

Two Ways to Structure a Comparison or Contrast

According to *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Writing*, there are two main organizational structures to use when writing a comparison or contrast (this handout reproduces a slightly modified version of Figure 18.6):

1. Side-by-Side Pattern [or One-example-at-a-time Pattern]

Project: Analyzing the four main differences between candidates A and B

Candidate A

- Foreign policy
- Economic policy
- Social policy
- Judicial policy

Candidate B

- Foreign policy
- Economic policy
- Social policy
- Judicial policy

2. Back-and-Forth Pattern for Comparison/Contrast [or Point-by-point Pattern]

Project: Analyzing the four main differences between candidates A and

Foreign policy

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

Economic policy

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

Social policy

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

Judicial policy

- Candidate A
- Candidate B

In-class Exercise

1. Review the 2-3 paragraph comparison/contrast you wrote for homework. Have you used a side-by-side or a back-and-forth/point-by-point pattern?
2. In class today, write a new version of the 2-3 paragraph comparison/contrast, this time using the other method. (So, if you wrote a side-by-side comparison for homework, now write a point-by-point version, and vice versa.). Make sure to use some transitional expressions to help indicate the relationship between the ideas and examples.
3. Now, evaluate the two versions. Which seems more effective for this particular pair of readings? Explain your answer (1-2 sentences).

You will turn in your homework and also this in-class exercise today.

Work Cited

Ramage, John D., John C. Bean, and June Johnson. *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Writing*. 5th ed. New York: Pearson, 2009.