**Compare and Contrast: Essay Strategies**

Often, you are asked to compare and contrast two texts (for example a poem). The first thing to remember: even if you are only asked to compare, or only asked to contrast, it is always best to do both.

The two approaches are point-by-point or block.

**POINT-BY-POINT**

*(Each roman numeral is a paragraph.)*

I. Introduction -- preview your points.

II. Point #1. Specify one element (speaker, diction, imagery, etc.)

A. Discuss Poem X, with text evidence.

B. Discuss Poem Y, with text evidence.

C. Make it clear how Poem X and Y are related in regards to Point #1. Are they the same? Different? In what way?

III. Point #2. Specify a different element (speaker, diction, imagery, etc.)

A. Discuss Poem X, with text evidence.

B. Discuss Poem Y, with text evidence.

C. Make it clear how Poem X and Y are related in regards to Point #2. Are they the same? Different? In what way?

*Continue this with your other point, and draw a conclusion in a final paragraph. When comparing/contrasting poems, does any additional insight or meaning happen?*

**BLOCK**

*(Each roman numeral is a paragraph.)*

I. Introduction -- preview your thesis.

II. Poem X

A. Element #1 with text evidence

B. Element #2 with text evidence

C. Element #3 with text evidence

III. Poem Y

A. Element #1 with text evidence (refer back to IIA; explain same or different and why)

B. Element #2 with text evidence (refer back to IIB; explain same or different and why)

C. Element #3 with text evidence (refere back to IIC; explain same or different and why)

IV. Conclusion. When comparing/contrasting poems, does any additional insight or meaning happen?