

Comparison or contrast, as a method of development, examines similarities or differences between people, objects, or ideas in order to arrive at a judgment or conclusion. The term comparison is sometimes used in a general sense to include both comparisons and contrasts.

2. Key features of a comparison paragraph

A comparison paragraph has the following features:

- Two subjects
- Compared similarities or contrasted differences
- Similarities or differences that are not so obvious
- Point by point method or block method

3. Uses: a comparison paragraph

A comparison paragraph may show the following

- Similarities between two things
- Differences between two things
- Strengths and weaknesses of something
- Advantages and disadvantages of something

4. Ways of writing a comparison paragraph

A. POINT-BY-POINT METHOD

One method for ordering material in a paragraph of comparison or contrast is known as the point-by-point method. When you use this method, you compare/contrast point 1 of topic 1 and then point 1 of topic 2. Then you go on to your second points for each of the two topics. You continue until you have covered all the points.

What characteristics distinguish plants from animals?

There are several characteristics which distinguish plants from animals. Green plants are able to manufacture their own food from substances in the environment. This process is known as photosynthesis. In contrast, animals, including man, get their food either directly from plants or indirectly by eating animals which have eaten plants. Plants are generally stationary. Animals, on the other hand, can usually move about. In external appearance, plants are usually green. They grow in a branching fashion at their extremities, and their growth continues throughout their lives. Animals, however, are very diverse in their external appearance. Their growth pattern is not limited to their extremities. It is evenly distributed and only occurs in a definite time period. Therefore, the differences between plants and animals is quite significant.

My hometown and my college town

My hometown and my college town have several things in common. First, both are small rural communities. For example, my hometown, Gridlock, has a population of only about 10,000 people. Similarly, my college town, Subnormal, consists of about 11,000 local residents. This population swells to 15,000 people when the college students are attending classes. A second way in which these two towns are similar is that they are both located in rural areas. Gridlock is surrounded by many acres of farmland which is devoted mainly to growing corn and soybeans. In the same way, Subnormal lies in the center of farmland which is used to raise hogs and cattle. Thirdly, these towns are similar in that they contain college campuses. Gridlock, for example, is home to Neutron College, which is famous for its Agricultural Economics program as well as for its annual Corn-Watching Festival. Likewise, the town of Subnormal boasts the beautiful campus of Quark College, which is well known for its Agricultural Engineering department and also for its yearly Hog-Calling Contest

B. BLOCK METHOD

The other method for ordering material in a paragraph of comparison or contrast is known as the block method. When you use this approach, you present all of the facts and supporting details about one part of your topic, and then you give all of the facts and supporting details about the other part.

What is the difference between allopathy and homeopathy?

Allopathy and homeopathy are quite different. Allopathy is the treatment of disease of one kind by exciting a disease of another kind or in another part. It is sometimes incorrectly used as a name for orthodox medicine or Western medicine. Homeopathy, in contrast, is a system of medicine based on the treatment of a given disease by administering small quantities of a drug which produces the symptoms of that disease in a healthy person. The treatment of illnesses, then, would be markedly dissimilar because the underlying beliefs are strongly differentiated.

My hometown and my college town

My hometown and my college town have several things in common. First, my hometown, Gridlock, is a small town. It has a population of only about 10,000 people. Located in a rural area, Gridlock is surrounded by many acres of farmland which are devoted mainly to growing corn and soybeans. Gridlock also contains a college campus, Neutron College, which is famous for its Agricultural Economics program as well as for its annual Corn-Watching Festival. As for my college town, Subnormal, it too is small, having a population of about 11,000 local residents, which swells to 15,000 people when students from the nearby college are attending classes. Like Gridlock, Subnormal lies in the center of farmland which is used to raise hogs and cattle. Finally, Subnormal is similar to Gridlock in that it also boasts a beautiful college campus, called Quark College. This college is well known for its Agricultural Engineering department and also for its yearly Hog-Calling Contest.

5. Linking words to express comparison and contrast

Words to indicate Contrast	Words to indicate Comparison
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unlike• Different from• Despite• But• Yet• However• Nevertheless• In contrast• On the other hand• Although• Even though• While• Whereas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Like• Similar to• Just like• Be the same as• Both• Neither (negative similarity)• And• Similarly• Likewise• In the same way• Just as

COMPARING AND CONTRASTING: SENTENCE STRUCTURE

1. The following paragraph is missing a topic sentence and many supporting sentences. Fill in the blanks with well written sentences in order to create a coherent and unified paragraph.

..... First, both require an early start.,

..... Second,

.....Being at work on time pleases the employer; being in class on time pleases the instructor. Third, both require devoting a lot of efforts.

Likewise,

..... Fourth, On the job, different tasks must be done by a certain time; in a class,

..... Finally, both work and school benefit society.

.....Similarly,

.....It is not surprising that work and school share these five similarities, since one of the purposes of school is to prepare a student for the job of his choice.

Transitional expressions used in comparison:

- in the same way
- and, also, in addition
- as well as
- both, neither
- each of
- just as...so
- similarly
- like
- too
- the same

Transitional expressions used in contrast:

- although
- whereas
- but
- however
- conversely
- on the other hand
- in contrast

- while
- yet
- unlike

Exercise 2: Using the transitional expressions above, complete the following paragraph by adding supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.

Although cars and human beings are different, they are similar in so many ways.

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Exercise 3:Using the transitional expressions above, write a paragraph in which you compare and contrast cell phones and regular phones.