

Explanatory Synthesis Essay Outline Example

In the Explanatory Synthesis, explain the similarities and differences between two texts that cover the same topic. Like the Summary, you must write this essay **objectively**; you cannot show favoritism toward one text over the other, nor can you express your own opinions or judgments. **You must remain neutral.**

Introduction:

Your introduction provides basic information: the names of the authors and the titles of their texts. Your introduction should also provide essay map, which gives a layout of your essay.

1. Combine your paraphrase of the source texts' theses with the names of the articles and their authors.

Example: *Mary Bates argues against censorship in "Banning Censorship," while Michael Thorpe counters that censorship is an important resource in "Censorship: A Necessary Evil."*

2. Present your essay map, which identifies the similarities and differences between the two texts and the order in which you will discuss them.

Example: *Bates and Thorpe agree that a world without censorship would be ideal, but they disagree on two fronts: first, whether it is ethical, and second, whether it is practical.*

Body:

The body provides support for your thesis statement. The body can contain as many paragraphs as you need to explain the similarities and differences between the two texts.

Important considerations for writing the body:

1. Follow the order outlined in your essay map.
2. Explain what **each author** writes about **each point** in your essay map.
3. Use quotation and paraphrase to show what the authors say about each point in your essay map. When quoting, use the author's words directly and put them in quotation marks. When paraphrasing, put the author's ideas in your own words. Follow both with parenthetical citations.
4. Transition between paragraphs, ideas, and even sentences to improve readability. Examples of transitions that are useful in syntheses: "similarly," "likewise," "on the other hand," "in contrast."

Example: *Bates thinks censorship is immoral; in contrast, Thorpe argues it is often necessary.*

Conclusion:

Your conclusion addresses the "so what" question—why does your paper matter? This part of the paper can be a little subjective (opinionated); however, you should still avoid taking a side or showing preference to one text or the other. Example:

With such a controversial issue as book censorship, it is important to look at both sides of the argument—we should not "censor" those that disagree with us.