

Comparison/Contrast: In-Class Essay 2 Assignment

Due Date: Saturday, September 12, 2016, before 10:59 pm

Audience: Campus community

Length Requirement: approx. 500-750 words

Assignment: A comparison/contrast essay on two "cultures". This could also include subcultures. The goal, since this is NOT a research paper, is to pick two cultures which with you are intimately familiar. For example, I am familiar with both New Orleans culture and University/Academic culture, because I am a part of both cultures.

Overview:

The comparison/contrast essay focuses on the ways in which things/ideas/people are similar and/or different. Comparison/contrasts are organized **item-by-item (block)** or **point-by-point**. The **thesis** of the comparison/contrast essay clarifies the purpose or conclusion reached in the essay.

Many people are members of a minority group. Some minorities are racial, ethnic, or cultural. Other minorities may be related to lifestyle (e.g. bikers or people with tattoos), interests and hobbies (e.g. spelunkers, paddlers, naturists), similar life-experiences (war veterans, children of alcoholics) or beliefs (Wiccans, UFO abductees, or unusual religious groups. Note: mainline Christianity is NOT a minority group).

Make a generalization about the fears, joys, or contradictions that members of a minority group seem to share. Draw examples from your personal experience and observations.

Goal:

Use comparison/contrast to enhance your and your audience's understanding of the cultures you compare and contrast. Instead of simply summarizing or describing how these topics are similar and/or different, provide a focus or frame for your analysis.

Traps to avoid:

- This is not a research paper; choose cultures you are familiar with. Think "outside the box" when selecting your two cultures.
- Organize well, avoiding repetition.

Some hints on writing this essay:

- Support your judgments with evidence. But use evidence from your personal observations. DO NOT USE RESEARCH! This essay should be from your own point of view and experience.

- Details, and the quality of details, will make or break this paper. Since you're not using research for support, readers must be able to "see" and "hear", etc., your point of view. Show the cultures—don't just tell us.

The **purpose** of this essay is to analyze the differences and/or the similarities of two distinct subjects.

Information about essay evaluation:

As I read your essays, I will be looking for the following:

- A clearly defined topic that you can develop within the space allotted;
- A clearly stated thesis that provides the reader a clear sense of purpose and direction for the essay;
- Specific examples that explain and illustrate your point;
- Reasonable control of grammar and punctuation, with an emphasis on the correct use of commas;
- Appropriate MLA format for the essay and any in-text citations.