

**Structure of your first essay**

- Use a Venn diagram to decide the similarities and differences
- Group them into useful structures
- Decide if your essay will emphasize the differences or similarities

**Similarities to Differences Strategy:** Intro, Similarities, Differences, Conclusion

**Differences to Similarities:** Intro, Differences, Similarities, Conclusion

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**The Introduction** has 3 parts:

- **Hook:** an attention grabbing open
  - **Bridge:** a statement connecting the hook to the thesis
  - **Thesis:** the argument your paper advances
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**Strategies for the Hook Include:**

- **Shocking** the reader with a statistic
  - **Telling** an interesting story
  - **Analogizing** by making a useful comparison
  - **Misdirecting** the reader by suggesting another topic
  - **Personalizing** by telling an anecdote about yourself or experiences
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**The Bridge Connects the hook to the Thesis Statement**

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**Thesis Statement in a Compare Contrast Essay**

- Should be **a one sentence** claim that previews the arguments you will make in your essay.
  - It should tell the reader whether you believe the similarities or differences are more important
  - It should specifically identify any major claims you intend to make in the piece.
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**Sample Thesis Statements:**

**Bad:** Christianity and Islam were similar in some ways but different in others.

**Better:** Christianity and Islam were similar in origin but different in practice.

**Best:** While both Christianity and Islam are Abrahamic faiths rooted in belief in one god, their differences in practice and faith make them profoundly different faiths.

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*When he came to high school, Gary thought everything would be different: no more teachers hovering over him to make sure he turned in his work, more opportunity for freedom, and a greater sense of responsibility. Once he got to Helena High, though, he discovered much of the same babying he'd hated in middle school. Gary's experience is like that of many high school students who find high school to be more of the same. Despite Differences in grading and the amount of homework, high school and middle school are largely the same for students in Helena.*

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