

COMPARISON-CONTRAST PARAGRAPHS

There are actually three types of paragraphs which can be written in this general area. The comparison paragraph discusses the similarities in subjects. The contrast paragraph points out differences. The comparison-contrast paragraph does both. The topic will dictate which type should be used.

Make sure the topic you choose is worthy of discussion. This simply means that the paragraph should have a definite purpose. Always ask yourself, "Why does the reader need the information?" If your topic is too obvious, choose another topic.

Comparison paragraphs should deal in fresh comparison. That is to say, you should try to reveal unsuspected similarities in a slightly different way.

Contrasts are most interesting when through them the reader becomes aware of differences he had not noticed before. Fresh contrasts reveal unfamiliar differences in subjects supposedly alike or, in reality, much alike. It is usually not rewarding to contrast the obviously different.

Paragraphs developed by comparison, contrast, or comparison-contrast may employ all or some of the basic means of development already studied: descriptive details, reasons, or definition. The purpose of the paragraph, however it is developed, is to compare and/or contrast.

To be clear, the paragraphs you write for comparison-contrast will almost certainly want to be longer than those you write for other, for you are trying to explain more. It will be helpful to you to think of the paragraphs you write for comparison-contrast as transitions to the writing of the short composition of five to six hundred words. You are still writing a single paragraph, but it is now a paragraph with distinctly felt parts. And if it is to be clear and coherent, the parts must be well arranged. Blocking out and outlining can help you think through subject before you write, as well as give order to what you write.

<u>SUBJECT MATTER</u>	<u>POINT-OF-VIEW</u> (my approach, my analysis)	<u>MATERIALS OF DEVELOPMENT</u> (relevant descriptive details and reasons)
effective leadership in the armed forces	persuasive authoritarian	Sergeant Smith a) appearance b) leadership b) individual Sergeant Jones a) appearance c) leadership d) individual

Persuasive or Authoritarian?

Although Sergeant Smith and Sergeant Jones are both effective leaders, they typify two different concepts of leadership—the persuasive and authoritarian. Smith is young and eager, while Jones is an old veteran with many campaigns to his credit. Recently, during an inspection on the parade field, Smith appeared with his shoes, and his uniform pressed to perfection. In a word, he was immaculate. Jones was at the same inspection, and although he was no shining example, neither was he sloppy. He relied on the many rows of ribbons and decorations adorning his chest to make an impression for him. Both of these men are constantly dealing with the problems of leadership, but while Smith spends long hours orienting and persuading his men, Jones is constantly barking orders and admonishing those who do not respond. By soliciting suggestions from his troops about how to overcome obstacles, Sergeant Smith usually arrives at a workable solution. Sergeant Jones, on the other hand, relies on his many years of experience to guide him in overcoming these problems. The apparent differences between these two is the way that they deal with their men on a daily basis. Smith places a great deal of importance on respecting every Soldier as a man and as an individual. On the contrary, Jones, although he recognizes that each man has different physical features, desires, and interests, treats each man exactly the same as the next. He is the boss, and soldiers were born to obey his commands.

With the help of a simple sentence, you can crystallize and refine the key points which become the framework of your thought.

TOPIC SENTENCE: Although Sergeant Smith and Sergeant Jones are both effective leaders, they typify two difference concepts of leadership—the persuasive and authoritarian.

- I. Sergeant Smith is less inclined to command than attempt to persuade in various ways.
 - A. Sergeant Smith’s textbook appearance says to his men: this is how you and I should dress.
 - B. Sergeant Smith attempts to orient and persuade as well as to value another’s suggestions.
 - C. Sergeant Smith treats each man as an individual.

- II. Sergeant Jones is less inclined to persuade than to issue commands.
 - A. Sergeant Jones appearance says to his men: unlike you fellows, I'm an old-line sergeant with the credentials and privileges thereof. .
 - B. Sergeant Jones orders everyone and values only his own opinions and judgments.
 - C. Sergeant Jones treats all men alike.

SAMPLE PARAGRAPHS

Some people think cats are all alike but I live with a pair that have quite different personalities. Dark and massive, Arthur ambles around with a dignified trust of his head followed by an unsettled tail. On the other hand, Kelly prances on tiny pointed toes and displays immaculate ears and whiskers due to perpetual bathing. Their daily routines are also a contrast. Sniffing at each chair to find the proper seat, Arthur finally settles at a safe distance from any humans. Kelly has nothing but favorable reactions to people as she nudges the closest hand into a patting position and begins to write ecstatically on a lap. Another parting of opinions comes at feeding time. Kelly, with a scornful look at her portion, dabs in a paw, speedily retracts it, and bustles away. Arthur, would go into mortal combat for a soda cracker, pounces on his dish cramming and gulping to the very bottom.

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What a joy to the palate is fresh fruit! And yet, even the more common varieties have many differences. An apple has a smooth, often freckled skin of crimson or gold, while an orange is orange and covered with craters and valleys of minuscule size. The aroma of an apple is sweet and mellow, that of the orange is richly tart. After a quick polish, you may bite into an apple's crunching goodness. But, alas, poor orange must be stripped of its armor before its dripping sections may be savored.

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Although Linda and Glinda are twins, they are totally different people: Linda has blonde hair, while Glinda has brown hair. Linda is very lady-like and is easily hurt by her emotions. Glinda is more a tom-boy than a lady and is the cause of hurt feelings. You would think Linda was the popular girl, but she's not. Glinda has always been considered the popular girl.