

COMPARE / CONTRAST ESSAYS

- I. ORGANIZATION – emphasizes the similarities, differences, or both of two or more things. There are three possible organizational methods in a compare / contrast essay
- A. **COMPARE ONLY** - the writer mainly points out the similarities of the two subjects
 - B. **CONTRAST ONLY** - the writer primarily focuses on the differences between two subjects
 - C. **COMPARE/CONTRAST** – the writer discusses both similarities (comparisons) and differences (contrasts) equally.
- II. UNITY
- *Use two equivalent topics.* Make sure the things you are comparing belong to the same group
 - *Include solid supporting points.*
 - *Create a clear focus on comparison, contrast, or comparison/contrast.* All your supporting points should clearly demonstrate that the two topics are similar, different, or both similar & different depending on the method of organization.
- III. COHERENCE - In compare/contrast essays, transition expressions help create coherence.
- A. ***BOTH*** (noun) ***AND*** (noun)
 1. Function - to indicate that two items are included in the information.
 2. Use - ***Both*** (noun) ***and*** (noun) is a noun phrase. When it is the subject of a sentence, the verb that follows is plural.
 3. Examples
 - ***Both*** mathematics ***and*** biology are required subjects for graduation.

B. ***NOT ONLY... BUT ALSO...***

1. Function – to emphasize that both items are included in the information
2. Use - ***Not only...but also...*** is sometimes a noun phrase. When the noun phrase is the subject of a sentence, the second noun determines whether the verb is singular or plural.
3. Examples
 - ***Not only the electrician but also the carpenters are working overtime.***
 - ***He not only wanted but also needed her affection. (joins 2 verbs)***

C. ***NEVERTHELESS***

1. Function – to indicate that a certain fact will not prevent a second fact from happening
2. Use – ***Nevertheless*** is a conjunction that usually occurs at the beginning of a sentence in which case it is followed by a comma.
3. Example - ***The instructor told the students to write exactly five paragraphs in the last essay. Nevertheless, some students wrote essays with only four paragraphs.***

D. ***ON ONE HAND...ON THE OTHER HAND***

1. Function – to indicate two contrasting ideas
2. Use – ***On one hand*** and ***on the other hand*** present contrasting ideas and are two phrases that are best used together. They are punctuated with commas
3. Example – ***I'm trying to decide whether to buy a new car. On one hand, I really need a new car. On the other hand, I could save a lot of money by taking the bus or riding my bike for the rest of the summer.***

E. ***IN CONTRAST, WHEREAS***

1. Function – to indicate contrast between two items
2. Use – ***In contrast*** is an adverbial phrase that usually occurs at the beginning of a sentence. ***Whereas*** is a conjunction that occurs at the beginning of a dependent clause. ***In contrast*** is followed by a comma. ***Whereas*** connects two clauses and is preceded by a

comma if the dependent clause is 2nd, but is followed by a comma at the end of a clause if the dependent clause is first.

3. Examples:

- Traditional banks have very high overhead expenses. *In contrast*, Internet banks do not have the usual kinds of overhead expenses to worry about.
- The weather in the summer months is hot and humid, *whereas* the weather in the fall is cool and dry.
- *Whereas* the weather in the summer months is hot and humid, it is cool in the fall.

F. **UNLIKE** + NOUN

1. Function – to indicate contrast between two nouns
2. Use – *Unlike* is a preposition and is always followed by noun or pronoun
3. Examples: - *Unlike* his father, Elias did not pursue a job in banking.

G. **LIKE** + NOUN

1. Function – to indicate similarity between two nouns
2. Use – *Like* is a preposition and is always followed by noun or pronoun
3. Examples: - *Like* his father, Elias pursued a job in banking.

H. **CONVERSELY**

1. Function – to discuss an opposite idea
2. Use – *Conversely* is a conjunction that usually occurs at the beginning of a sentence and is followed by a comma
3. Examples: - The trim on this house is white against gray. *Conversely*, the trim on the next house is gray against white.

I. **ALTHOUGH, EVEN THOUGH, THOUGH**

1. Function – to indicate that a certain fact has little effect on a second fact
2. Use – *Although*, *even though*, and *though* are subordinating conjunctions. They may be used interchangeably.