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## Sample Compare and Contrast Essays

### The Senate and the House of Representatives

The government of the United States is made up of three branches: the legislative branch, the executive branch and the judicial branch. The legislative branch, called Congress, is responsible for making laws. Congress is made up of two houses: the Senate and the House of Representatives. In this essay, you will learn the differences and similarities between these two houses of Congress.

There are many differences between the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Vice President of the United States is the head of the Senate. He must vote in the Senate if there is a tie. On the other hand, the House of Representatives' leader is called the Speaker of the House. The representatives elect him or her.

Another difference is that the Senate is made up of 100 senators, two from each state. The House of Representatives, however, is made up of 435 representatives. The number of representatives from each state is determined by that state's population. The greater the population in a state, the more representatives that state will have in the House. A third difference is that senators are elected to six- year terms, while representatives are elected to serve two-year terms. Every two years, the nation holds an election for members of Congress. At that time, all members of the House of Representatives and one- third of the Senate are up for re-election.

There are also similarities between the Senate and the House of Representatives. For example, both houses of Congress are made up of men and women. Both senators and representatives are members of Congress who must work together toward the same goal: to create, discuss, debate and vote on bills, some of which eventually become laws. In the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington D.C., senators and representatives often meet with each other and in smaller groups to discuss laws. Before the President can sign a bill into law, it must first be approved by a majority of members in both the House and Senate.

Although Congress is made up of two types of lawmakers, they must work together for the benefit of all Americans.

### Vacations

Vacations are one of the favorite things for people to do. There are a couple ways to do this, and they have their pros and cons. Tent-camping and staying at hotels are two of the most common ways of vacationing.

Tent camping has been around for years. This is a good option for those whose budget is limited, although some campgrounds' sites these days rival the charge of hotels. There is also a little bit of an element of danger in tent-camping, although others just see this as part of the adventure.

Hotels are definitely a more comfortable way of vacationing if you have the financial resources. They provide comfortable beds and all the amenities of home. You also have reservations for peace of mind, and don't need to worry about the weather.

The two ways I've discussed are both good in some ways; it largely depends on the amount of money you have to spend. Personally, after a bad tent-camping experience with the weather, I'd recommend hotels because this could be the difference between a good trip and a soggy mess!

### Compare and Contrast Essay Checklist

Ask a peer to review your essay using the checklist. Make any necessary changes before submitting.

	yes	no
<b>Purpose &amp; Supporting Details</b>		
The paper compares and contrasts items clearly.		
The paper points to specific examples to illustrate the comparison.		
The paper includes only the information relevant to the comparison.		
<b>Organization &amp; Structure</b>		
The paper breaks the information into the whole-to-whole, similarities-to-differences, or point-by-point structure.		
The paper follows a consistent order when discussing the comparison.		
The paper breaks the information into appropriate sections or paragraphs to the ideas.		
The introduction paragraph contains a powerful thesis statement		
Word choice is precise, sentences are varied, and grammatical errors are rare or absent.		
The conclusion synthesizes -- or brings together -- the comparison and contrast.		
<b>Transitions &amp; Coherence</b>		
The paper moves smoothly from one idea to the next.		
The paper uses comparison and contrast transition words to show relationships between ideas.		
The paper uses a variety of sentence structures and clear topic sentences.		

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