

Name: _____

Comparative Analysis Exercise

Step One: Select one of the two works for comparative analysis. Read it carefully, marking the author's main points on your copy of the essay; list those points in the left column. The author likely grouped main points in individual paragraphs, so topic sentences should prove useful in identifying the main points. Also, make note of any particular use of evidence and language. Read the second work and record your observations in the right column.

Main Points in Article A:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Main Points in Article B:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Step Two: Now that you have the main points identified in both essays, find the main points that both articles address; draw lines connecting these shared points. For instance, each essay may offer a definition of a single term or present an opinion on a particular issue. Whether the definitions or opinions are similar or different does not matter at this point. You need only to identify the main points the articles share.

Step Three: After you have identified the shared points, reword and list them in the following spaces. You might find it useful to begin your entries with the words like “Both articles discuss,” and you might note where they agree or disagree.

Shared Main Points:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Step Four: From here, your assignment will be determined by your instructor. You may be asked to select several of these shared points and discuss the similarities or differences of the authors’ opinions, or you might be required to discuss each author’s use of logos, ethos, or pathos. Additionally, you could be asked to provide summary paragraphs or include analysis of the tone presented by each author. Whatever your instructor assigns, this list should provide a better understanding of how the two texts communicate with each other. This exercise should serve as a good starting point for developing a comparative analysis essay.