

## Compare/Contrast Essay rubric

CATEGORY	4 Above Standards	3 Meets Standards	2 Approaching Standards	1 Below Standards
<b>Attention Grabber</b>	The introductory paragraph has a strong hook or attention grabber that is appropriate for the audience. This could be a strong statement, a relevant quotation, statistic, or question addressed to the reader.	The introductory paragraph has a hook or attention grabber, but it is weak, rambling or inappropriate for the audience.	The author has an interesting introductory paragraph but the connection to the topic is not clear.	The introductory paragraph is not interesting AND is not relevant to the topic.
<b>Focus or Thesis Statement</b>	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay.	The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.	The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed.
<b>Chooses appropriate characteristics for comparison.</b>	Selects important features or attributes of the items that can provide insight into the nature of those items being compared.	Selects characteristics that can provide for a meaningful comparison.	Selects characteristics that provide for a partial comparison of the items.	Selects characteristics that are not important and don't lead to insightful conclusions.
<b>Identifies similarities and differences between two or more items.</b>	Accurately selects all major similarities and differences for each item.	Selects similarities and differences for each item.	Makes some errors in identifying major similarities and differences.	Makes many errors in identifying major similarities and differences.
<b>Uses the identified similarities and differences to reach important conclusions or insights.</b>	Draws insightful and thoughtful conclusions from the similarities and differences, usually highlighting either one or the other.	Draws some thoughtful conclusions from the comparison.	Isn't clear about the significance of the comparison.	Does not get far beyond noting similarities and differences.
<b>Evidence and Examples</b>	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.
<b>Transitions</b>	A variety of thoughtful transitions are used. They clearly show how ideas are connected	Transitions show how ideas are connected, but there is little variety	Some transitions work well, but some connections between ideas are fuzzy.	The transitions between ideas are unclear OR nonexistent.
<b>Audience</b>	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the potential reader and uses appropriate vocabulary and arguments. Anticipates reader's questions and provides thorough answers appropriate for that audience.	Demonstrates a general understanding of the potential reader and uses vocabulary and arguments appropriate for that audience.	Demonstrates some understanding of the potential reader and uses arguments appropriate for that audience.	It is not clear who the author is writing for.

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<b>Sentence Structure</b>	All sentences are well-constructed with varied structure.	Most sentences are well-constructed and there is some varied sentence structure in the essay.	Most sentences are well constructed, but there is no variation in structure.	Most sentences are not well-constructed or varied.
<b>Grammar &amp; Spelling</b>	Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.
<b>Capitalization &amp; Punctuation</b>	Author makes no errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the essay is exceptionally easy to read.	Author makes 1-2 errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the essay is still easy to read.	Author makes a few errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.	Author makes several errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.