

## Comparison and contrast Essays:

The most important thing to remember when writing a compare and contrast essay is structure. Structure makes writing the essay easy, as it focuses your topic and it makes it logical. Two classic organizational patterns of a comparison or contrast essay will be discussed. One is called **block arrangement** of ideas; the other is called **point-by-point** or **alternating arrangement** of ideas. Suppose you are interested in showing the differences between vacationing in the mountains and vacationing at the beach. You will then write a contrast composition. One way to arrange your material is to use the *block* arrangement which is to write about vacationing in the mountains in one paragraph and vacationing at the beach in the next. If you mention a particular point in the mountains paragraph, you must mention the same point in the beach paragraph, and *in the same order*. Study the following outline, which shows this kind of organization. The introductory paragraph is followed by the *mountains* paragraph, the *beach* paragraph, then the conclusion; the fully developed essay is just four paragraphs.

### Block Arrangement:

I.	Introduction in which you state your purpose which is to discuss the differences between vacationing in the mountains or at the beach
II.	Mountain A. Climate B. Types of Activities C. Location
III.	Beach A. Climate B. Types of Activities C. Location
IV.	Conclusion

I.	Introduction in which you state your purpose which is to discuss differences between vacationing in the mountains or at the beach
II.	First difference between mountains and beaches is climate A. Mountains B. Beach
III.	Second difference between mountains and beaches are types of activities A. Mountains B. Beach
IV.	Third difference between mountains and beaches is the location A. Mountains B. Beach
V.	Conclusion

### Point by Point Arrangement:

**Introduction:** This section should be a statement on the topic of your essay specifically what you are going to contrast; this should be followed up with general sentences giving a background on your subject.

**Body:** This section should contain multiple paragraphs discussing the differences between the subject points in your essay, the points should be in a logical order, don't introduce wayward ideas or point that are off topic or not directly related to the topic.

**Conclusion:** The final paragraph should bring all the points together you should restate your thesis in a different yet confident manner. This is where you bring in the big picture, on your subject which is important in science. If discussing the morphological differences between basal fishes and those highly derived fishes you should mention it in the context of evolution. If you are discussing cellular mechanisms you should discuss why there are differences (mitosis and meiosis).

### **Summary:**

1. Know what organizational style you are using. Whether you use the *block* arrangement or *point-by-point* arrangement, you should be able to identify it. Being able to identify your organization will not only help you in the organization of your own writing, but it will also help your reader follow the points you make.
2. State your organization. Remember the "straight line of development" that was discussed in the introduction requires that you "tell your audience what you are going to tell them; then tell them; then tell them what you told them." An important objective in academic writing is clarity, and stating your organization always contributes to clarity. Err on the side of clarity!
3. Keep your audience in mind. Be sure your reader can relate to your topic. After you finish writing, read your essay from the perspective of your audience. How will they respond to your ideas? Will they understand what you have written? Will they agree with your main point? Will the support appear logical to them?

Sources: <http://www.eslbee.com/comptcont.htm>