

## Reading the Question

- Read the question carefully so you know what you need to specifically compare.
- You will usually be given a theme, such as animals, the environment, etc.
- You might also be given prompts to focus on, such as the writers' language, their use of sentence structure, and how they achieve their purposes.



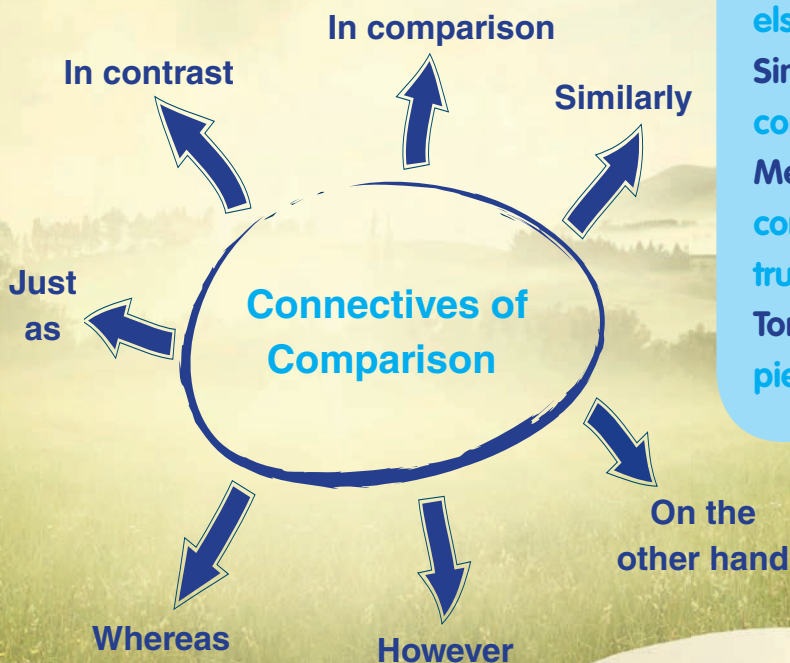
Come up with a similarity or difference about how the writers approach the theme.

Identify and quote specific features of language or structure used by the writers.

Explain how this helps to get across their ideas about the theme.

## Connectives

- Use connectives of comparison to show the examiner that you are comparing.



## Autobiography ➤

a text written by someone about their own life (whereas a biography is written about someone else's life).

**Simile ➤** a descriptive comparison, using like or as.

**Metaphor ➤** a descriptive comparison that claims to be true, rather than like or as.

**Tone ➤** the emotion in a piece of writing or speech.



## Coming Up With Ideas

- Look at these extracts of modern non-fiction, focussed on mothers. The first is from an **autobiography**, the second is from a speech at an awards ceremony. A student has underlined features of language and structure that stood out to them.

My mother is scraping a piece of burned toast out of the kitchen window, a crease of annoyance across her forehead. This is not an occasional occurrence, a once-in-awhile hiccup in a busy mother's day. My mother burns the toast as surely as the sun rises each morning. In fact, I doubt if she has ever made a round of toast in her life that failed to fill the kitchen with plumes of throat-catching smoke. I am nine now and have never seen butter without black bits in it.

It is impossible not to love someone who makes toast for you. People's failings, even major ones such as when they make you wear short trousers to school, fall into insignificance as your teeth break through the rough, toasted crust and sink into the doughy cushion of white bread underneath.

(from 'Toast' by Nigel Slater)

And last, my mom. I don't think you know what you did. You had my brother when you were 18 years old. Three years later, I came out. The odds were stacked against us. Single parent with two boys by the time you were 21 years old. Everybody told us we weren't supposed to be here. We went from apartment to apartment by ourselves. One of the best memories I had was when we moved into our first apartment, no bed, no furniture and we just sat in the living room and just hugged each other.

You made us believe. You kept us off the street. You put clothes on our backs, food on the table. When you didn't eat, you made sure we ate. You went to sleep hungry. You sacrificed for us.

(speech by Kevin Durant on collecting the NBA's Most Valuable Player Award in 2014)

- If you were comparing how these two authors feel about their mothers, you might get some of these ideas. (You could practise writing some up using the simple comparison structure covered on page 10):

- Both love their mums – emphasised by short sentences.
- Slater seems less close to his mum than Durant – mother / mom.
- Neither mum had a perfect life. One was annoyed by her inability to cook, the other struggled to support her family – use of **metaphor** (and **simile** in the first extract).
- Both mums did their best for their boys – shown through list form and powerful verbs.
- Both have happy memories of their mothers – description of toast / hugging in apartment.
- Slater makes fun of his mum a bit, whilst Durant seems in awe of his mum – use of humour / more serious **tone**, repetition, and powerful verbs.



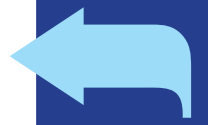
Find two different texts that have a shared theme. Using a different colour pen for each of your ideas, circle similarities and differences in how the texts approach their theme. To develop this skill, list the different features of language and structure used to get across each writer's idea.



1. Why do you need to read the question carefully?
2. What three things should you include in order to structure your comparisons?
3. List three connectives of comparison.







## MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING (ACT 2 SCENE 3)

Either:

1. How far do you think Shakespeare presents Benedick as a dislikeable character?

Write about:

- a. how Shakespeare presents Benedick in this extract
- b. how Shakespeare presents Benedick in the play as a whole.

Or:

- 2a. How does Shakespeare present Benedick in this extract?
- 2b. How is love presented elsewhere in the play?

**BENEDICK** I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by failing in love: and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walked ten mile a-foot to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now is he turned orthography; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn, but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well; but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha! the prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour.