

Mosaics Chap 12: Compare/Contrast Writing

Using Chapter 12 on compare/contrast writing in your *Mosaics* text as your guide, write an essay of **3 to 4 pages**. You may choose your own topic as long as you follow closely the writing models we have reviewed from Chapter 12.

Using one of the compare/contrast prompts provided separately, or your own, write an essay comparing different aspects of similar or comparable subjects and in which you make a single, important point about those subjects while providing lots of detailed examples to illustrate your point. Choose a comparative structure and stick to it throughout your entire essay: use either the block or the point-by-point method to lay out your analysis. Remember to *show* your readers what you wish to illustrate rather than just telling them about it: use well-organized examples in your body paragraphs to support your thesis statement. Put your thesis statement, the sentence that states what you wish to say about your topics, in your introductory paragraph so that we will know *exactly* what you wish to communicate with the examples you provide.

Please Note: You may or may not choose to do outside research to help you with this essay, but you must not write about yourself or about your own personal experiences this time. I want you to make conclusions about something external to you, and then show us examples and illustrations that support those conclusions.

Remember, you should be using **academic language** in this essay. This means making sure all of your verbs are in the same tense, it means eliminating contractions and slang speech, and it means proofreading your work slowly and repeatedly to ensure that your sentences are complete and error free. Do not use 1st person (I, me) or 2nd person (you, your) speech in this essay. Keep your attention focused on the examples you include in your discussion.

Follow the steps explained on pages 264-267 and briefly outlined below. Remember to leave plenty of time for both the prewriting and drafting stages as well as the revision and proofreading stages of your writing process. I want only focused, error-free work for this assignment.

1. Decide what **thesis point** you wish to make with your comparison, and state it up front in your thesis statement. A comparison/contrast essay is usually written for one of two purposes: to examine the subjects separately or to show the superiority of one over the other. This purpose must be made absolutely clear in your thesis statement. Make your readers actually *want* to continue reading about your subject.
2. **Choose items** to compare and contrast that will make your thesis point most effectively. A good comparative analysis will feature subjects with *many* similarities and differences to discuss. Your task is to look over your own ideas generated in prewriting work and choose only the 3 or 4 best points for making your comparison clearly and strongly.
3. Use as many **specific details and examples** as possible to expand your comparison. The most common way to developing a comparison/contrast essay is to use description and example – strategies you already know from earlier essays. Generate as many details and examples as you can for each of your subjects. Try to think of both obvious *and* less obvious points of comparison to discuss in your analysis. You want your details and examples to actually *draw your readers into your essay*, to make them care about what you are writing about.
4. **Develop** your comparison in a balanced way by covering the same topics for each subject. Give equal coverage to both subjects, no matter what your ultimate conclusions about them are. Spend the same amount of time on each point: if you describe one subject in great detail then describe the other in great detail also. Provide a similar number of examples for both subjects. Be fair in your discussion, not biased toward or against one subject or the other.
5. Choose an **organizational structure**. Use either a block or point-by-point approach to organize your discussion around the points you make. See your text for a detailed explanation of these two methods of analysis.