

COMPARISON ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

Revise and expand either your in-class writing assignment or your midterm essay as a formal, academic comparison paper. **You must attach the original in-class writing assignment or midterm to your rewritten comparison essay.**

Length: 4-6 pages

Sources: You may use your notes from class and your textbook, but I do not want you to use any other outside sources. This is not a research paper; it is about your own visual and contextual analysis. The purpose of this essay is to get you to work on formalizing your own writing and your own ideas.

Organization: Your paper must have an **introductory paragraph** that introduces the works that will be compared and that contains a clearly stated **thesis statement**.^{*} The thesis statement should make a point about the comparison, which you will explore throughout your essay. Your paper should end with a **conclusion paragraph** that sums up your essay. You may organize the body of your paper however you chose.

Thesis example: The Parthenon and the Pantheon are both temples for the worship of gods, however the structures differ greatly, reflecting differences between Ancient Greek and Roman culture.

For help organizing your comparison, see "Writing a Comparison" excerpt from *A Short Guide to Writing about Art* (scanned on blackboard.)

^{*}Avoid introductions that make broad statements about art historical change. Indicate what you will be discussing in your introductory paragraph.

Content: Make sure to compare the works visually and contextually. Your paper must address the following questions. (You can address them in separate sections of the paper or integrate them.)

- How do these works compare and/or contrast visually?
- How can these formal differences be explained by the historic or cultural context that these works were produced in?

Remember the difference between description and visual analysis: An essay is a formal analysis rather than a description if it explains *how* the described object works. For example:

Description: "Menkaure's body is very muscular."

Formal Analysis: "Menkaure's muscular body shows his strength and power."

Writing Guidelines:

Your paper should be free of grammatical and spelling errors. It should be organized logically – paragraphs should begin with a topic sentence followed by supporting sentences.

If English is your second language or if you are having trouble writing, visit the Learning Center (1st floor Boylan Hall) with a draft of the paper or visit the writing tutors at the Meier Bernstein Art Library (5300 Boylan.) Also, please feel free to come to my office hours with paper questions.