

Workshop: Mon. 10/31: Essay #2: Comparative Analysis Essay**Due: Two copies of workshop letters; marked-up drafts.**

For next class, review each essay twice. First, read the piece aloud. Then read it silently, writing in marginal comments/ suggestions. Type a letter (1- 1 ½ pgs.) to each writer; make two copies of the letters. Your letters should let your fellow students know a few specific strong points in the essay, as well as two or three specific things that need work. We are interested primarily in the larger issues: voice, comparative argument, use of secondary sources and organization. We will focus secondarily on “polishing” the essay in terms of grammar, punctuation, etc. Here are some questions to consider:

1. Do the title and introduction engage you as a reader and set a context for the essay? Does the writer’s choice of voice seem appropriate to the topic and argument s/he is making? If not, what suggestions would you make? Does the writer provide a context for understanding the importance of the topic?
2. Does the writer adequately compare different viewpoints on an issue? Is each view fairly and equally presented? Does the organization of the comparative analysis work well? (Typically writers choose between two strategies: (a) present one side first, then the other (A/B) or alternate between positions, exploring different aspects of each (A/B/A/B...) Can you make suggestions to improve the organizational structure? Note: a good test of a comparative analysis essay is to see if the piece can adequately educate a motivated reader about different sides of an issue.
3. Has the author chosen appropriate secondary sources representing different points of view? Do the sources seem credible? Has s/he integrated secondary sources well and quoted from those sources appropriately? (Are quotes too long or too short?) How can s/he could improve in this area? Are there any other secondary sources (or types of sources) that you would suggest?
4. (If applicable) Does the writer integrate the interview material from his/her community research well? (If the writer has not yet included the community research, you can discuss this in the workshop.)
5. How effective is the conclusion in dynamically closing the piece? Does the writer effectively stimulate reflection about different sides of an issue? Alternately, does the author present her or his view clearly? (Remember that writers can either affirm the importance of considering different viewpoints or take a stance.)
6. How can the writer strengthen the draft on the paragraph, sentence or word level? Here you might comment on such issues as paragraph cohesion (are there any paragraphs in which the sentences might be reordered?), word and sentence structure repetition, run-on sentences, and overuse of being verbs and passive verb constructions.