

**Rhetorical functions in academic writing: comparison and contrast** (*This handout was prepared by A. Suchomelová*)

<http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/comparing.htm>

**Introductory Sentences: Differences**

X is **different from** Y in a number of respects.

**There are a number of important differences between** X and Y.

X **differs from** Y in a number of important ways.

Smith (2003) found **distinct differences between** X and Y.

Women and men **differ not only in** physical attributes **but also in the way in which** they .....

**Introductory Sentences: Similarities**

The mode of processing used by the right brain is **similar to that** used by the left brain.

The mode of processing used by the right brain is **comparable in** complexity to that used by the left brain.

The effects of nitrous dioxide on human health **are similar to those of** ground level ozone.

**Both** X and Y generally take place in a "safe environment".

**There are a number of similarities between** X and Y.

Numerous studies **have compared** the brain cells in man and animals and found that the cells **are essentially identical**.

<http://www.uefap.com/writing/writfram.htm>

When you are writing critically, you need to do much more than just give information. One common function in academic writing is comparing and contrasting, writing about similarities and differences. You may compare and contrast objects and places, or ideas and opinion obtained from your reading.

Look at the following table and read the text below. Pay attention to the comparisons and contrasts.

	Price	Processor Speed	Screen Size	Hard Disk	RAM
Evesham Axis 1.33 SK	£1,174	1.33 GHz	17"	40 GB	256 MB
Armani R850 P4.	£2,467	1.7 GHz	19"	40 GB	256 MB
Mesh Elite 1.7GT Pro	£1,938	1.7 GHz	19"	57 GB	256 MB
Elonex WebRider Pro	£1,174	1.2 GHz	17"	38.1 GB	128 MB

**Comparison**

The Evesham Axis **is like** the Elonex WebRider

The Evesham Axis **and** the Elonex WebRider **are similar**

**with respect to** price.

**as regards** price.

The Evesham Axis **is similar to** the Elonex WebRider  
The Evesham Axis **is the same as** the Elonex WebRider  
The Evesham Axis **resembles** the Elonex WebRider

**as far as price is concerned.**  
**regarding price.**  
**in that the price is the same.**  
**in terms of price.**  
**in price.**

**Both** the Evesham Axis **and** the Elonex WebRider cost £1,174.  
The Evesham Axis **is as expensive as** the Elonex WebRider.  
The Evesham Axis costs **the same as** the Elonex WebRider.  
The Evesham Axis **is the same price as** the Elonex WebRider.

The Mesh Elite has a large screen.

**Similarly**, it has a high capacity hard disk.  
**Likewise**, it has a high capacity hard disk.  
**Furthermore**, it has a high capacity hard disk.  
**Moreover**, it has a high capacity hard disk.  
**Correspondingly**, it has a high capacity hard disk.  
**It has** a high capacity hard disk, **too**.  
**It also has** a high capacity hard disk.

## Contrast

The Evesham Axis **differs from** the Armani  
The Evesham Axis **is unlike** the Armani  
The Evesham Axis **and** the Armani **differ**  
The Evesham Axis **is different from** the Armani  
The Evesham Axis **contrasts with** the Armani

**with respect to price.**  
**as regards price.**  
**as far as price is concerned.**  
**regarding price.**  
**in terms of price.**  
**in price.**

The Evesham Axis costs £1,174, **whereas** the Armani costs £2,467.  
The Evesham Axis costs £1,174, **while** the Armani costs £2,467.  
The Evesham Axis costs £1,174, **but** the Armani costs £2,467.  
The Evesham Axis costs £1,174, **in contrast to** the Armani, **which** costs £2,467.  
The Armani **is more expensive than** the Evesham Axis.  
The Evesham Axis **is not as expensive as** the Armani.  
The Armani costs **more than** the Evesham Axis.

The Armani is expensive to buy.

**On the other hand**, it is very fast and has a large screen.  
**In contrast**, it is very fast and has a large screen.  
**Conversely**, it is very fast and has a large screen.  
**However**, it is very fast and has a large screen.  
**But**, it is very fast and has a large screen.

**Although** the Armani is expensive to buy,  
**Despite** the high price of the Armani, it is very fast and has a large screen.