

Comparative Analysis Essay

Description and Purpose

The Comparative Analysis Essay (CAE) requires you to compare an image, literary device, or idea across two texts that we have read thus far. Your final draft should engage equally with both texts, describing and comparing how your chosen element functions in each text. Additionally, your final draft should analyze what this comparison reveals about the texts themselves and explain why such a comparison is important.

Your target audience for this essay is your ENGL 238 peers, so you can assume that they are familiar with the source material as well as the terms that you incorporate. (For instance, you do not need to define “characterization” or explain the plot of a text.) Additionally, you should not conduct any research for this essay; rather, I am interested in seeing how effectively you can use textual evidence from two primary sources to compare a particular element.



Assessment

The final draft of your CAE should be 1,000-1,250 words (excluding your Works Cited page) and formatted in [standard MLA format](#) (9th edition; double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, on a Word document with 1-inch margins) with correct in-text citations. The essay should contain an introductory paragraph (including a strong thesis), multiple support paragraphs (following the PIE+T model), and a conclusion paragraph.

The CAE will be assessed using [this rubric](#). Successful essays will contain an argument that is coherent, compelling, and well-supported by textual evidence and thorough explanations. To avoid violating Purdue’s [Policy on Academic Dishonesty](#), essays should contain [parenthetical citations](#) and a [Works Cited page](#) containing entries for every text you quote or paraphrase.

Resources

For more guidance on the following subjects, please refer to the corresponding resources:

- Literary devices → “Definitions” submodule on Brightspace
- Close reading and the PIE+T model → “Introduction to Close Reading” submodule on Brightspace
- Suggestions for crafting the Comparative Analysis Essay → [“Tips for Comparative Analysis Essay”](#)
- Samples of successful Comparative Analysis Essays → [Student Samples](#) Drive Folder