

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Writing an Essay with Two Texts

A compare and contrast Response to Literature / Response to Informational Text looks much the same as a standard RTL/RTI. The only difference is in the paragraph structure, with one body paragraph focusing on the differences and a second one focusing on the similarities.

Intro

- TAG #1 and summary #1
- TAG #2 and summary #2
- Claim (*concise sentence that states whether the two topics are more alike or different OR answers the prompt directly*)

Body Paragraph #1 (Focus on Similarities)

- Premise
- Intro to Evidence for Text #1
- Evidence for Text #1
- Justification Sentence(s) for Text #1 relating to premise
- Intro to Evidence for Text #2
- Evidence for Text #2
- Justification Sentence(s) for Text #2 relating to premise
- Justification Sentence(s) explaining how BOTH pieces of evidence relate back to the claim

Body Paragraph #2 (Focus on Differences)

- Premise
- Intro to Evidence for Text #1
- Evidence for Text #1
- Justification Sentence(s) for Text #1 relating to premise
- Intro to Evidence for Text #2
- Evidence for Text #2
- Justification Sentence(s) for Text #2 relating to premise
- Justification Sentence(s) explaining how BOTH pieces of evidence relate back to the claim

Conclusion

- Restate claim
- Summary of Evidence
- "Mic drop sentence"

Name: _____

Date: _____

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Evidence Tracker

Student Directions: Use this graphic organizer to help you track your evidence from any research you do to prepare for the final essay you'll be writing. Make sure to always include all relevant information from the article, website, etc. (title, author, publication date). Make sure to only list relevant characteristics for each topic in the first two boxes, as shown in the example below. Notice that in the description of the spoon and the fork, the differences are parallel. That is, the bullet points across from each other in the top two boxes are loosely related.

EXAMPLE

<p>SPOON</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a small, shallow bowl at the end of the handle • Often used for eating soups, cereals, and other foods that are mostly made of liquid 	<p>FORK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has several narrow tines at the end of the handle • Often used for eating meat, salads, and other solid foods
<p>SIMILARITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A utensil used to lift food to the mouth • Typically made of metal or plastic 	



SIMILARITIES

TOPIC #1

TOPIC #2

SAMPLE

EXTEND YOUR

Thinking

Student Directions: After completing the chart, answer the following questions.

Are the two topics more alike or different?
Explain your reasoning.

What is the most critical difference between the topics?
Why?

What conclusions can you form based on the comparison (only focus on the similarities) of the topics?

Student Directions: Now that you've compared and contrasted the topics and drawn conclusions, use the space below to begin outlining your thoughts in advance of writing your paper. This will help prepare you for your final essay.

Large empty rectangular box for student writing.

TRANSFER OF

Knowledge

Name: _____

Date: _____

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Introductory Paragraph

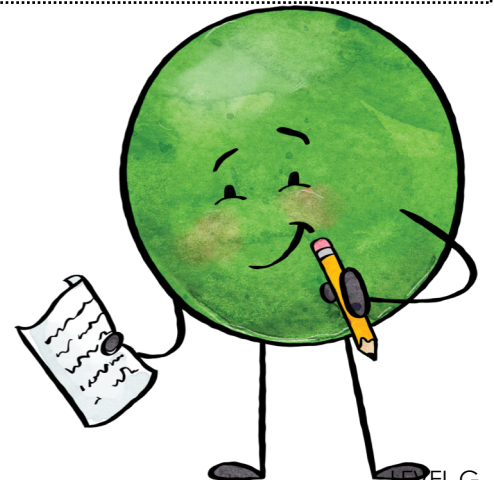
Write a **TAG** (title, author, genre) and brief **summary** for **Text #1**.

(INDENT) _____

Write a **TAG** (title, author, genre) and brief **summary** for **Text #2**.

Write a **claim** stating your answer to the question. Don't say WHY here.

***Everything on this page goes in your introduction paragraph.*



Name: _____

Date: _____

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Body Paragraph #1 - Focus on Similarities

Write **the reason (premise)** for your claim about the similarities in the texts.

(INDENT) _____

Introduce your evidence for Text #1 and include a **quote** from the text that supports your claim. Don't forget quotation marks. **Challenge yourself: add background information and "set the scene" for the quote.*

Circle one: According to the text, The author states, The author writes, According to the author,

Justify your evidence for **Text #1** by writing **at least one** sentence that explains why the quote you chose from the text supports your premise.

Justification for **Text #1** (connect your evidence to your premise)

***Go to the next page to finish Body Paragraph #1.*

Name: _____

Date: _____

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Body Paragraph #2 Continued - Focus on Differences

Introduce your evidence for Text #2 and include a **quote** from the text that supports your claim. Don't forget quotation marks. **Challenge yourself: add background information and "set the scene" for the quote.*

Circle one: According to the text, The author states, The author writes, According to the author,

Justify your evidence for Text #2 by writing **at least one** sentence that explains why the quote you chose from the text supports your premise.

Justification **Text #2** (connect your evidence to your premise)

Justify your evidence for Text #1 AND Text #2 by writing **at least one** sentence that explains how BOTH pieces of evidence show the differences of these two texts.

Justification of Text #1 AND Text #2 (connect your evidence and entire paragraph to your claim)

***Everything from these two pages is your Body Paragraph #2.*

Name: _____

Date: _____

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Conclusion Paragraph

Use a **transition word** to show the reader they have arrived at your conclusion, and then **restate your claim**, using different words than your original claim.

Circle one: In conclusion, Thus, In the end, To conclude, Finally,

(INDENT) _____

Summarize your evidence. Don't introduce anything new here. Simply point out one more time how the premises you wrote prove your claim is true.

Write a **“mic drop” sentence** that offers the reader some final insight (i.e., a lesson learned).

***Everything on this page goes in your conclusion paragraph.*

Name: _____ Date: _____

COMPARE AND CONTRAST Rubric

Performance	Inadequate 1	Developing 2	Adequate 3	Accomplished 4	Mastery 5
Introduction and Claim (x2) _____/10	Lacks an introduction and any organizing elements of an introduction; it fails to address the claim	Underdeveloped introduction with poor or insufficient overview of the topic; weak, unfinished, or puzzling claim	Simple or hackneyed opening; introduction and summary of topic is included; clear claim that addresses the similarities / differences	Convincing opening with a hook; vibrant overview of topic; rational claim that addresses the similarities / differences	Innovative, appealing hook; convincing summary of topic; well written, detailed, and engaging claim that addresses the similarities / differences
Evidence (x3) _____/15	Evidence is not present in the essay	Evidence is broad and may not focus on the similarities and differences	Precise evidence included for both the similarities and differences; occasional gaps in focus	Substantial and precise evidence for both the similarities and differences (ties into claim); any quotes or statistics are unified into body paragraphs	Captivating and evocative evidence that is tightly focused on the similarities, differences, and claim; evidence is effortlessly combined with the justification
Justification (x3) _____/15	No justification of evidence; pure summary of similarities or differences	Little or insufficient discussion of or connection to similarities and differences	Establishes ability to justify and connect evidence, but evidence is petty, banal, or vague	Provides thoughtful, strong justification of evidence with occasional lapses	Provides sharp justification that explores profounder meaning between all components
Organization (x1) _____/5	No organizational elements of an essay exist; premises missing	Inadequate organization; illogical paragraph division; premises missing	Somewhat clear organization and premises, but body paragraphs and transitions are irregular; conclusion may be missing	Clear premises, organization, and logic; decent transitions; nominal irregularity in paragraph focus and structure; conclusion exists, but it is basic	Flawless, rational, engaging premises and organization with methodical development of ideas; sophisticated, lucid transitions; well-structured, concentrated paragraphs; conclusion displays clever synthesis of thoughts
Mechanics and Format (x1) _____/5	Elements of spelling, grammar, and punctuation are misunderstood	Substantial and confusing spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors that sometimes hinder ideas; constant error patterns	Errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation, but basic ideas are clear; may have one error in formatting	Infrequent, trivial errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation, but ideas are unblemished; observes the formatting guidelines	Few or no errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation; varied array of sentence construction and vocabulary; observes the formatting guidelines

Teacher Comments:

Final Grade: _____ / 50

Overall, _____
(main effect or
multiple effects) have
had a profound effect
on _____

Fortunately, _____
(citizens, companies,
etc.) have an opportunity
to take control of the
_____ (situation, etc.) in
order to _____.

The main
takeaway for
readers is ...

Understanding
that...(causes) will
help to (effect)

It is clear that there
are many actions
_____ (people,
companies, etc.)
can take to
_____.

Given this
information,
it is clear
that ...

CAUSE AND EFFECT

MIC DROP

SENTENCE STARTERS

CAUSE AND EFFECT

ANSWER KEY

Summarizing Evidence Activity

Student Directions: Read through the sample cause and effect essay below. You have been given an introduction and two body paragraphs, but the conclusion is missing. Your task is to practice writing the conclusion by 1) restating the claim in new words, and 2) summarizing the evidence.

But, before you do all of this, label all the elements of the intro paragraph (hook [which kind], summary, and claim) and all the elements in the body paragraphs (premise, introduction to evidence, evidence, and justification). This will help you easily identify the claim that needs to be restated and the evidence that needs to be summarized.

ESSAY PROMPT:
How does pet ownership impact a person's life?

There is a reason they call dogs a man's best friend. (HOOK - metaphor) Humans have kept pets as companions throughout history. Though a lot of work, and oftentimes expensive, many families and individuals prefer to live life with a pet by their side. (SUMMARY) This makes sense because owning a pet causes multiple positive health outcomes. (CLAIM)

To begin, (TRANSITION) pet ownership leads to improved emotional wellbeing. (PREMISE) According to the CDC, (INTRODUCTION TO EVIDENCE) pets give individuals companionship, particularly if they live alone; they also offer increased opportunities for socialization (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2019). (EVIDENCE) These findings indicate that owning a pet can improve a person's mood and mental health. Because living a happy life with strong relationships is important for wellbeing, it is clear that pets can improve the health of their owners. (JUSTIFICATION)

Additionally, (TRANSITION) pet ownership leads to improved physical wellbeing. (PREMISE) In the article *Healthy Pets, Healthy People*, the CDC explained (INTRODUCTION TO EVIDENCE) that pet ownership improves pet owners' blood pressure, cholesterol, and triglyceride levels (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2019). (EVIDENCE) This research demonstrates that choosing to add a pet to your family is a decision that will positively impact your physical health long-term. These benefits will improve overall wellbeing, and therefore, quality of life. (JUSTIFICATION)

WRITE YOUR CONCLUSION ON THE NEXT PAGE →

YOUR CONCLUSION



First, restate the claim in different words (this is highlighted in **BOLD** in the essay): _____

Then, summarize the two pieces of evidence in your own words: _____

MIC DROP SENTENCE

(do not complete this part until after learning about the "mic drop" sentence)

Student Directions: Compose three different "mic drop" sentences using the sentence starters from the Mic Drop Poster. Once you've written three, circle your best one.

#1

#2

#3

MIXED MESSAGES CARDS

Student Directions: Cut out each box and arrange your cards in order from 1-5.

#1

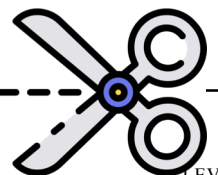
#2

#3

#4

#5

SAMPLE



DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

Practicing Thesis Statements

ANSWER KEY

Student Directions: Read each hook and summary below, and then select the thesis statement that best completes the intro paragraph for a descriptive essay. Remember, a thesis statement should identify the specific topic of the essay. The topic should not be too general, but rather narrowed down enough to be described in a few paragraphs.

1. Do you know that feeling when your stomach suddenly drops like you're flying down a roller coaster? (HOOK – QUESTION) That's exactly the feeling I got every time Mylena walked by. I'm not sure if it was the way her hair smelled, her warm smile, how friendly she was to everyone in the school, or a combination of all three. (SUMMARY)

- a. Either way, having a crush on Mylena changed the way I looked, acted, and felt for a solid month.
- b. It might even have been how great she was at solving math problems on the spot in class.

2. When I play a video game, I am as focused as a lion on the prowl for dinner. (HOOK – SIMILE) Since I was a little kid, holding a game controller has felt natural to me. My reflexes are quick and I can improve at almost any game quickly. School, on the other hand, doesn't come so easily. (SUMMARY)

- a. Playing video games is my favorite way to destress because when I'm gaming, the rest of the world falls away and I finally feel confident.
- b. Most of my friends don't enjoy school either.

3. I frantically tugged at my locker, spinning the lock and trying my new combination for the fifth time. The bell rang and I could feel the back of my neck get hot and sticky with nervous sweat. (HOOK – DESCRIPTION) The first day of school is always the worst. Between new classroom locations, new classmates, and new teachers, my head is always spinning before lunch. (SUMMARY)

- a. My best friend, Davy, is the most popular kid in the grade, and even he hates the first day.
- b. This year, though, I had the worst first day of all.

Directions: Read the hook and summary below. Then, write a possible thesis statement to complete the intro paragraph.

Do you want to roll down the sidewalk looking like the coolest kid on the block? (HOOK – QUESTION) The RideFlow skateboard is the ideal board for cruising around the neighborhood or hitting the skate park. It is a smooth ride that will be sure to not only impress your friends, but also take your skills to the next level. (SUMMARY)

Possible answer:

This Rideflow skateboard stands out because of its new design and premium quality materials.

Name: _____

Date: _____

PROBLEM-SOLUTION

Evidence Tracker

Student Directions: Use this graphic organizer to help you track your evidence from any research you do to prepare for your final essay you'll be writing. Make sure to always include all relevant information from the article, website, etc. (title, author, publication date).

PROBLEM (write your topic): _____

ESSAY QUESTION:

PROBLEM *(describe in your own words):*

EVIDENCE			

(quote or statistic from your research that explains the magnitude of the problem)

MAIN SOLUTION *(describe in your own words):*

Name: _____

Date: _____

PROBLEM-SOLUTION

Restating the Thesis Statement Activity

Student Directions: This activity focuses on the first part of a conclusion paragraph in a problem-solution essay – restating the thesis statement. In this activity, you will be working with several thesis statements that you must reword as if you were writing the first part of a conclusion paragraph. Remember, you are *rewording* these sentences, so you cannot simply state the same exact thing! It will also be helpful to include a transition word or phrase at the beginning of your new sentence to let readers know they have arrived at the conclusion.

CONCLUSION TRANSITIONS:

- In conclusion,
- Thus,
- In the end,
- In the final analysis,
- On the whole,
- To conclude,
- To summarize,
- In summary

ORIGINAL THESIS STATEMENT	YOUR RESTATED THESIS STATEMENT
Improving the quality of school lunches and including up-to-date nutrition information in health class curriculums could make a positive impact on the health of US citizens.	
Allocating more funds to publicizing the dangers associated with using e-cigarettes and vapes could lead to fewer people purchasing them.	
A recommendation from the American Academy of Pediatrics to limit screen time for children could dramatically reduce the amount of time kids spend on screens.	

Problem-Solution Teacher Example - **ANSWER KEY**

Essay Topic: Physical Activity Among US Adolescents

Americans face the frightening reality that less than 25% of children under 17 years old get an hour of exercise per day (“Physical”). (HOOK) This poses a tremendous health concern for our nation’s youth; but it also affects adolescents’ attentional and academic ability.

(SUMMARY) Mandating a daily physical education class in all schools would ensure that all children are given the opportunity to exercise each day. (THESIS)

Insufficient exercise among children and teens is problematic because it can cause a litany of health issues that, in turn, affect academic performance. (PREMISE PROBLEM FOCUSED) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (INTRODUCTION TO EVIDENCE) physical inactivity can increase adolescents’ risk for cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, and obesity, as well as affect their concentration and memory. (EVIDENCE) A lack of exercise is a threat to children’s health and long-term goals. Implementing a mandated daily physical education class in all schools could help to prevent and reverse the harmful effects of inactivity. (JUSTIFICATION)

Requiring all students to exercise daily in a P.E. class would improve students’ health, and therefore, their academic outcomes. (PREMISE SOLUTION FOCUSED) Research from the CDC states that (INTRODUCTION TO EVIDENCE) students who get physical education in school demonstrate higher academic performance in classes and on standardized tests as well as an improved ability to concentrate (“Physical”). (EVIDENCE) Daily exercise allows students to maximize their health and academic performance. Requiring a physical education class in school

provides all students with the time and space to exercise so that they can experience the benefits throughout the rest of their day. (JUSTIFICATION)

To conclude, (TRANSITION) mandated daily P.E. classes will ensure that more children and teens meet the exercise recommendations in the United States. (RESTATEMENT OF THESIS) The shockingly low levels of activity among adolescents puts them at risk for a long list of health problems and decreased academic performance. However, when students do exercise an appropriate amount each day, their health and cognitive abilities are notably improved. (SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE) Solving the problem of inactivity among adolescents is not a difficult one to solve, but it is vital for future generations to thrive. (MIC DROP SENTENCE)

“Physical Education.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 29 May 2019, www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/physical-education.htm.

“CDC.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 20 Feb. 2020, www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/facts.htm.