Compare and Contrast Essay Pack | Grades 4–7



Teacher Guide

Overview:

This packet uses two informational passages about related animals to guide students through compare-and-contrast reading and writing. Students read both texts, collect short-phrase notes, plan with text evidence, revise, and complete an evidence-based written response.

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Materials Included:

- Baboon Passage
- Mandrill Passage
- Baboon Quiz + Answer Key
- Compare-and-Contrast Organizer
- Prewriting Organizer
- Revision Checklist
- Compare-and-Contrast Rubric

Instructional Focus:

- Read two informational texts about related animals.
- Identify meaningful similarities and differences in adaptations and ecological roles.
- Use accurate facts and details from both passages.
- Write a clear compare-and-contrast response.

Suggested Lesson Sequence:

- Read both passages; complete the Baboon Quiz as a comprehension check.
- Use the Compare-and-Contrast Organizer to collect short-phrase notes.

• Complete the Prewriting Organizer to choose the strongest comparisons and evidence.

• Have students write their compare-and-contrast response using evidence from both passages.

• Use the Revision Checklist to improve clarity, evidence, and conventions.

• Score the final response with the rubric or use the rubric during conferencing.

Differentiation and Support:

• Model one evidence-based similarity and one evidence-based difference before independent work.

• Allow partner talk before writing.

• Provide compare-and-contrast sentence starters for students who need extra support.

• For additional challenge, have Grades 6–7 use the extension to analyze how the writers present information.

Assessment:

• Use the Baboon Quiz as a reading-comprehension check for the baboon passage.

• Use the organizer and Prewriting Organizer as formative assessment.

• Use the revision checklist for self-checking before final scoring.

• Use the rubric to score the finished compare-and-contrast response.

Standards Alignment (Grades 4–7):

Grade 4:

• RI.4.9 Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

• W.4.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

• W.4.4 Produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Grade 5:

• RI.5.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

• W.5.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

• W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

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Grade 6:

• RI.6.9 Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another.

• W.6.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information.

• W.6.4 Produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Grade 7:

• RI.7.9 Analyze how two or more authors write about the same topic by shaping their presentations of key information differently.

• W.7.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information.

• W.7.4 Produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Grades 6–7 Extension: Comparing Authors' Presentations

• Ask students: How do the writers present survival in African habitats differently? Compare the baboon passage's emphasis on intelligence, cooperation, adaptability, and predator defense with the mandrill passage's emphasis on rainforest adaptation, social hierarchy, coloration, and conservation. Identify one similarity and one difference in emphasis or organization. Cite one detail from each passage and explain how the writers' choices shape understanding.

• Check that responses compare the writers' presentations, cite both texts, and explain how differences in emphasis or organization affect understanding.

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