**Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay**

Apples and oranges. All you need do in writing a compare and contrast essay is take two subjects and show their similarities and their differences.

**Brainstorm**

Before you begin writing, find similarities and differences between your subjects.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Subject | Similarities | Differences |
| Apples & Oranges | Both are tree fruits, grown commercially in large orchards | Oranges tropical, apples temperate |
| Apple juice and orange juice | Apple juice has no pulp. Orange juice has pulp. |
| Sauce | Pulp and peeling from oranges is used in sauce. Applesauce contains only the pulp of the pared apple. |

**Introduction**

Use your essay introduction to introduce both subjects and present the points you intend to make.

* **Ex:** However, although apples and oranges are both fruits, they are each ripe with differences, some of which are shown in the way they are grown and processed.

**The Body**

Format the body of your compare and contrast essay in one of two ways: **point-by-point**, or **block**

**Point by Point**

1. You can compare and contrast different elements of each subject in each paragraph of your essay body.

**Example 1:**

Body Paragraph 1.

(Compare) Apples and oranges are both tree fruits often grown commercially in large orchards. (Contrast) However, apples grow in every climate and oranges need tropical temperatures to produce fruit.

Body Paragraph 2.

(Compare) Although both fruits can be juiced, (Contrast) apples are pressed and only the juice is bottled while both pulp and juice is squeezed from oranges.

Body Paragraph 3.

(Compare) Again, while fruit sauce is made from both apples and oranges, usually applesauce comes from the pared and pureed apple (Contrast) while orange sauce may contain both the rind and the pulp of the orange.

**Block**

1. You can use one paragraph to discuss one subject, the second paragraph to discuss the other and the final paragraph of the body to compare and contrast the two subjects.

**Example 2:**

Body Paragraph 1.

Apples are a tree fruit that is often grown commercially in large orchards. As well as eaten from the tree, apples are also both pressed into apple juice or pureed and processed into applesauce.

Body Paragraph 2.

Oranges are also a tree fruit, often grown commercially in large orchards. Like apples, they can be eaten from the tree, squeezed into juices or processed into orange sauce.

Body Paragraph 3.

(Compare and contrast points discussed in paragraphs one and two.) One big difference between apples and oranges is the way they are processed. Notice that while apples are pressed for juice, orange juice is squeezed from the orange. Another difference is that while apple juice contains only the liquid pressed from the apple, orange juice may also contain the pulp from the orange. Although applesauce contains the pureed pulp of the pared apple, orange sauce may contain bits of orange rind as well as the pulp of the fruit.

**Additionally**:

* You can also limit your essay to discuss only one similarity and one difference between the two subjects.
* You can structure you essay to compare only similarities or to contrast only differences between your two subjects.

Note: To avoid confusing your reader, it’s best to follow the same order of representation in each paragraph. For instance, in example one notice that the order is subject one (apples,) comparison, and then contrast and followed by subject two (oranges,) comparison, and then contrast.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Cue Words | |
| Similarities   Is similar to   Both   Also   Too   As well   Like | Differences   On the other hand   However   But   Although   Unlike   While |

**Transitions: Cue Words**

An important technique in writing the compare and contrast essay is to use cue words. Cue words are clues to whether you are comparing your subjects or contrasting them and make it easier for your reader to understand your points.

**Conclusion**

Like in any essay, finish your essay by restating your thesis, summarizing the points you made in the body, and making a definitive judgment on the analysis you presented.

* Why does it matter that you compared and/or contrasted these subjects? Why should I, the reader, care?