

Compare & Contrast Essay: Thesis Development Worksheet

Use this worksheet to turn your topic into a clear, arguable, and analytical thesis.

1. Your Chosen Topic

Write the two subjects you will compare.

Subject 1: _____

Subject 2: _____

2. Main Comparison Criteria

List the 3–5 aspects you plan to compare (example: structure, purpose, effectiveness, themes, outcomes).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

3. Notes on Key Similarities

Identify meaningful similarities related to the criteria above.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. Notes on Key Differences

Identify meaningful differences related to the criteria above.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5. Analytical Insight

What bigger idea or conclusion emerges from the comparison?

(Example: what these patterns reveal about effectiveness, philosophy, culture, or purpose.)

Insight:

6. Drafting Your Thesis

Use this formula to create an analytical thesis:

While both [Subject 1] and [Subject 2] share [similarity], they differ in [difference 1], [difference 2], and [difference 3], which shows/reveals/suggests that
_____.

Draft 1:

7. Strength Test for Your Thesis

Check each item:

- Makes a clear argument, not just a statement: Yes / No
- Goes beyond listing similarities and differences: Yes / No
- Reveals what those comparisons mean: Yes / No
- Fits the assignment's length and requirements: Yes / No
- Supported by available evidence: Yes / No

If any item is "No," revise your thesis.

8. Final Thesis Statement

Write your final, polished thesis.
