

Working Toward a Thesis and Essay Structure

## BASES OF COMPARISON

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### Bohemian like you

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHKuDKswdoo>

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### RELEVANT TIP SHEET

On the "Links/Docs" page



"Links for all Tip Sheets, Sample Assignments and Commentaries"

- <http://blogs.unbc.ca/dickson/downloadables/>



"Bases of Comparison updated Sept. 2011"

- <http://blogs.unbc.ca/dickson/files/2010/11/Bases-of-Comparison.pdf>

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# COMPARING APPLES TO APPLES

COMPARISON: APPLE  
CONTRAST: GREEN



COMPARISON: APPLE  
CONTRAST: RED



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# VALID Bases of Comparison

Apple is a FRUIT.  
Orange is a FRUIT.

Apple is CRUNCHY.  
Orange is MUSHY.

Apple is ROUND.  
Orange is HARD TO RHYME.

USE MATCHING CATEGORIES



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# BEGIN WITH THE TOPIC: KEYWORDS

DISCUSS the role of passion in "Poem A" and "Poem B."

"Discuss" in two poems means to talk about A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN the two poems.

"Role" suggests that PASSION actually DOES something in the poems. What does it DO?

How does PASSION appear in the poems? Do they actually use the word, "passion?" What other ways do they communicate passion? What is PASSION, anyway?

So, passion in THESE POEMS: for it or against it? the same or different?

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## BRAINSTORM IN PARALLEL

### POEM A

- really regular rhyme and rhythm all the way through
- Lots of words relating to order like "regular" (3), "clocklike" (14), woodworking, like sanding and measuring (17)
- Tone is really clear and kind of distant—all the observations seem to come from "above" (13)

### POEM B

- it's weird. There's this real mishmash of language and tone, like there are two voices, one staid and one exuberant, both talking in the poem
- Pattern of positive words about passion like "joy" (2), "born" (13), "escape" (17)
- No rhyme scheme, lots of lines of different lengths, kind of choppy

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## ASK PARALLEL QUESTIONS

### POEM A

- Q: What is the function of rhythm and rhyme?
- Q: What is the attitude of the speaker toward PASSION?
- Q: What is the RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN rhythm/rhyme and the speaker's attitude?

### POEM B

- Q: What is the function of rhythm and rhyme?
- Q: What is the attitude of the speaker toward PASSION?
- Q: What is the RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN rhythm/rhyme and the speaker's attitude?

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## FORMULATE BASES OF COMPARISON

- RHYTHM AND RHYME
  - POEM A: regular
  - POEM B: irregular
- ATTITUDE toward passion
  - POEM A: powerful, but dangerous
  - POEM B: powerful, but creative
- TONE
  - POEM A: distant, controlled by outside force
  - POEM B: distant, but disturbed or broken up by choppy lines and exuberant language

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## NEXT STEP: WORKING THESIS

WORKING THESIS = a preliminary statement that you will use to guide you as you interact with the text and organize your materials. It reminds you:

- What the TOPIC is;
- What types of EVIDENCE you should be gathering;
- What you want to ARGUE.

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## 2 PARTS OF THE THESIS: WHAT

- WHAT = the EVIDENCE you will use to make your case; your BASES OF COMPARISON
  - RHYTHM/RHYME (formal elements)
  - ATTITUDE
  - TONE

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## 2 PARTS OF THE THESIS: SO WHAT

- SO WHAT = how your BofC illuminate the topic, in this case, the ROLE OF PASSION IN ART
  - RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN formal structure and passion
    - POEMA: formal structures shape the energy of passion to produce beauty
    - POEM B: passion pushes against formal structures to create new forms of beauty

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## A WORKING THESIS

Although they have different [formal qualities](#), [tones](#), and [attitudes](#) toward passion, both poems illustrate that the role of passion is to [challenge conventions in order to create beauty out of chaos](#).

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## The Anatomy of a Thesis

THE THESIS PROVIDES A MAP OF THE PAPER

WHAT (evidence and method)  
+  
SO WHAT (findings or point)

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## THE ANATOMY OF A THESIS: Asking the Key Questions

- What is the author's MATERIAL?
  - What types of evidence will she use?
- What is the author's METHOD?
  - How will she go about proving her point?
- What is the author's GOAL or FINDING?
  - What point is she making?

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## DISSECTING the THESIS

Various renditions of this story survive both in document form and in oral tradition. A comparison of these versions illustrates how historical events and experiences are written from particular perspectives, and suggests that events are interpreted and realities constructed in order to suit specific purposes. The comparison casts doubt on the superiority of written texts and shows how over time—in the written and oral traditions alike—history is shaped and reshaped in the telling.

(Klippenstein 125).

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