

## COMPARE – CONTRAST MODELS

Here's a brief run-down of the two basic patterns you may choose to follow in your own comparative analytical work, using a set of sample paragraphs. The two methods are “**Point by Point**” or “**Subject Block**.” Use one method or the other in your essays; do not try and use both methods at once because your essay will end up being a very messy, unfocused discussion with comparative and contrasting parts that are impossible to distinguish from one another. Remember too that your papers will be much more complex than the models below.

Essentially, you will choose two readings to compare from *Rereading America*. Then you will decide what 2 or 3 points you are going to compare in both of them – the same 2 or 3 points in both. Then you will decide how you wish to compare them: by either taking each point individually and discussing it first in relation to one reading, then the other, before moving on to the second point and doing the same back-and-forth process again, OR choosing the same 2 or 3 points of comparison and examining them all at once in just one of your two readings, then examining all 2 or 3 points of comparison at once in just the second reading. It is your choice – do whatever you are most comfortable with – just make sure you clearly choose and follow one model or the other, not both. I want a clean, tight, well-organized comparative discussion.

Again, to review:

Choose two related readings to compare. Identify 2 or 3 writing strategies you see being used in both, though perhaps in different ways or differing levels of effectiveness. Then decide how you wish to compare them:

by taking each strategy individually and discussing it in relation to one reading and then the other reading before moving on to the second strategy and repeating the process of examining what it looks like in each reading

OR

by choosing those same 2 or 3 writing strategies or points of comparison and examining them all at once, one right after the other for just ONE of your two readings, then examining all 2 or 3 points of comparison all at once again in the other reading

***Please see models of both comparative approaches on the following page.***

### Point-by-Point Method

Now, of course, I know that it was as difficult being a girl as it was a boy, if not more so. While I stood paralyzed at one end of a dance floor trying to find the courage to ask a girl for a dance, most of the girls waited in terror at the other, afraid that no one, not even I, would ask them. And while I resented having to ask a girl for a date, wasn't it also horrible to be the one who waited for the phone to ring? And how many of those girls who laughed at me making a fool of myself on the baseball diamond would have gladly given up their places on the sidelines for mine on the field?

**Topic Sentence:** *Now, of course, I know that it was as difficult being a girl as it was a boy, if not more so.*

**First point, FIRST topic:** *While I stood paralyzed at one end of a dance floor trying to find the courage to ask a girl for a dance...*

**First point, SECOND topic:** *...most of the girls waited in terror at the other, afraid that no one, not even I, would ask them.*

**Second point, FIRST topic:** *And while I resented having to ask a girl for a date,...*

**Second point, SECOND topic:** *...wasn't it also horrible to be the one who waited for the phone to ring?*

**Third point, FIRST topic:** *And how many of those girls who laughed at me making a fool of myself on the baseball diamond...*

**Third point, SECOND topic:** *...would have gladly given up their places on the sidelines for mine on the field?*

### Block (or Subject-by-Subject) Method

Now, of course, I know that it was as difficult being a girl as it was being a boy, if not more so. I stood paralyzed at one end of the dance floor trying to find the courage to ask a girl for a dance. I resented having to ask a girl for a date, just as I often felt foolish on the baseball diamond. On the other hand, most of the girls waited in terror at the other end of the dance floor, afraid that on one, not even I, would ask them to dance. In addition, it was a horrible situation for the girls who had to wait for the phone to ring. And how many of those girls who stood on the sidelines would have gladly traded places with me on the baseball diamond?

**Topic Sentence:** *Now, of course, I know that it was as difficult being a girl as it was a boy, if not more so.*

**First Topic, Points 1, 2 and 3:** *I stood paralyzed at one end of a dance floor trying to find the courage to ask a girl for a dance. I resented having to ask a girl for a date, just as I often felt foolish on the baseball diamond.*

**Second Topic, Points 1, 2, and 3:** *On the other hand, most of the girls waited in terror at the other end of the dance floor, afraid that on one, not even I, would ask them to dance. In addition, it was a horrible situation for the girls who had to wait for the phone to ring. And how many of those girls who stood on the sidelines would have gladly traded places with me on the baseball diamond?*