

How to Write a Comparative Academic Essay



Engage with the question:

- Deconstruct the question – what are you being asked to do? What is your focus?
- What are the keywords?
- How are you interpreting the question in terms of your chosen texts?
- What is your view? What are you trying to prove? How do you respond to the question?

Introduction:

- Give an overview of your argument. What will you focus on in this essay?
- What is your view / argument that you will prove?
- Include your thesis statement.
- Draw the two texts together in terms of your thesis statement.
- Give an overview of the context and forms of the texts.
- Let the examiner know how you have interpreted the question and which direction your essay is going in.
- What is the purpose of your essay? What are the main ideas in response to the question.
- Be focused and precise.

Main body

Several clear and focused points – use topic sentences that directly link back to your introduction and that bring both texts together.

Each point or section should:

- Support the thesis established in the introduction.
- Have a topic sentence: this should be a declarative statement that makes reference to the task.
- Include clear and relevant examples that reinforce your point AND that you can discuss in detail. You may need more than one per section.
- Analyse authorial choices and the effect: implies; suggests; reveals; reflects.
- Link back to your main point / topic sentence.

Structure of each section:

- Topic sentence that draws the texts together and makes a clear point in response to the question and your own thesis statement.
- More focused and specific point that links to Text 1
- Analysis of evidence from text 1 with reference to the main point
- **Linking statement to Text 2**
- More focused and specific point that links to Text 2
- Analysis of evidence from text 2 with reference to the main point
- Compare text 2 in relation to text 1 and what you have chosen to analyse
- Mini concluding statement that links back to your thesis and your main topic sentence for this section.

Conclusion

- Return to the question / task.
- What have you proven? How do your points support your argument.
- What is the significance of the texts in relation to the question / task?
- Brief summary of your main points.
- Overall, how do both texts present ideas? How/why do they differ or share similarities?
- Is there a point or moral?
- What is your solution / answer to the question?
- Don't introduce new information.

