

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.



What to Include

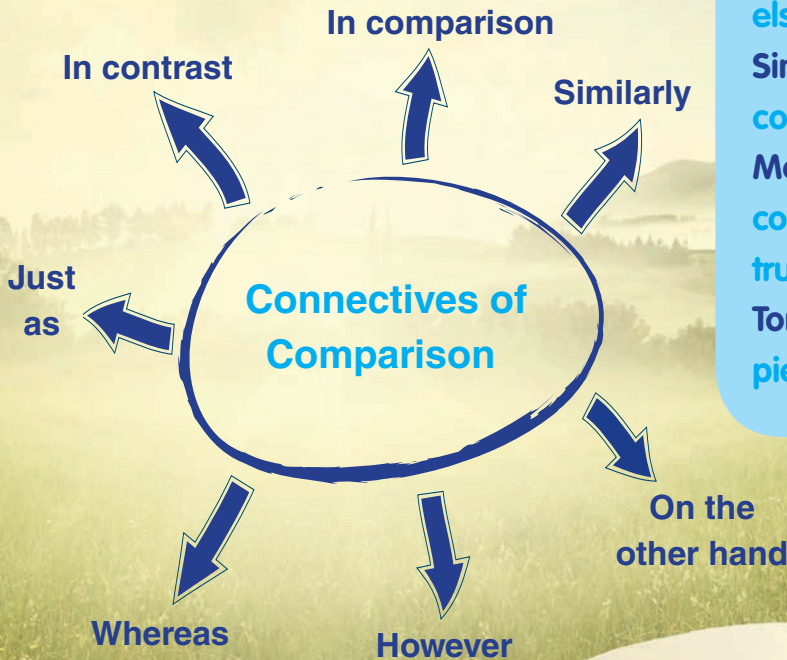
Come up with a similarity or difference about how the writers approach the theme.

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.

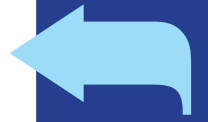


Find two different texts that have a shared theme. Using a different colour pen for each of your ideas, circle similarities and differences in how the texts approach their theme. To develop this skill, list the different features of language and structure used to get across each writer's idea.



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.

ROMEO AND JULIET (ACT 1 SCENE 1)

(Write your answers on a separate piece of paper.)

- 1 a) How does Shakespeare present the relationship between Romeo and Benvolio in this extract? (15 marks)
- b) How does Shakespeare present friendships in the play as a whole? (15 marks)
- 2 How does Shakespeare present the difficulties of being in love in the play as a whole? (30 marks)

At this point in the play, Romeo is explaining to Benvolio how Rosalind does not love him back.

BENVOLIO What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?
ROMEO Not having that, which, having, makes them short.
BENVOLIO In love?
ROMEO Out –
BENVOLIO Of love?
ROMEO Out of her favour, where I am in love.
BENVOLIO Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!
ROMEO Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!
Where shall we dine? O me! What fray was here?
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
Here's much to do with hate, but more with love.
Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!
O any thing, of nothing first create!
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?
BENVOLIO No, coz, I rather weep.
ROMEO Good heart, at what?
BENVOLIO At thy good heart's oppression.
ROMEO Why, such is love's transgression.
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it prest
With more of thine: this love that thou hast shown
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vex'd a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
What is it else? a madness most discreet,
A choking gall and a preserving sweet.
Farewell, my coz

ROMEO AND JULIET (ACT 4 SCENE 5)

(Write your answers on a separate piece of paper.)

- 1** a) How does Shakespeare present Lord and Lady Capulet's grief for their daughter in this extract? (15 marks)
- b) How are Lord and Lady Capulet presented in the play as a whole? (15 marks)
- 2** How does Shakespeare present the Nurse in the play as a whole? (30 marks)

At this point in the play, on the morning of her wedding to Paris, Juliet has faked her death and is discovered by the Nurse and her parents.

LADY CAPULET	What noise is here?
NURSE	O lamentable day!
LADY CAPULET	What is the matter?
NURSE	Look, look! O heavy day!
LADY CAPULET	O me, O me! My child, my only life, Revive, look up, or I will die with thee! Help, help! Call help. (Enter Capulet)
CAPULET	For shame, bring Juliet forth; her lord is come.
NURSE	She's dead, deceased, she's dead; alack the day!
LADY CAPULET	Alack the day, she's dead, she's dead, she's dead!
CAPULET	Ha! let me see her: out, alas! she's cold: Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff; Life and these lips have long been separated: Death lies on her like an untimely frost Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.
NURSE	O lamentable day!
LADY CAPULET	O woeful time!
CAPULET	Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail, Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak. (Enter Friar Laurence and Paris , with Musicians)
FRIAR LAURENCE	Come, is the bride ready to go to church?
CAPULET	Ready to go, but never to return. O son! the night before thy wedding-day Hath Death lain with thy wife. There she lies, Flower as she was, deflowered by him. Death is my son-in-law, Death is my heir; My daughter he hath wedded: I will die, And leave him all; life, living, all is Death's.

For more help on this topic, see Letts GCSE English Revision Guide pages 58–68.

Section B: 19th Century Fiction

Answer the question from this section on your chosen text.

(Write your answer on a separate piece of paper.)

Great Expectations

Read the following extract from Chapter 2 and then answer the question that follows. In this extract, Dickens introduces the characters of Joe and Mrs Joe.

Joe was a fair man, with curls of flaxen hair on each side of his smooth face, and with eyes of such a very undecided blue that they seemed to have somehow got mixed with their own whites. He was a mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy-going, foolish, dear fellow,—a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness.

My sister, Mrs. Joe, with black hair and eyes, had such a prevailing redness of skin that I sometimes used to wonder whether it was possible she washed herself with a nutmeg-grater instead of soap. She was tall and bony, and almost always wore a coarse apron, fastened over her figure behind with two loops, and having a square impregnable bib in front, that was stuck full of pins and needles. She made it a powerful merit in herself, and a strong reproach against Joe, that she wore this apron so much. Though I really see no reason why she should have worn it at all; or why, if she did wear it at all, she should not have taken it off, every day of her life.

Joe's forge adjoined our house, which was a wooden house, as many of the dwellings in our country were,—most of them, at that time. When I ran home from the churchyard, the forge was shut up, and Joe was sitting alone in the kitchen. Joe and I being fellow-sufferers, and having confidences as such, Joe imparted a confidence to me, the moment I raised the latch of the door and peeped in at him opposite to it, sitting in the chimney corner.

"Mrs. Joe has been out a dozen times, looking for you, Pip. And she's out now, making it a baker's dozen."

"Is she?"

"Yes, Pip," said Joe; "and what's worse, she's got Tickler with her."

At this dismal intelligence, I twisted the only button on my waistcoat round and round, and looked in great depression at the fire. Tickler was a wax-ended piece of cane, worn smooth by collision with my tickled frame.

"She sot down," said Joe, "and she got up, and she made a grab at Tickler, and she rampaged out. That's what she did," said Joe, slowly clearing the fire between the lower bars with the poker, and looking at it; "she Ram-paged out, Pip."

"Has she been gone long, Joe?" I always treated him as a larger species of child, and as no more than my equal.

"Well," said Joe, glancing up at the Dutch clock, "she's been on the rampage, this last spell, about five minutes, Pip. She's a coming! Get behind the door, old chap, and have the jack-towel betwixt you."

4 Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present Joe as a kind but weak character?

Write about:

- how Dickens presents Joe in this extract
- how Dickens presents Joe as a kind but weak man in the novel as a whole.

(30 marks)

Jane Eyre

Read the following extract from Chapter 7 and then answer the question that follows. In this extract, Jane is a student at Lowood School. Mr Brocklehurst has arrived and ordered that Jane be made to stand on a stool in front of everyone.

“Ladies,” said he, turning to his family, “Miss Temple, teachers, and children, you all see this girl?”

Of course they did; for I felt their eyes directed like burning-glasses against my scorched skin.

“You see she is yet young; you observe she possesses the ordinary form of childhood; God has graciously given her the shape that He has given to all of us; no signal deformity points her out as a marked character. Who would think that the Evil One had already found a servant and agent in her? Yet such, I grieve to say, is the case.”

A pause—in which I began to steady the palsy of my nerves, and to feel that the Rubicon was passed; and that the trial, no longer to be shirked, must be firmly sustained.

“My dear children,” pursued the black marble clergyman, with pathos, “this is a sad, a melancholy occasion; for it becomes my duty to warn you, that this girl, who might be one of God’s own lambs, is a little castaway: not a member of the true flock, but evidently an interloper and an alien. You must be on your guard against her; you must shun her example; if necessary, avoid her company, exclude her from your sports, and shut her out from your converse. Teachers, you must watch her: keep your eyes on her movements, weigh well her words, scrutinise her actions, punish her body to save her soul: if, indeed, such salvation be possible, for (my tongue falters while I tell it) this girl, this child, the native of a Christian land, worse than many a little heathen who says its prayers to Brahma and kneels before Juggernaut—this girl is—a liar!”

Now came a pause of ten minutes, during which I, by this time in perfect possession of my wits, observed all the female Brocklehursts produce their pocket-handkerchiefs and apply them to their optics, while the elderly lady swayed herself to and fro, and the two younger ones whispered, “How shocking!” Mr. Brocklehurst resumed.

“This I learned from her benefactress; from the pious and charitable lady who adopted her in her orphan state, reared her as her own daughter, and whose kindness, whose generosity the unhappy girl repaid by an ingratitude so bad, so dreadful, that at last her excellent patroness was obliged to separate her from her own young ones, fearful lest her vicious example should contaminate their purity: she has sent her here to be healed, even as the Jews of old sent their diseased to the troubled pool of Bethesda; and, teachers, superintendent, I beg of you not to allow the waters to stagnate round her.”

With this sublime conclusion, Mr. Brocklehurst adjusted the top button of his surtout, muttered something to his family, who rose, bowed to Miss Temple, and then all the great people sailed in state from the room. Turning at the door, my judge said—

“Let her stand half-an-hour longer on that stool, and let no one speak to her during the remainder of the day.”

5 Starting with this extract, how does Brontë make us feel sympathy for Jane?

Write about:

- how Brontë presents Jane in this extract
- how Brontë makes us feel sympathy for Jane in the novel as a whole.

(30 marks)