

ENG 1101
ESSAY #2 – Comparison and Contrast

“New York is the biggest collection of villages in the world.” -*Alistair Cooke*

Assignment:

One can argue that New York City is actually made up of hundreds of individual cities. While certain similarities span all five boroughs, each neighborhood tends to have its own personality, defining factors and quirks. You could experience a completely different atmosphere from one street to the next, from Brooklyn to Manhattan. For your second essay assignment, you will be examining two separate locations in New York City: the neighborhood where you live, and Times Square.

Using descriptive details drawn from your experience in these places—and careful attention paid to the five senses—you will compare and contrast these two neighborhoods, ultimately arguing your opinion on which one is better, and why.

Process:

Step 1: Gather your information. First, visit Times Square. Explore the environment, pen in hand, taking note of as many keenly observed details as possible. What do you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel? You must also take a digital photograph while at Times Square—this could be an overview shot or a close up of one detail, but make sure that this photograph exemplifies Times Square to you.

Then, walk around your own neighborhood and do the same. Chances are that your neighborhood is so familiar that you don’t always take note of what you see or smell, hear or touch. Write down as many details as possible about the neighborhood where you live. Take a photograph that you think best showcases your neighborhood.

On March 17th, you will post one typed paragraph of detailed observations for each location to OpenLab, along with your photographs (at least one of each neighborhood). We are building on the work you did with descriptive detail for your narrative essay. You must represent at least three of the five senses in each paragraph.

Step 2: Before beginning a draft of this essay, you will need to do some prewriting to help you organize your information. I encourage you to freewrite, brainstorm, ask questions, or make lists to help generate ideas (see Chapter 4 in *Good Writing Made Simple* for more information on how to start and organize your essay). Regardless, you must create a **detailed** outline for your essay before you start drafting. This means that your outline will clearly show whether you have chosen the divided or alternating pattern of organization, as well as the specific categories you have chosen to establish points of comparison. The outline must be typed and printed. You will turn this in on March 19th.

Step 3: Create your first draft. Your introductory paragraph will give an overview of the paper’s topic and must include a thesis statement. Each body paragraph in the essay should be organized around topic sentences, followed by supporting details. Finish with a strong, well-developed conclusion. Please type your draft, and bring **TWO** copies to class on March 26th.

You should use either the divided (subject-by-subject) or alternating (point-by-point) pattern, and should arrange the points of your comparison in a logical, balanced, and dramatic sequence. Consider which subject should be placed in the first position and why. Also, make sure to use transition words in your paragraphs to guide your reader from idea to idea.

Format Guidelines:

- Your final essay should be three to five pages in length, typed in 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced and with 1-inch margins (see “Essay Formatting Guidelines” on OpenLab).
- A cover page is *not necessary*. Put your name, the course and the date in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. Do not forget a title.
- Be sure to add page numbers and staple all pages *before* coming to class.
- Use parenthetical documentation (MLA style) to cite any quotations.
 - o Example: When quoting a text, you will want to show that “this is a quoted sentence from hypothetical page twenty-five” (Author 25).

Grading:

There are six main features that I will look for when grading your essays:

- 1) A clear title and an introduction that includes a powerful thesis.
- 2) A clear comparison that includes specific, well defined categories to showcase similarities and differences.
- 3) Organization and presentation of the material: are you effectively using the divided (subject-by-subject) or alternating (point-by-point) pattern? Are your paragraphs coherent and focused?
- 4) The effort you have put into observing the two specific neighborhoods and your use of concrete details.
- 5) Use of well-structured sentences, clean paragraphs, and proper grammar and spelling.
- 6) Your ability to meet format guidelines and turn in completed observations, photos, prewriting and drafts on time. (Please note that all process work must be turned in with the final essay, and any inability to meet the various deadlines will affect your final grade.)

Due Dates:

Tuesday, March 17th: observations and photographs must be posted to OpenLab before class on this day.

Thursday, March 19th: detailed outline due.

Thursday, March 26th: first draft due in class. You must bring two printed copies for peer review.

Tuesday, March 31st: final draft due in class. You must include your outline, peer review worksheets, and your peer review reflection with the final draft.

****Inability to meet any of these deadlines will affect your final grade. Missing the peer review, or not participating properly, will lower your grade by one letter.**

Example Divided (Subject-by-Subject) Outline

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **BACKGROUND INFO:** Name your two subjects.
- B. **THESIS:** State your purpose (to persuade or inform); if you are merely informing, declaring that intent is your thesis. If you are persuading (passing judgment), then you can have a limited thesis or a full thesis. A limited thesis declares your intent to persuade, but doesn't give away your opinion yet; that is saved for the Conclusion. A full thesis goes ahead and gives your opinion as to which subject is superior. Usually, a limited thesis at this point will help you to remain unbiased in the descriptive Main Body.
- C. **PREVIEW:** List your standards of comparison. (Often, this information is included in your thesis statement.)

II. MAIN BODY

A. FIRST SUBJECT

- 1. **FIRST STANDARD OF COMPARISON**
 - a. TS (topic sentence)
 - b. GE (general explanation)
 - c. SE (specific example)
 - d. CS (concluding sentence)
- 2. **SECOND STANDARD OF COMPARISON**
 - a. TS
 - b. GE
 - c. SE
 - d. CS
- 3. **THIRD STANDARD OF COMPARISON**
 - a. TS
 - b. GE
 - c. SE
 - d. CS

B. SECOND SUBJECT

- 1. **FIRST STANDARD OF COMPARISON**
 - a. TS
 - b. GE
 - c. SE
 - d. CS
- 2. **SECOND STANDARD OF COMPARISON**
 - a. TS
 - b. GE
 - c. SE
 - d. CS
- 3. **THIRD STANDARD OF COMPARISON**
 - a. TS
 - b. GE
 - c. SE
 - d. CS

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Summation of the Standards of Comparison for Both Subjects
- B. Expansion of Thesis
- C. Clincher Statement

Example Alternating (Point-by-Point) Outline

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. BACKGROUND INFO: Name your two subjects.
- B. THESIS: State your purpose (to persuade or inform); if you are merely informing, declaring that intent is your thesis. If you are persuading (passing judgment), then you can have a limited thesis or a full thesis. A limited thesis declares your intent to persuade, but doesn't give away your opinion yet; that is saved for the Conclusion. A full thesis goes ahead and gives your opinion as to which subject is superior. Usually, a limited thesis at this point will help you to remain unbiased in the descriptive Main Body.
- C. PREVIEW: List your standards of comparison. (Often, this information is included in your thesis statement.)

II. MAIN BODY

A. FIRST STANDARD OF COMPARISON

1. FIRST SUBJECT

- a. TS (topic sentence)
- b. GE (general explanation)
- c. SE (specific example)
- d. CS (concluding sentence)

2. SECOND SUBJECT

- a. TS
- b. GE
- c. SE
- d. CS

B. SECOND STANDARD OF COMPARISON

1. FIRST SUBJECT

- a. TS
- b. GE
- c. SE
- d. CS

2. SECOND SUBJECT

- a. TS
- b. GE
- c. SE
- d. CS

C. THIRD STANDARD OF COMPARISON

1. FIRST SUBJECT

- a. TS
- b. GE
- c. SE
- d. CS

2. SECOND SUBJECT

- a. TS
- b. GE
- c. SE
- d. CS

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Summation of the Standards of Comparison for Both Subjects
- B. Expansion of Thesis
- C. Clincher Statement