

# Aim: How do you organize an essay comparing and contrasting Ancient Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CIVILIZATION	MESOPOTAMIA	EGYPT	MORE SIMILAR OR DIFFERENT
GOVERNMENT/CITIES			
RELIGION			
WRITING & KEEPING RECORDS			
SOCIAL CLASSES			
PUBLIC WORKS			
ART & ARCHITECTURE			
JOB SPECIALIZATION			

# Compare and Contrast: Mesopotamia/Ancient Egypt

- Must have similarities and differences
- Two of one and one of the other.

# Thesis Statement

- The central argument or point you are trying to make in your essay
- Analysis – because statement (Why?)

Introduction

Historical  
Context

Thesis  
Statement

# Historical context

- This is background information that use in your introduction.
  - Go back a little before the time period.

# Thesis Statement

- **One or two sentences that expresses your position.**
- Although Mesopotamia and Egypt were similar in that \_\_\_\_\_, they were mostly different, Because \_\_\_\_\_, they were different in that \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Historical Context and Thesis Statement

10,000 years ago, the Neolithic revolution occurred during which man learned agriculture and began to settle down. Over several thousand years, these human societies increasingly became more sophisticated and civilizations with complex governments, writing systems, and cities developed. Two civilizations that emerged by 3,000 BCE were located in Mesopotamia and along the Nile River in Egypt. Although these civilizations were different in the systems of government they developed, they were overall mostly similar in their economies and religions because they shared a similar location along rivers and because religion, at a time when science was not well developed, helped explain natural phenomena.

**Comparing:** Shows the similarities between two topics or ideas.

**Contrasting:** Shows the differences between two topics or ideas.



# **BODY PARAGRAPH(S)**

- **Each body paragraph should start with a topic sentence that will state either a similarity or a difference previewed in your thesis statement.**
- **Then, you must provide evidence to support your topic sentence. Preferably, the evidence in your body paragraph will directly compare/contrast the two societies.**
- **Follow evidence with analysis when appropriate.**

# Topic Sentence

- a sentence that expresses the main idea of the paragraph in which it occurs.

# Transitional Words

Use transitional words when writing a compare-contrast assignment to show the relationship between your ideas and to connect your main points

## Transitional Words showing Comparison:

- in comparison
- in the same way
- comparably
- equally
- equivalently
- in a similar manner
- likewise
- similarly
- moreover

## Transitional Words showing Contrast:

- but
- conversely
- however
- in contrast
- on the contrary
- on the other hand
- otherwise
- rather
- though
- whereas
- yet

# Conclusion outline

- Topic sentence. Fresh rephrasing of thesis statement.
- Supporting sentences. Summarize or wrap up the main points in the body of the essay. Explain how ideas fit together.
- Closing sentence. Final words. Connects back to the introduction. Provides a sense of closure.

# Three ways of organizing your ideas in comparative essays

- **Block Method** - the writer tells about the first civilization in one section and then everything about the second civilization in the next. The points covered should be in the same order in both sections.
- **Similarities-to-Differences Method** - the writer introduces tells those aspects of two or more societies that are similar and in the next section, discusses the selected differences.
- **Point-by-Point Method** - a specific aspect of both civilizations is discussed in one section. The subsequent sections discuss different aspects, one topic per section. Each topic is analyzed in regard to each civilization.
- There are three main things to pay attention to as you write a comparison and contrast paper:
  1. Purpose & Supporting Details
  2. Organization & Structure
  3. Transitions & Coherence
- In addition, be sure to pay attention to the usual requirements for writing, such as spelling, punctuation, and grammar.