

The Comparison Essay (LEQ)

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What is it?

A comparison essay is an essay that identifies and analyzes similarities and differences between two things.

- Similarities = things that are the same
- Differences = things that are not the same

What do I need to do?

I need to COMPARE two things. I will figure out if they are similar, different or somewhat similar.

Make a comparison chart.

Helpful Videos & Links

[How to write an LEQ \(Heimler\)](#)

[LEQ Rubric \(Tom Richey\)](#)

Sample Sentence Starters

Thesis Statement

1. _____ and _____ are similar because Claim #1 and Claim #2.
2. _____ and _____ are different because Claim #1 and Claim #2.
3. _____ and _____ are somewhat similar. They both ... (Claim #1 (SIMILARITY)) and (Claim #2 (SIMILARITY)).
However, (Claim #3 (DIFFERENCE)).
4. _____ and _____ are somewhat different because (Claim #1 (DIFFERENCE)) and (Claim #2 (DIFFERENCE)).
However, they both (Claim #3 (SIMILARITY)).
 - a. **These are the best options and the one that you should always try to use.**

Topic Sentences (for each paragraph)

One similarity/difference between _____ and _____ is (claim) because (examples).

What should this essay look like? (Format)

Note: This is a GUIDE. It is meant to help you if you are stuck. It is absolutely not the only way to write a strong and high-scoring essay. Use it to help you out, but do not sacrifice your own writing style or skills to try to fit your answer into this format. You are in AP for a reason - Trust your instincts.

- I. Introduction Paragraph
 - A. Contextualization: What happened immediately before the prompt?
 - B. Thesis Statement with at least two claims.
- II. Contextualization Paragraph: What is the big picture here?
 - A. Suggestion #1:
Discuss what happened BEFORE THE TIME PERIOD and how those events LED TO the events in your thesis (how/why)
 - B. Suggestion #2:
Discuss what happened DURING THE TIME PERIOD, in a place not mentioned in the prompt, and how those events LED TO the events in your thesis (how/why)
- III. Body Paragraphs 1 & 2: Claim #1 & #2 = These should either be about similarities OR differences, but they should be the same. For example: two similarity paragraphs OR two difference paragraphs
 - A. Claim #1
 1. Evidence (1-3 sentences):
 - a) What is the similarity/difference you are talking about?
 - b) What facts do you know about this similarity/difference?
 2. Analysis (2-4 sentences):
 - a) How is this similar/different?
 - b) Why does this similarity/difference exist?
 - c) Why is this similarity/difference important to history? How does it impact other topics?
 - d) How do these ideas connect to your thesis and the prompt?
 - B. Claim #2: Repeat the above for a second paragraph
- IV. Body Paragraph 3: Claim #3 (if you talked about similarities in the first two paragraphs, now discuss a difference, and vice versa)
 - A. Claim #3
 1. Evidence (1-3 sentences):
 - a) What is the similarity/difference you are talking about?
 - b) What facts do you know about this similarity/difference?
 2. Analysis (2-4 sentences):
 - a) How is this similar/different?
 - b) Why does this similarity/difference exist?
 - c) Why is this similarity/difference important to history? How does it impact other topics?
 - d) How do these ideas connect to your thesis and the prompt?
- V. Conclusion
 - A. Restate thesis statement
 - B. Contextualization: What legacy does this leave behind AFTER the time period of the prompt?