

**ANALOGY
ESSAY**

PRE-WRITING



THE PROCESS

ANALOGY ESSAY

PROCESS:

1. First, choose a subject that concerns you:

- Some issue in your **career** field,
- from **personal** experience,
- or of **national** concern
 - politics, war, economy, history, education
- This will be your “**Subject X**”

ANALOGY ESSAY

PROCESS:

2. Then determine what point you want to make about it:

- What is the **purpose** of my analogy?
- What do I want/have to say about my subject (Subject X)?
- **What is my argument?**
 - *Abolishing* the Patriot Act
 - *Condemning* the Iraq War
 - *Preventing* Teen Smoking

• ***For Subject X***
• ***Against Subject X***
• ***To get the reader to understand Subject X as I do***

ANALOGY ESSAY

PROCESS:

2. **ARGUMENT Choices:**

- You can argue **for OR against** some **issue**
 - (as in the IOE)
- You can try to **explain** your X **as you understand it**
 - a hobby, sport, major, career, addiction
 - the person (*teacher*) or the abstraction (*teaching*)
- You can **clarify** how a **complicated** system works
 - financial (stock market), biological (brain, cardiovascular system), political (electoral college)

ANALOGY ESSAY

PROCESS:

3. Then list the most significant traits about Subject X:

- Negative traits if you're *against* it
- Positive traits if you're *for* it
 - that which makes it bad or good
- those traits that illustrate your overall point
 - Invasion of privacy
 - Invasion of a sovereign state
 - Invasion of a foreign substance
- If we were to stop here = Example Essay

ANALOGY ESSAY

PROCESS:

4. At this point, you want to find a “Subject Y”
 - o Another subject that shares those traits
 - o A subject that will help you make the overall point against/for Subject X
 - o *Look for this subject *outside* the class or category to which Subject X belongs
 - o To use items from the same class = Comparison Essay

ANALOGY ESSAY

PROCESS:

4. At this point, you want to find a “Subject Y”
 - What other act or belief shares these (positive/negative) traits?
 - not ALL of those traits listed
 - but some SIGNIFICANT ones (5+)
 - What else “is like” Subject X?

ANALOGY ESSAY

PROCESS:

4. At this point, you want to find a “Subject Y”
 - Keep an eye on your Purpose:
 - What is the significance of the link between these 2 subjects?
 - Why are you bothering to discuss the resemblances between these 2 subjects?



SUBJECT Y

ANALOGY ESSAY

SUBJECT Y:

- o **Already known**
 - o Is **easily recognizable** by most people
 - o Has a **consensus** formed about it
 - o (*most agree*)
 - o Has had some **decision/action** made on it
 - o (*law, ban*)

- o **Outside** the class or category to which Subject X belongs
 - o To use items from the same class = Comparison

ANALOGY ESSAY

SUBJECT Y:

- Shares at least 4+ resemblances with Subject X
 - *Certainly, Subjects X&Y should have more similarities than differences*



EXAMPLES

ANALOGY ESSAY

EXAMPLE #1

- o Suppose your **Subject X** were some frustrating situation
- o And the **argument** behind the analogy (your purpose, thesis, claim) were to argue against it
- o You would then list this frustrating situation's **negative traits**
 - Why is it frustrating?
 - Why should it be stopped?
- o Then find another activity just as negative or frustrating:
 - o NOT: the Iraq War is like the Vietnam War
 - o BUT: the Iraq War is like a bad vacation

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EXAMPLE #2

o Subject X:

- fast food

o Argument:

- against it
- should be reduced
- too much

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EXAMPLE #2

o List of (-) traits:

- fast, rushed, poor quality, empty calories, bad effect on the body, body outside (pimples, fat), body inside (cholesterol, fat),
- made in unsanitary conditions, made by people who don't care about their work (in it for the paycheck, don't care about customers)
- in large doses (overindulgence) = dangerous
- serves a basic human need, serves it quickly, serves it relatively cheaply/inexpensively, but at a higher cost down the road (long-term effects)

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EXAMPLE #2

o Possible Subjects Y:

- Internet, porn, prostitution, poison

o Title:

- Fast Food Is like Prostitution

o Analogy Statement:

- Fast food is like prostitution in terms of its effects on the body, its initial price, and its long-term costs.



PITFALLS

ANALOGY ESSAY

What to Avoid:

o **Avoid it:**

- If you are having difficulty finding more than one resemblance
- If you can get only a solid paragraph out of it
- ❖ *If it would appear on a tee shirt, a bumper sticker, a poster, or a coffee mug, avoid it.*

ANALOGY ESSAY

What to Avoid:

DESCRIPTIVE vs. EXPLANATORY

- o We have two basic types of analogies:
 - Descriptive and Explanatory
- o When it comes to choosing “appropriate” topics for this Analogy Essay, avoid descriptive analogies.
- o While both make connections between unrelated subjects, only one of these analogy types has any profundity, insightfulness, depth, or complexity to it.

Avoid CLICHES

ANALOGY ESSAY

What to Avoid:

DESCRIPTIVE vs. EXPLANATORY

o Descriptive analogies

- are more like clichés
- are cute, one-liners that may appear on tee shirts, bumper stickers, or coffee mugs
- have no depth to them
- Life *may* be like a box of chocolates, BUT you will only get a one-paragraph explanation out of that clever line.

o Explanatory analogies

- conversely, are deep, thought-provoking, multi-faceted ideas, connections, correspondences, associations
- that can easily be explored in a lengthy essay.

ANALOGY ESSAY

What to Avoid:

COMPARISON-CONTRAST vs. ANALOGY

- o Avoid writing a **Comparison-Contrast** essay instead of an Analogy essay.
- o While both look for similarities, remember that significant differences exist between these two distinct Rhetorical Strategies:

ANALOGY ESSAY

What to Avoid:

COMPARISON-CONTRAST vs. ANALOGY

o Comparison-Contrast

- compares subjects that are in the *same* class or category (*they're related*) and
- *balances* the discussion on differences and similarities.

o Analogy

- *on the other hand*, compares subjects across class boundaries (*they're unrelated*) and
- *disproportionately* discusses the resemblances more than the differences.
- Further, Analogies are more metaphorical, connecting subjects previously unconnected, to transfer the feelings or opinions of one subject to another OR to get readers to think differently, to see one subject anew or afresh.

ANALOGY ESSAY

What to Avoid:

COMPARISON-CONTRAST vs. ANALOGY

o To Illustrate

- A **Comparison Essay** would discuss the similarities between the 1929 **Stock Market Crash** and the current market trouble.
- However, an **Analogy Essay** could compare the current market trouble and its bailout to rewarding a spoiled child for his/her tantrums or other poor, selfish behavior.

ANALOGY ESSAY

What to Avoid:

EXAMPLE/ILLUSTRATION vs. ANALOGY

- o Avoid writing an **Example/Illustration** essay instead of an Analogy essay.
- o While both argue for or against Subject X, remember that significant differences exist between these two distinct Rhetorical Strategies:

ANALOGY ESSAY

What to Avoid:

EXAMPLE/ILLUSTRATION vs. ANALOGY

o Illustration

- merely lists *reasons* for/against Subject X
- makes **no mention of Subject Y** or its shared resemblances to Subject X

o Analogy

- argues for/against Subject X, too
- **BUT** argues by comparing, relating, connecting
- discusses the resemblances between subjects X&Y as a means of arguing for/against Subject X