

Lesson 7: Comparison and Contrast: Showing Similarities and Differences

INTRODUCTION

Now that you've had some hands-on experience with literary analysis, you're ready to apply what you've learned on a more advanced level. The critical reading and thinking skills you developed while analyzing figurative language and other elements in short stories, poetry, and song lyrics can be applied to longer narrative fiction as well. As you recall, when you write about literature, you need to develop an original point of view on a text. One common approach to writing about literature is comparison and contrast. Integrating other patterns of development—such as cause and effect—can help build your case. Because you'll be using evidence to support your analysis, the essay you write at the end of this lesson will require you to use secondary sources to support your ideas.

OBJECTIVES

When you complete this lesson, you'll be able to

- Explain point-by-point organization for comparison and contrast
- Characterize subject-by-subject organization for comparison and contrast
- Explain the use of causal analysis to show how one action or event leads to another
- Define *cause-and-effect* as a pattern of development, and apply its techniques
- Write an essay comparing and contrasting a novel and a movie made from the novel.

Note: At the end of this lesson, you'll use the novel and movie you chose when you started the course to write a literary analysis that compares and contrasts the novel and the film version.



ASSIGNMENT 23: REVIEWING COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

Read the following assignment. Then read pages 365–377 in your textbook. Be sure to complete the self-check to gauge your progress.

Introduction

Stanley is evil; Livingston is good. That's sharp contrast. While both Stanley and Livingston enjoy fishing, Stanley ties his own flies and fishes in sparkling mountain streams, while Livingston uses a bamboo pole and earthworms at the local fishing hole. That's comparison and contrast. To compare is to show similarities; to contrast is to show differences. You make these judgments in your daily life without thinking about it, comparing two people's personalities or your current television with an older one. We compare the advantages and disadvantages of renting or buying and the nutritional value and cost of one food compared to another. As you study the use of contrast and comparison in a paper, think about how this pattern might be used with other patterns, such as definition.

Reading Highlights

Pages 366–369

Carefully review the characteristics of comparison or contrast essays. Key points for this pattern of development are

- A clear purpose
- A specific basis of comparison
- A fair appraisal

Comparison or contrast makes a point. Why would a writer compare white pine trees to Douglas fir trees? Perhaps he's comparing and contrasting their relative virtues as Christmas trees. Why would a writer compare and contrast jogging and walking as aerobic exercise? Perhaps she wants to compare

the two with respect to the age and physical condition of people who jog or walk. If a writer is a long-distance runner, he or she might wish to praise the endorphin highs of the three-mile jog as opposed to the milder joys of walking. Details and sensory impressions provide the flavor of any effective comparison or contrast.

Pages 370–378

College-level writing has two basic approaches to comparison and contrast. The point-by-point approach is illustrated by “Amusing Ourselves to Depth: Is *The Onion* Our Most Intelligent Newspaper?” on pages 370–372. As you read it, try to locate the points of comparison or contrast. The piece by Ian Frazier, on pages 375–377, demonstrates the subject-by-subject approach, in which the author compares the romantic days of pay phones with today’s hectic cell-phone lifestyle. The graphic organizers on pages 373–374 offer examples of point-by-point and subject-by-subject approaches. Compare and contrast the two samples to see how they’re different. After reading Ian Frazier’s essay, turn to Figure 16.3 on page 378 and study it to see how subjects are framed and presented by the author. Then turn back to page 377 and study the four tips for integrating comparison and contrast into a paper. Reviewing these key ideas several times is a good way to reinforce them so they become second nature. Are you informing or persuading your audience? Do you need to take a stand on an issue? Be sure that your thesis reflects your purpose and choose the method of development that would best present your ideas to your audience.



Self-Check 23

1. Analyze the essay “Dearly Disconnected” (pages 375–377) for its subject-by-subject organization. State the topic of the essay, noting what’s being compared and contrasted. Summarize the subjects of paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8, identifying a thematic idea that stands out. For instance, the “seediness and sadness” of pay phones is characterized in paragraph 5.
2. Identify two bases of comparison for this topic: advantages and disadvantages of integrating public school classrooms by gender. Write a working thesis statement for each of them, one pro and the other one con.

Check your answers with those on page 136.

ASSIGNMENT 24: READING ACTIVELY AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Read the following assignment. Then read pages 378–388 and 394–396 in your textbook. Be sure to complete the self-check to gauge your progress.

Introduction

As a pattern of development, comparison and contrast may be used on its own or in combination with other patterns, such as narration, argument, or definition. First, you must decide the purpose of your essay, and then choose the best approach. By reading the examples and studying the guidelines for writing and the flowchart for revision, you'll be preparing to write an effective essay of your own.

Reading Highlights

Pages 378–380

Review the guidelines for actively reading and thinking critically about comparison and contrast essays. Key points for analysis include

- Understanding the main point
- Identifying the basis of comparison and the main points of comparison
- Questioning the assumptions and opinions of the author
- Examining the organization and how it affects the presentation of ideas
- Determining whether important points of comparisons have been omitted

Pages 380–385

Look closely at the steps involved in the “Guided Writing Assignment,” as comparison and contrast will be the dominant pattern of organization you’ll be using to write the essay at the end of Lesson 7. Then examine the flowchart for revision on pages 383–385.

Pages 385–388

Even if you’ve already read this student essay, “Border Bites” by Heather Gianakos, read it again, this time applying your sharpened skills to reading more critically.

Pages 394–396

In the essay by Abigail Zuger, “Defining a Doctor, with a Tear, a Shrug, and a Schedule,” you’ll consider the use of comparison and contrast combined with other patterns of development. Along with Giankos’ essay, you’ll be analyzing this essay for your self-check for this assignment.



Self-Check 24

Review the essay “Border Bites” by Heather Gianakos on pages 385–388, then complete items 1–3.

1. From Gianakos’s concluding paragraph, summarize the contrast she makes between Southwestern and Mexican food.
2. What are the author’s points in paragraphs 1, 3, and 4?
3. What nutrition-oriented information in this comparison could be used for another comparison/contrast approach to this topic?

Review the essay by Abigail Zuger on pages 394–396, then complete items 4 and 5.

4. Zuger uses three patterns of development other than comparison and contrast. Identify them by paragraph and summarize how each is used.
5. Does the author use a point-by-point approach or a subject-by-subject approach? Is it effective? Why or why not?

Check your answers with those on page 197.

ASSIGNMENT 25: REVIEWING CAUSE AND EFFECT

Read the following assignment. Then read pages 459–488 in your textbook. Be sure to complete the self-check to gauge your progress.

Introduction

You get into your car, put the key in the ignition, and discover to your dismay that the car won't start. As you look at the fuel indicator on the dashboard, you see that your gas tank is empty. That's a simple description of the relationship between cause and effect, a type of deduction that we make on a daily basis, sometimes without realizing it. As a pattern of essay development, *cause and effect*—sometimes referred to as *casual analysis*—examines the relationships between events or experiences in greater detail. The approach you take could examine both causes and events, or focus more specifically on one or the other aspect of the cause and effect relationship. An essay that focuses on causes usually emphasizes the reasons something occurred. In an effect essay, the emphasis is weighted more heavily on the consequences of an event, situation, or choice. As you approach writing your essay comparing and contrasting a novel and a film version, you may find yourself discussing cause and effect in terms of impact of the choices made by the people involved in the film.

Reading Highlights

Pages 460–463

Carefully review the characteristics of causal analysis. The key points to bear in mind are

- The different types of cause and effects relationships
- A clear thesis statement
- Logical organization
- Detailed explanation of cause and effect relationships

In many cases, causal analysis is sometimes intended as an argument that supports a set of observations, identifying a particular cause or sequence of causes. In other cases, a causal analysis is intended to inform readers, to challenge their expectations, or even to surprise readers.

Pages 463–467

Even if you’ve read it before, study Maria Konnikova’s “Why Summer Makes Us Lazy.” As you read the essay, look closely at the highlighted areas, which clearly indicate the different elements the author uses to develop her analysis. After reading the essay, study the three different graphic organizers on pages 466–467, which illustrate three different approaches to organizing cause and effect essays.

Pages 468–471

Read Adam Alter’s essay, “How Labels Like *Black* and *Working Class* Shape Your Identity,” which describes the effects of arbitrarily assigning labels influence behavior. Afterwards, review the graphic organizer in Figure 19.4 on page 471.

Pages 470–473

Review the suggestions for integrating cause and effect into essays based on other patterns of development, which you may find helpful while writing your compare and contrast essay at the end of Lesson 7. These suggestions highlight the importance of

- Using transitions
- Keeping the analysis simple
- Emphasizing why cause and effect is important in discussing your main point

The guidelines for reading actively and thinking critically encourage you to pay close attention to details, particularly when identifying the relationships between causes and effects. If you include any kind of casual analysis in your own writing, remember to offer enough evidence to clearly

establish causal relationships. Also, beware of common errors, such as confusing chronology with causation and mistaking correlation with causation.

Pages 474–480

Scan the “Guided Writing Assignment.” Look through all of it, but pay special attention to the editing, proofreading, and revision tips on pages 478–480.

Pages 480–488

Read the “Students Write” essay, “Is Sharing Files Online Killing Music?” by Jonathan Adamczak. Note that the author’s thesis identifies a single cause that leads to multiple consequences, and that in the body of his essay he presents both negative and positive effects. (Also, study the Works Cited page at the end of the essay.) Then read Jurriaan Kamp’s “Can Diet Help Stop Depression and Violence?” which uses evidence from several studies about the positive effects of dietary changes.



Self-Check 25

Read or reread Adam Alter’s essay on pages 468–470 to answer questions 1–3.

1. In addition to cause and effect, what other patterns of development does Alter use in his essay?
2. At what points in the essay does Alter use transitions to move from one point to the next?
3. Identify some examples of descriptive language Alter uses in his essay.
4. Read or reread Jonathan Adamczak’s essay on pages 480–483; then turn to page 484 and respond to all three all three items under “Analyzing the Writer’s Technique.”

Check your answers with those on page 198.

Before moving on to Lesson 8, watch the video lecture "Using Comparison and Contrast: Analyzing a Novel" on your student portal and complete multiple choice quiz 500501RR.

***Note:* To complete the quiz, you may wish to review pages 667–671, which you studied in Lesson 6, Assignment 20.**

After completing the quiz, proceed to the prewriting and essay exams for Lesson 7.

NOTES

Lesson 7: Prewriting: Comparison and Contrast

Objectives:

For this exam, students will

- Use the writing process to draft and revise a comparison and contrast essay
- Write an effective thesis statement
- Identify, define, and analyze literary elements
- Develop critical reading skills
- Use responsible research methods to locate appropriate secondary sources
- Use Modern Language Association (MLA) citation and documentation style to reference secondary source material correctly and appropriately

Introduction

For decades, the film industry has adapted beloved books into movies. When a book is adapted into a film, the story reaches a wider audience and provides a new perspective on the text. In this assignment, you will use comparison and contrast techniques to reveal the ways the plot, characters, and theme of a story are impacted as elements of the narrative change.

Topic: To compare and contrast a book and a film based on that book

Purpose: To show how the changes made affect the story's plot, characters, and theme in significant ways

Method:

- To prepare an outline or graphic organizer that will serve as the foundation for an 1,800–2,000 word comparison and contrast essay

- To begin the research process by preparing a bibliography in Modern Language Association citation and documentation format that consists of at least six sources
 - 2 primary sources: the book and the film
 - 4 secondary sources: book and film reviews, critiques, articles about the book and film, profiles of the author and/or the director and actors that focus on the content of the work.

Audience: Junior and senior-level distance education students enrolled at Penn Foster College

The Writing Process

Plan and Prewrite

1. Watch the Comparison and Contrast lecture notes video on your student portal. This video reviews the essay requirements and comparison and contrast techniques.
2. Read the book and watch the film you've chosen to write about.
3. Develop the content for your outline/graphic organizer by freewriting about the changes you've noticed. Review pages 366–369 of your textbook and identify a few bases of comparison:
 - a. Are there scenes omitted or added? How does this affect the sequence of events?
 - b. What is the central conflict of the book? The film? How do the author and the director present the conflict? Are the stakes higher in one or the other?
 - c. Is the main character's personality different in the film? How is it different? How does it affect the way we understand his/her character?
 - i. Is the narrator of the story the same? Does any element of the story change because we can't be in the narrator's head at all times? How does this change our understanding of the characters or the story?

- d. How is theme revealed throughout the book and the film?
4. Now that you've compared and contrasted the book and the film, freewrite on what the significance of these changes are to help you develop your ideas for the thesis statement.
5. Work through the Guided Writing Assignment for Comparison and Contrast prewriting on page 381 of your textbook. This assignment will help you determine your purpose and focus for your comparison and contrast essay.

Research

1. The book and the film are your primary sources and count as two sources in your bibliography and toward the research requirement for your essay. Be sure that you have carefully noted where you found them, either online or in a physical copy/in print.
2. You'll need a minimum of four other sources. These sources can be reviews, articles, and interviews related to the book and film.
3. Go to the library. Your Penn Foster digital library provides resources that will help you to meet the research requirements for your essay, but keep in mind that research in a library, even a digital one, isn't like searching online. To learn more, visit the Penn Foster Library site.

Use Expanded Academic ASAP, which is a subscription-only database available in Penn Foster's digital library. You can access the database by clicking on the Library Services link in your Student Portal. See the "Academic Support and Online Resources" section in the introduction to this study guide.

4. Search online, but remember that you'll need to evaluate your sources carefully; review pages 569–573 in your textbook. The following are examples of quality sources.
 - a. Reviews by book and film critics

- b. Interviews with the author and/or the director and actors
- c. Profiles by journalists and other professional writers

Prepare Your Outline/Graphic Organizer

You may choose to submit either a formal outline or a graphic organizer for this assignment. Your outline or graphic organizer should be sufficiently detailed to illustrate your plan for your essay. In other words, it should be as detailed as possible. Reread page 144–146 in your textbook on graphic organizers and outlines.

1. This assignment (both prewriting and essay) requires you analyze the significance of the differences between the book and the film. Please review pages 372–374 in your textbook for the characteristics of a comparison and contrast essay and two sample graphic organizers.
2. Be sure to state your main points, secondary points, and supporting evidence. Include any references to secondary sources as well, and use MLA parenthetical citation to link them to your annotated bibliography.
3. Revise your work to ensure that your thesis statement, main points, evidence, and secondary sources all work together to address the purpose of the assignment.

Assignment Checklist

For this assignment, you must submit your

- Outline or graphic organizer
- Bibliography

Submit Your Exam

Ensure your exam follows the proper format for submission:

- 1-inch margins on all sides
- 12 pt. Times New Roman font
- Double spacing

1. Use the header function in your word-processing program to enter your personal identification and exam information:

Student Name ID Number Exam Number

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Email Address

2. Save your exam with the file name:
IDNumber_ExamNumber_LastName_FirstName.
3. Save your exam in either MS Word or Rich Text Format (.rtf). If an instructor can't open the file you submit, it will be returned ungraded.
4. When your exam has been evaluated and returned to you, you will be able to review the instructor's comments by clicking on the View Project button next to the grade and downloading the Instructor Feedback File. If you have trouble viewing the file, please contact an instructor.

SUBMITTING YOUR PROJECT

To submit your essay exam, follow these steps:

1. Go to **<http://www.pennfoster.edu>**.
2. Log in to your student portal.
3. Click on **Take Exam** next to the lesson you're working on.
4. Follow the instructions provided to complete your exam.

Be sure to keep a backup copy of any files you submit to the school!

Tip: Review the evaluation rubric on the following page before submitting your exam.

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST PREWRITING EXAM RUBRIC

	Pass	Fail
<p>Thesis, Ideas, and Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The thesis makes a focused claim about the types of differences between the chosen book and movie and the significance or effect of those differences. ■ The outline/organizer provides a close reading of book and film using comparison and contrast patterns of development to identify differences between the two mediums. ■ Each main point includes evidence to prove the differences between the book and the film exist. ■ The main points analyze the significance of the differences between the book and film. 		
<p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ideas are logically arranged and help move paper forward. ■ Each proposed main point is focused on one aspect of the topic and helps support the thesis statement. ■ Secondary source information including reviews and articles is used to support claims made about the significance of the differences to the story. 		
<p>Style and Voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Maintains a consistent point of view on topic ■ Proposed evidence will engage readers' interest in the topic. 		
<p>Bibliography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Properly formatted using MLA guidelines. ■ Provided a minimum of six potential outside sources for research that could be used in the essay. 		
<p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The outline/organizer has been spell-checked and proofread to check for errors in word choice and typos. ■ The paper is reasonably free of errors that interfere with a reader's ability to understand the content. 		
<p>Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The prewrite is developed as an outline or graphic organizer. ■ It includes all required information in a properly formatted header. 		