

Contents of a Great 3-Part Comparative Essay (Take Home, 2-4 pages)

I. Introduction:

- a. **Context sentence**-introductory, who, what, when, where, sets stage
- b. **Wow statement**- grab your reader's attention
- c. **Definition of terms**- clarify any key terms you will be using
- d. **Thesis statement**- original analysis of main traits, characteristics, topics of body paragraphs, themes, patterns, or relationships. Do Not just write, "There are many similarities and many differences between ..." Yuck, that is not analysis! You need to comment on the *nature* of those similarities and differences. This should be your toughest sentence to write in the essay. It is in essence the answer to the question asked in one sentence. The rest of the essay is devoted to proving and discussing the merit of your thesis. Review 2 Keys to Structure and Organization.

II. Body:

The body section of your essay may be one, two, three, four, five... paragraphs. The structure of each paragraph is the same, therefore, simply be sure that each body paragraph meets the following format:... Then be sure to double check the overall structure/order of your paragraphs.

- a. **Topic sentence**- what is the main focus (area of comparison) of this paragraph, and why is this paragraph coming now. It can be as simple as first, second..., in order of importance, chronological, themes, direction...
- b. **#1 Specific** set evidence, details, data, people, quotations, events, dates, books...that allow you to compare and contrast.
- c. **#2 Specific** set evidence, details, data, people, quotations, events, dates, books...that allow you to compare and contrast.
- d. **#3 Specific** set evidence, details, data, people, quotations, events, dates, books...that allow you to compare and contrast.
- e. **#4 Specific** if needed.
- f. **Transition sentence**- lay out a connection into your next body paragraph or the conclusion if it is your last one.

III. Conclusion:

- a. **Summary statement** for entire essay
 - b. **Explanation** for how your thesis was proved
 - c. **So What**- why is this comparison important, what can the reader learn from your comparison, what can society improve/learn from understanding the complexity of your comparison.
- **Good Verbs:** illustrates, demonstrates, reflects, supports, proves, develops, enhances, compares, contrasts, differs, expands, explains, explicates, provokes, encompasses, emerges, elicits, elevates, illuminates, identifies, initiates.