolate-chip cookies.

5. According to the author, people are similar in “one of the earliest ways [that] we demonstrate our independence.” What is that way?
   The author says that one of the earliest ways we demonstrate our independence is by asserting our food preferences.

6. Cite a way you have demonstrated your independence through such preferences.
   Answers will vary.

7. Paragraph 3 cites the way Ms. Breeland reacted to her husband’s eating habits in the beginning of their marriage and the way she currently reacts. Describe both reactions.
   In the beginning, she nagged him or kicked his leg under the table; now she drinks wine to calm down, dines in another room, or rushes through her own food.

8. In paragraph 7, what examples of food fights does the author say she received?
   The author received stories of disputes over shopping lists, how closely to follow directions on a recipe, and how brown a banana has to be before it is inedible.

9. Bernstein quotes Sarah Walker in the last sentence of the essay. Explain what Walker means by “I am starting to pass him.”
   Answers will vary.

10. The conclusion of the article is unusual because it is only one sentence, yet it wraps up the essay concisely. How does it remind the audience of the thesis?
    Answers will vary.

**Writing Your Compare-and-Contrast Essay**

**LEARNING GOAL**

Write a compare-and-contrast essay

Essay writing is much like paragraph writing: you start with a topic and expand on it with details. Remember that just as a paragraph supports a topic sentence, an essay supports a thesis statement.
Step One: Choose a Topic and Develop a Working Thesis Statement

To begin your compare-and-contrast essay, ask yourself these **starter questions**:

1. **What** two subjects do I want to compare or contrast?
2. **Why** do I want to compare or contrast these subjects, or **what** is my purpose?
3. To accomplish my purpose, **what** should I focus on—similarities or differences or both?

For instance, in a compare-and-contrast essay comparing places you might stay when traveling, you could answer starter questions this way:

1. **What** two subjects do I want to compare or contrast?
   - staying in a hotel and staying in a relative’s home

2. **Why** do I want to compare or contrast these subjects, or **what** is my purpose?
   - I want to decide how to have the best vacation possible.

3. To accomplish my purpose, **what** should I focus on—similarities or differences or both?
   - I will focus on both.

**Answering Starter Questions:**

**Frances Moret-Koerper and Elizabeth Bernstein**

In answering the starter questions, Frances Moret-Koerper, author of “My Family Thanksgivings,” wrote:

1. I want to compare and contrast **Thanksgiving with my family in Louisiana and Thanksgiving with my family in Michigan**.
2. My purpose is to **show appreciation for the way both my families observe Thanksgiving**.
3. To accomplish my purpose, **I will describe the unique qualities that make up both Thanksgiving celebrations**.

Elizabeth Bernstein, author of “What’s for Dinner, Sweetie? Heartburn,” might have addressed the starter questions this way:
1. I want to compare and contrast adult spats about eating.
2. My purpose is to show that adults’ eating habits and food preferences differ greatly.
3. To accomplish my purpose, I will focus on the differences adults show in their habits and food preferences.

After reviewing your answers to the starter questions, combine them into a single sentence to create a starter statement. For example, the writer who is comparing and contrasting staying in a hotel with staying with relatives might create a starter statement like this:

I will write about the similarities and differences of staying in a hotel and staying with relatives because I want to decide which will be better for me.

Look at how two other writers chose to create starter statements for their topics:

I will write about the similarities of taking an online class and a traditional class because I want to show readers that comparable tasks are required for success in either class.

I will write about the differences between tweeting and blogging because I want to use one of these to keep in touch with my friends back home.

**11.9 Answer Starter Questions for a Compare-and-Contrast Essay**

**Directions:** All essays have thesis statements. To help develop a thesis statement for your compare-and-contrast essay, begin by reviewing your answers to the starter questions. Then use those answers to complete the sentence below. **Answers will vary.**

I will write about the similarities, the differences, the similarities and differences (circle one) between ____________ (list your two subjects) because I want to show readers ____________ (list your purpose).
Once you’ve completed the starter statement, you’ve begun to develop the focus of your essay. Return to your starter statement and consider your topic and your purpose. From this starter statement, create your working thesis statement. These are working thesis statements created from the starter statements above:

- Staying with relatives when vacationing has wonderful advantages, but staying in a hotel has its own advantages.
- Online and traditional classes are not as different as many students might think.
- While tweeting is an excellent way to keep in touch with friends, blogging offers more choices in what I share and how I share it.

To develop your working thesis statement, complete Ticket to Write 11.10 below.

**11.10 Develop a Working Thesis Statement**

*Directions:* Return to the starter statement you composed in Ticket to Write 11.9 and consider your topic and your purpose. From this, create your working thesis statement and share it with members of your writing group. Ask them if they understand what you will be describing in your essay and why it is important to you.

**Step Two: Generate Ideas**

Consider your purpose for comparing and contrasting your two subjects.

**Contrasting Subjects**

If your purpose is to show that one subject is superior to the other or is a better choice than the other, focus on their differences. Think of the particular qualities that highlight those differences. Using reporter’s questions (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?) is often helpful in generating ideas.

For instance, if you’re comparing and contrasting high school life with college life (your subjects) and you want to show that college life is better (your purpose), you might create ideas by using reporter’s questions this way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who can attend high school?</th>
<th>Who can attend college?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>students under 18</td>
<td>anyone with GED or diploma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
Comparing Subjects

If your purpose is to highlight two subjects’ similarities, you probably have two subjects that are not usually thought of as being alike. For example, Zach is comparing and contrasting online and traditional classes (two subjects). He wants to show that both kinds of classes demand the same attention and study habits (purpose), so he might discover ideas by using the reporter’s questions this way:
Once you have your two subjects, you need to discover what similarities or differences they have.

Your purpose for comparing or contrasting subjects should be evident in your working thesis. With this in mind, **prewrite** about your two subjects. Use reporter’s questions to discover similarities and differences between your two subjects.

11.11 Generate Ideas

**Directions:** Write your working thesis statement and any ideas you generated in prewriting. Then share this with your writing group and ask them to note which ideas seem the most compelling or which elaborate the most on the information in your working thesis statement. *Answers will vary.*

Step Three: Define Your Audience

Once you know what you want to write about two subjects, you need to figure out who would benefit from reading what you write. Defining your audience helps focus your purpose even more and helps you decide the language to use. Suppose you’re comparing and contrasting two movies. For a review on your personal blog, you might use language that is less formal than for a review that is for a class assignment. You may relate the same details in both, but the way you relate them—your language—will be different because of your audience.

11.12 Define Your Audience

**Directions:** Write your working thesis statement and your intended audience. Share this with members of your writing group and ask if they agree that your working thesis statement will be satisfactory for your audience.

Step Four: Draft Your Essay

No matter what your purpose with your compare-and-contrast essay, you need to decide if you are going to use an alternating pattern or a divided pattern of organization.

An alternating pattern compares and contrasts the two subjects *within* the same body paragraph. The paragraph’s topic is usually a specific quality or point of comparison. A divided pattern *divides* the two subjects into separate body
paragraphs, addressing only one subject in one paragraph. Because the topics of the paragraphs are the subjects themselves, the paragraph usually discusses more than one quality or point of comparison at a time.

Because you are exploring the similarities and differences between two subjects, allowing yourself and your readers to gain a deeper understanding of the two, you need to decide which pattern will work better for you.

Zach’s essay compares and contrasts online classes with face-to-face classes and has the following thesis:

> While online classes demand more self-motivation than face-to-face classes, both types of classes have the same basic features.

Zach made the following outlines when deciding which pattern to select:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternating Pattern</th>
<th>Divided Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Point 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subject 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject A</td>
<td>Point 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject B</td>
<td>Point 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Point 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subject 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject A</td>
<td>Point 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject B</td>
<td>Point 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Point 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subject 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject A</td>
<td>Point 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject B</td>
<td>Point 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternating Pattern</th>
<th>Divided Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Point 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subject 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class availability</td>
<td>Point 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>face-to-face</td>
<td>Point 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>online</td>
<td>Point 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Point 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subject 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td><strong>Point 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requirements</td>
<td>Types of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>face-to-face</td>
<td>assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>online</td>
<td>face-to-face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Point 4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subject 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>face-to-face</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>online</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whether you’re writing on paper or using a computer, the point is to get your ideas down. Know that these ideas will change—that’s the progress of your writing process. Refer to Chapter 2 to review suggestions about discovery drafting.

In generating ideas, you may have discovered some information you now find you don’t need. As you progress, you may discover other qualities you hadn’t thought of before. Keeping your audience and purpose in mind helps you decide which details you need most.

### Divided Pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject 1</th>
<th>Subject 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>face-to-face classes</td>
<td>online classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class availability</td>
<td>Class availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation requirements</td>
<td>Participation requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of assignments</td>
<td>Types of assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class activities</td>
<td>Class activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 11.13 Write Your Discovery Draft

**Directions:** Use the starter question, working thesis statement, ideas, and defined audience you compiled in Ticket to Write 11.9 through 11.12 to write your discovery draft. Refer to Chapter 2 to review discovery drafting. When finished, share your work with members of your writing group. Ask them to note the following on your two subjects: Answers will vary.

1. Points of comparison and contrast that are detailed and specific.
2. Points of comparison and contrast that are vague, unclear, or need more development.
3. Points of comparison you haven’t already thought of that would be good to include in your draft.

### Step Five: Organize Your Essay

Although you have already determined your pattern of organization, *alternating* or *divided*, you need to decide in what order to present your paragraphs, and in what order to present your support within those paragraphs. Consulting your working thesis statement and purpose will help you determine this.

Zach chose the alternating pattern for his essay comparing and contrasting online and face-to-face classes. Because anyone who meets the prerequisites can take online classes, Zach decided to make *class availability* the first point of
the essay. The next three points of comparison progressed to what Zach believed is his strongest point of support for the essay’s thesis.

Below is a chart Zach made to check that he was giving equal weight to the alternating points in his body paragraphs. Making this chart helped him organize his ideas by

- showing particular points that needed more details
- helping him see which details best illustrated his points
- helping him reexamine the order of the details within body paragraphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details of support</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Face-to-face Classes</th>
<th>Online Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Point 1: Class availability</td>
<td>Can take if pre-reqs are met Internet access at home</td>
<td>Can take if pre-reqs are met Internet access at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point 2: Types of assignments</td>
<td>Lecture: notes &amp; ask prof questions Assigned readings discussed in class Group projects: meet with other students Essays: often work on in class &amp; ask prof to look at drafts</td>
<td>Lecture: take notes from recorded lectures/can’t ask questions Assigned readings not always discussed online Group projects: other members all over the state Essays: can’t always have prof read drafts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point 3: Participation requirements</td>
<td>Must attend class Work with groups in class Some profs can be talked into accepting late work</td>
<td>Must be self-motivated to log in daily Deadlines for assignments Assignments will lock you out after deadline passes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To stay reminded of his purpose, Zach wrote his thesis statement at the top of his chart.
Writing Your Compare-and-Contrast Essay

Point 4 Class activities
Open discussions
Small group work
Presentations . . . PowerPoint, speeches, group discussions
Service learning projects—hands-on . . . go into community

Discussion boards
Group projects
Presentations . . . PowerPoint or essays uploaded to site
Service learning projects—virtual . . . all individual

Complete Ticket to Write 11.14 to review your body paragraphs’ points of comparison and contrast and their supporting details.

11.14 Organize Your Essay

Directions: Using the example above, create a chart of your essay’s body paragraphs. Review your chart for the following:

1. Look for points of comparison or contrast that need more developed details. Where needed, develop more details to complete the body paragraphs.
2. Determine which details are the strongest support in each body paragraph. Where needed, reorder the details of support so that body paragraphs end with their strongest details.

Step Six: Apply Critical Thinking

Critical thinking means thinking and then rethinking about a topic with the goal of discovering all the implications you can about it. In thinking critically about a compare-and-contrast essay, you often do the following:

- reflect on the relationship of two subjects
- analyze the similarities or differences between two subjects
- provide precise details
- reflect on the relevance of details you provide

The following critical thinking questions are important when you write a compare-and-contrast essay. After you write each of your drafts, ask yourself these questions and then apply your answers to your writing.
1. **Purpose:** Will my readers understand why my comparison or contrast of these two subjects is important? (This importance may have helped you make a decision or come to a clearer understanding about the two subjects.) Have I clearly stated or clearly implied my purpose?

2. **Information:** Have I given my readers enough details to understand how these subjects relate to one another? Do I see any place to add details that will enhance or further explain my topic?

3. **Reasoning:** Are all my facts accurate? Are they clear? Are they relevant to my topic? Is my reasoning logical?

4. **Assumptions:** Have I made any assumptions that need to be explained or justified? Have I used any vocabulary my audience may not understand?

---

**11.15 Apply Critical Thinking**

**Directions:** After your revision, ask members of your writing group to read your latest draft and answer the critical thinking questions below. **Answers will vary.**

**Purpose**

1. Do you understand why my comparison or contrast of these subjects is important?
2. Did I clearly state or imply my purpose? If not, where should I be clearer?

**Information**

3. Did you read enough details to understand the relationship of these subjects? If not, where should I add details?
4. Do you see any places where adding details would enhance or further support my topic?

**Reasoning**

5. Do you feel all my facts are accurate? If not, where should I provide more accurate details?
6. Are all my details clear? If not, where should I change my wording to be clearer?
7. Are all my details relevant to my topic? If not, where did I stray from my topic?
8. Is my reasoning logical? If not, where do I seem to be illogical?

**Assumptions**

9. Have I made any assumptions that need to be explained or justified? If so, what are these?
10. Did I use any vocabulary you don’t understand? If so, what words or phrases need definitions?
Step Seven: Revise Your Essay

As you know, getting your essay on paper is just your first step. Revising and rewriting through subsequent drafts shapes your first draft into a finished product of which you can be proud. First, consult the Review Checklist for an Essay in Chapter 3, page 61, and look for places in your essay you need to polish. Then think about revisions that are specific to compare-and-contrast essays: topics, details, and transitions.

**Topics**

When you revise, look at your body paragraphs’ topics. Focus each body paragraph on one topic. In an alternating pattern, each body paragraph’s topic should be a specific point of comparison or contrast. In a divided pattern, each body paragraph’s topic should be one subject.

**Details**

When you revise, review your details.

- Will readers understand the significance of the details of one subject when compared or contrasted to the other subject?
- Have you given too many details?
- Have you written anything that flows away from a paragraph’s focus?
- Are your paragraphs arranged in the most logical or effective way?

**Transitions**

Also consider the language you use and word choices you make when developing the relationship between your two subjects. In compare-and-contrast essays, use words and phrases that show special relationships between your two subjects.

When comparing, use words and phrases that indicate equality or show similarity. This is called using coordination. These transition words and phrases show coordination:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Transition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>along with</td>
<td>in addition</td>
<td>similarly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>also</td>
<td>in the same way</td>
<td>thus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both . . . and</td>
<td>just as . . .</td>
<td>together with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the same token</td>
<td>like</td>
<td>too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coupled with</td>
<td>likewise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>correspondingly</td>
<td>moreover</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When contrasting, use words and phrases that indicate inequality or show differences. This is called using subordination. These transition words and phrases show subordination:

- although
- at the same time
- but
- by contrast
- different from
- even so (though)
- however
- in contrast
- in spite of
- instead
- nevertheless
- on the contrary
- on the other hand
- otherwise
- rather than
- regardless
- still
- though
- unlike
- yet

11.16 Recognizing Coordination and Subordination

Directions: In each sentence, underline the transition words or phrases. Then in the spaces provided, identify the type of transition (subordination or coordination) and explain the relationship between the two subjects. Answers may vary.

Example: Although football and boxing are dangerous sports, boxing is the more deadly sport.

Type of transition: subordination
Relationship: boxing is more dangerous than football

1. For some people, the need for caffeine can cause an addiction to chocolate in the same way it can to coffee or soft drinks.

Type of transition: coordination
Relationship: Chocolate can be as addicting as coffee or soft drinks.

2. Algebra and writing classes, along with all other basic core courses, can help students prepare for other more demanding classes.

Type of transition: coordination
Relationship: Algebra, writing, and all other core classes help prepare students.

3. The football coach was forced to resign because of five recruiting violations; on the other hand, the tennis coach committed the same violations but received only a warning.

Type of transition: subordination
Relationship: The two coaches were not treated equally.
4. Despite the disco music that I can’t stand, I still listen to the local oldies station because it plays a lot of 70s progressive rock that I like.

Type of transition: subordination

Relationship: The writer prefers the 70s progressive rock to the 70s disco music.

5. Instead of spending extra money each week for gas, I decided to bike to class whenever the weather was good.

Type of transition: subordination

Relationship: The writer shows a preference for biking to classes over driving.

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**Writing Assignment**

Consider the topics below or one that your instructor gives you. Choose one topic and expand it into a compare-and-contrast essay.

1. two personal role models
2. a spring break vacation with your family and one with your friends
3. the main characters in two books you have read
4. two different movie action heroes
5. your first week as a college student and your current student life
6. two different places where you study
7. experiences of two people who have been in the military
8. single life and married life (or the way you think it will be)
9. local news coverage and national news coverage
10. the first job you held and your dream job

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**MyWritingLab**

Visit MyWritingLab.com and complete the exercises and activities in the Paragraph Development-Describing and Essay Development-Describing topic areas.
A compare-and-contrast paragraph or essay . . . details the similarities (the comparisons) and the differences (the contrasts) between two people, places, ideas, events, or things.

A compare-and-contrast paragraph or essay . . . may be written in an alternating or a divided pattern.

In the topic sentence of your compare-and-contrast paragraph, clearly state . . . what two subjects you are comparing and contrasting and why their similarities or differences are important.

When writing a compare and contrast paragraph, it is important . . . to determine your purpose and identify your audience.

After you have completed your compare-and-contrast paragraph, check that your points of comparison and contrast align with . . . your purpose.

Starter questions for a compare-and-contrast essay include . . . What two subjects do I want to compare or contrast? Why do I want to compare or contrast these subjects, or what is my purpose? To accomplish my purpose, what should I focus on—similarities or differences or both?

If your purpose is to show that one of your subjects is superior to the other or is a better choice than the other . . . focus on their differences.

If your purpose is to highlight two subjects’ similarities, you probably have . . . two subjects that are not usually thought of as being alike.

Defining your audience helps . . . focus your purpose even more and helps you decide the language to use.

An alternating pattern of organization . . . compares and contrasts the two subjects within the same body paragraph.

A divided pattern of organization . . . divides the two subjects into separate body paragraphs, addressing only one subject in one paragraph.

Consulting your thesis statement and purpose will help you determine the order to present . . . your paragraphs and the support within your paragraphs.

In thinking critically about a compare-and-contrast essay, you often . . . reflect on the relationship of two subjects, analyze the similarities or differences between two subjects, provide precise details, and reflect on the relevance of details you provide.

When revising a compare-and-contrast essay, look especially at . . . topics, details, and transitions.
COMPARE-AND-CONTRAST WRITING LEARNING LOG

Answer the questions below to review your mastery of compare-and-contrast writing. Answers will vary.

1. Beyond reporting the similarities and differences of two subjects, what might a compare-and-contrast paragraph or essay do?
   
   It may propose that one subject is superior to the other in specific ways, that both subjects are equal in importance, or that one subject is far less important.

2. What is a Venn diagram?
   
   A Venn diagram is a drawing of two intersecting circles that note features that are either unique or common to two concepts.

3. When contrasting two subjects, what do you focus on?
   
   You focus on their different qualities.

4. What could be your purpose in comparing and contrasting two subjects?
   
   Your purpose could be to convince readers that one subject is better than the other, show readers that two subjects are equal, or inform readers of unique qualities of each subject.

5. How should you create your starter statement?
   
   Combine the answers to your starter questions into a single sentence.

6. What should you create from your starter statement?
   
   You should create your working thesis statement.

7. What two elements should be evident in your working thesis statement?
   
   Your purpose for comparing or contrasting subjects should be evident.

8. After you have determined what you want to write about your two subjects, what is the next step?
   
   Determining who will benefit from reading what you write about the subjects is the next step.

9. In compare-and-contrast writing, what are two patterns of organization you must decide between?
   
   You must decide between an alternating pattern and a divided pattern.

10. In applying critical thinking to your essay, what questions help you in examining your purpose?
    
    Will my readers understand why my comparison or contrast of these two subjects is important? Have I clearly stated or clearly implied my purpose?
11. In applying critical thinking to your essay, what questions help you in examining your information?
   - Have I given my readers enough details to understand how these subjects relate to one another? Do I see any place to add details that will enhance or further explain my topic?

12. In applying critical thinking to your essay, what questions help you in examining your reasoning?
   - Are all my facts accurate? Are they clear? Are they relevant to my topic? Is my reasoning logical?

13. In applying critical thinking to your essay, what questions help you in examining your assumptions?
   - Have I made any assumptions that need to be explained or justified?
   - Have I used any vocabulary my audience may not understand?

14. You have used an alternating pattern for your body paragraphs. When you are revising, you should check to see if you used what format?
   - Check to see that each body paragraph's topic gives a specific point of comparison or contrast.

15. You have used a divided pattern for your body paragraphs. When you are revising, you should check to see if you used what format?
   - You should check to see that each body paragraph's topic gives only one subject.

16. When you revise for details, what questions should you ask yourself?
   - Will readers understand the significance of the details of one subject when compared or contrasted to the other subject? Have I given too many details? Have I written anything that flows away from a paragraph's focus?
   - Are my paragraphs arranged in the most logical or effective way?

17. Name at least five transition words or phrases that show similarity (that use coordination).
   - Transition words or phrases that show similarity include along with, also, both . . . and, by the same token, correspondingly, coupled with, in addition, in the same way, just as, like, likewise, moreover, similarly, thus, together with, and too.
18. Name at least five transition words or phrases that show differences (that use subordination).

Transition words or phrases that show differences include although, at the same time, but, by contrast, conversely, despite, different from, even so (though), however, in contrast, in spite of, instead, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on one hand, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, rather than, regardless, still, though, thus, unlike, and yet.