

How Can You Explain This?

What do you know about old and new buildings? What information about buildings could you share with others? Information can be presented in many ways. For example, you can compare two things, such as the buildings in the photograph on page 144 of your textbook.

Try It! How could you compare the two buildings? Take notes as you consider this question. Then, participate in an extended discussion with your class. Review your ideas, and discuss your comparison.

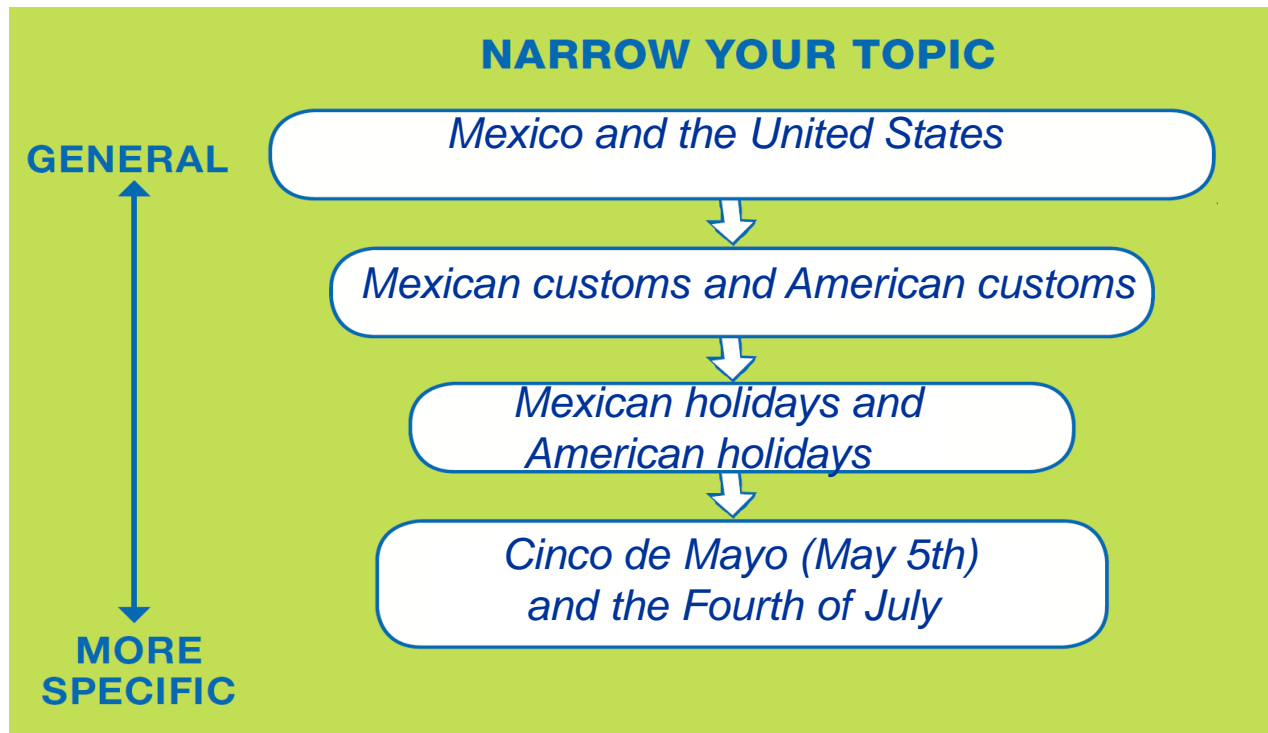
- How are these two buildings similar?
- How are these two buildings different?
- What details would you use to describe the buildings?

Prewriting

Choose And Narrow Your Topic

Some topics are too broad to cover in a compare-and-contrast essay. By narrowing your topic, you can focus on specific similarities and differences.

Apply It! Use a graphic organizer like this one to narrow your topic. Write your general topic in the top box, and keep narrowing your topic as you move down the chart. Your last box should hold your narrowest topic, which will be the new focus of your compare-and-contrast essay.



Prewriting

Plan Your Essay

Use a graphic organizer like this one to state your thesis and identify details that show how your subjects are alike and different. When it is complete, you will be ready to write your first draft.

Develop Your Comparisons and Contrasts

Thesis: _____

Cinco de Mayo	Fourth of July
Different	Different
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>not same as Mexican Independence Day (Sept. 16)</i>• <i>mariachi bands</i>• <i>Mexican costumes</i>• <i>Mexican crafts</i>• _____• _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>American Independence Day</i>• <i>fireworks</i>• <i>readings of Declaration of Independence</i>• _____• _____
Alike	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>celebrate important events in nations' history</i>• <i>patriotic</i>• <i>parades</i>• <i>food and drink</i>• _____• _____	

The Organization of an Expository Essay

I. Introduction

Grab Your Reader

- Attention-grabbing opening
- Thesis that states what you are comparing and contrasting

II. Body

Compare and Contrast

•Points of comparison and contrast

Point-by-Point

- Point 1: Topic A and B
- Point 2: Topic A and B
- Point 3: Topic A and B

• Logical organization of points

Block Organization

- Topic A: Points 1, 2, and 3
- Topic B: Points 1, 2, and 3

III. Conclusion

Wrap It Up

- Restatement of thesis
- Memorable ending

Revising: Making It Better

Now that you have finished your first draft, you are ready to revise. You can use the guide below for making changes to improve your draft. Remember—you can use the steps in any order.

Replace . . .	Add . . .	Delete . . .	Reorder . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words that are not specific• Words that are overused• Sentences that are unclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New information• Descriptive adjectives and adverbs• Rhetorical or literary devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unrelated ideas• Sentences that sound good, but do not make sense• Repeated words or phrases• Unnecessary details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• So most important points are last• To make better sense or to flow better• So details support main ideas

Fine-Tune Your Draft

Apply It! Use these revision suggestions to prepare your final draft, after rethinking how well you have addressed questions of purpose, audience, and genre.

- **Choose Effective Transitions to Convey Meaning** To ensure your ideas flow logically, use transitions between sentences and between paragraphs. Use transitions to clarify relationships between points and to be certain that you have a consistent point of view.
- **Ensure Internal and External Coherence** To present a cohesive essay within each section and as a whole, make sure that ideas, sentences, and paragraphs are organized in a logical sequence and that they flow easily.
- **Check Consistent Point of View** Make sure that the entire essay uses the same person, or voice, consistently. For example, avoid switching from first-person “I” to second-person “she.”

Editing: Making It Correct

As you edit, think about whether or not you have used **transitions** effectively. A transition is a word or phrase that creates a clear relationship between ideas.

In the United States, wolves are a protected species, which means they are in danger of becoming extinct. Coyotes, on the other hand, have an incredible talent for adapting.... Thus, while coyotes and wolves look alike, their behaviors and situations are different.

Perhaps you identified the transition *on the other hand*, which makes clear the contrast between the first two sentences in the passage.

The transition *Thus* makes clear the cause-and-effect relationship between the last paragraph and the paragraphs that came before it.

Grammar Mini-Lesson: Commas With Transitions

Most **transitions** should be set off from the rest of the sentence by **commas**. The comma may be omitted after a short introductory transition if the sentence is clear without it.

Try It! Identify two transitions in this passage. Also indicate if any commas need to be added.

The Fourth of July celebrates American independence. In contrast Cinco de Mayo commemorates a Mexican victory in a battle. Accordingly it is a celebration of Mexican culture.

Publish Your Essay

Get your compare-and-contrast essay ready for presentation so you can share what you learned with others. Use this chart to identify a way to publish your essay for the appropriate audience

If your audience is...	...then publish it by...
Classmates and others at your school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submitting it to a school newspaper or magazine• Creating a podcast for classmates to hear
Your local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submitting it to a local print or online newspaper• Reading and discussing it on local public-access TV
The larger community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Posting it online and inviting responses• Entering it in a regional or national essay contest