What this handout is about
This handout will assist you first to decide whether a specific venture is asking for comparison/contrast and then to generate a listing of similarities and differences, determine which similarities and variations to the center of attention on, and prepare your paper so that it will be clear and effective. It will also explain how you can (and why you should) increase a thesis that goes past “Thing A and Thing B are similar in many methods but exceptional in others.”

Introduction
In your career as a student, you’ll come upon many special kinds of writing assignments, each with its personal requirements. One of the most frequent is the comparison/contrast essay, in which you center of attention on the methods in which sure things or ideas—usually two of them—are similar to (this is the comparison) and/or one of a kind from (this is the contrast) one another. By assigning such essays, your instructors are encouraging you to make connections between texts or ideas, have interaction in indispensable thinking, and go past mere description or precis to generate fascinating analysis: when you reflect on similarities and differences, you reap a deeper understanding of the items you are comparing, their relationship to each other, and what is most essential about them.

Recognizing comparison/contrast in assignments
Some assignments use words—like compare, contrast, similarities, and differences—that make it effortless for you to see that they are asking you to evaluate and/or contrast. Here are a few hypothetical examples:

*Compare and contrast Frye’s and Bartky’s money owed of oppression.

*Compare WWI to WWII, figuring out similarities in the causes, development, and consequences of the wars.

*Contrast Wordsworth and Coleridge; what are the principal variations in their poetry?

Notice that some topics ask solely for comparison, others only for contrast, and others for both.

But it's no longer always so handy to inform whether or not a mission is asking you to include comparison/contrast. And in some cases, comparison/contrast is solely section of the essay—you commence by way of evaluating and/or contrasting two or more matters and then use what you've realized to assemble an argument or evaluation. Consider these examples, noticing the language that is used to ask for the comparison/contrast and whether the comparison/contrast is solely one part of a large assignment:

*Choose a specific thought or theme, such as romantic love, death, or nature, and think about how it is treated in two Romantic poems.

*How do the different authors we have studied so far outline and describe oppression?

*Compare Frye's and Bartky's accounts of oppression. What does each mean about women's collusion in their very own oppression?

Which is extra accurate?
*In the texts we've studied, soldiers who served in one of a kind wars provide differing debts of their experiences and emotions both all through and after the fighting. What commonalities are there in these accounts? What factors do you suppose are accountable for their differences?

You may additionally choose to test out our handout on Understanding Assignments for extra

tips.
Using comparison/contrast for all types of writing projects
Sometimes you may prefer to use comparison/contrast strategies in your own pre-writing work to get thoughts that you can later use for an argument, even if comparison/contrast isn't an official requirement for the paper you're writing. For example, if you desired to argue that Frye's account of oppression is higher than each de Beauvoir's and Bartky's, evaluating and contrasting the predominant arguments of those three authors may assist you construct your evaluation—even even though the theme may also no longer have asked for comparison/contrast and the lists of similarities and differences you generate may additionally no longer show up somewhere in the final draft of your paper.

Discovering similarities and differences
Making a Venn plan or a chart can help you shortly and correctly evaluate and distinction two or more things or ideas. To make a Venn diagram, in reality, draw some overlapping circles, one circle for each object you're considering. In the central place where they overlap, list the qualities the two objects have in common. Assign every one of the areas that don't overlap; in those areas, you can list the features that make things different.
To make a chart, figure out what criteria you want to focal point on comparing the items. Along the left facet of the page, list each of the criteria. Across the top, listing the names of the items. You have to then have a box per object for every criterion; you can fill the bins in and then survey what you've discovered.
As you generate points of comparison, reflect on consideration on the motive and content material of the project and the center of attention of the class. What do you think the professor desires you to learn by means of doing this comparison/contrast? How does it suit what you have been studying in so many ways and with the other assignments in the course? Are there any clues about what to focal point on in the venture itself?
Here are some well-known questions about the distinctive types of things you may have to compare. These are by no means whole or definitive lists; they're just here to provide you some ideas—you can generate your own questions for these and different kinds of comparison. You may additionally choose to start by using the usage of the questions newshounds traditionally ask: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? If you're speaking about objects, you may also reflect on consideration on common residences like size, shape, color, sound, weight, taste, texture, smell, number, duration, and location.
Two historic durations or events

*When did they occur—do you understand the date(s) and duration? What befell or modified at some point in each? Why are they significant?
*What types of work did human beings do? What kinds of relationships did they have? What did they value?
*What kinds of governments have been there? Who were the essential people involved?

*What brought on activities in these periods, and what penalties did they have later on?
Two ideas or theories
*What are they about?
*Did they originate at some particular time?
*Who created them? Who uses or defends them?
*What is the central focus, claim, or goal of each? What conclusions do they offer?
*How are they applied to situations/people/things/etc.?
*Which looks extra possible to you, and why? How huge is their scope?
*What variety of proof is commonly offered for them?
Two pieces of writing or art
*What are their titles? What do they describe or depict?
*What is their tone or mood? What is their form?
*Who created them? When were they created? Why do you suppose they were created as they were? What issues do they address?
Do you suppose one is of a greater great or higher benefit than the other(s)—and if so, why?
For writing: what plot, characterization, setting, theme, tone, and kind of narration are used?
Two people
*Where are they from? How ancient are they? What is the gender, race, class, etc. of each?
*What, if anything, are they regarded for? Do they have any relationship to every other?
*What are they like? What did/do they do? What do they believe? Why are they interesting?
*What stands out most about every one of them?
Deciding what to focus on
By now you have possibly generated a large list of similarities and differences—congratulations! Next, you must determine which of them are interesting, important, and relevant enough to be blanketed in your paper. Ask yourself these questions:
*What's relevant to the assignment?
*What's applicable to the course?
*What's interesting and informative?
*What matters to the argument you are going to make?
*What's fundamental or central (and desires to be referred to even if obvious)?
*Overall, what's greater important—the similarities or the differences?

Suppose that you are writing a paper comparing two novels. For most literature classes, the reality that they each use Caslon kind (a type of typeface, like the fonts you may additionally use in your writing) is not going to be relevant, nor is the truth that one of them has a few illustrations and the other has none; literature instructions are greater possibilities to focal point on subjects like characterization, plot, setting, the writer's style, and intentions, language, central themes, and so forth. However, if you were writing a paper for a type on typesetting or on how illustrations are used to decorate novels, the typeface, and presence or absence of illustrations would possibly be definitely essential to include in your final paper.

Sometimes a precise point of evaluation or contrast would possibly be applicable but not terribly revealing or interesting. For example, if you are writing a paper about Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" and Coleridge's "Frost at Midnight," pointing out that they each have nature as a central theme is applicable (comparisons of poetry regularly discuss about themes) however no longer terribly interesting; your class has in all likelihood already had many discussions about the Romantic poets' fondness for nature. Talking about the specific methods nature is depicted or the different factors of nature that are emphasized might be more interesting and show a more sophisticated grasp of the poems.