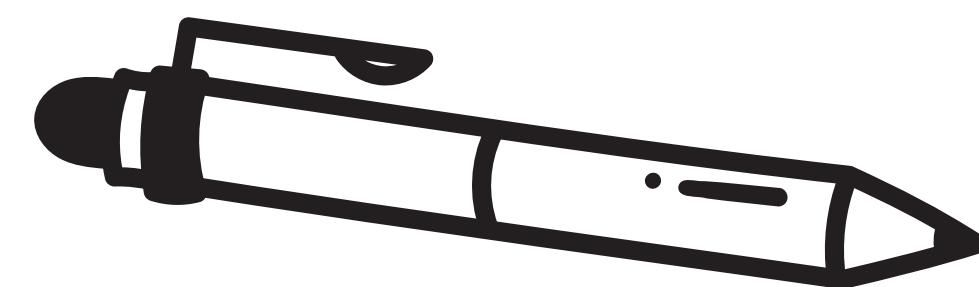
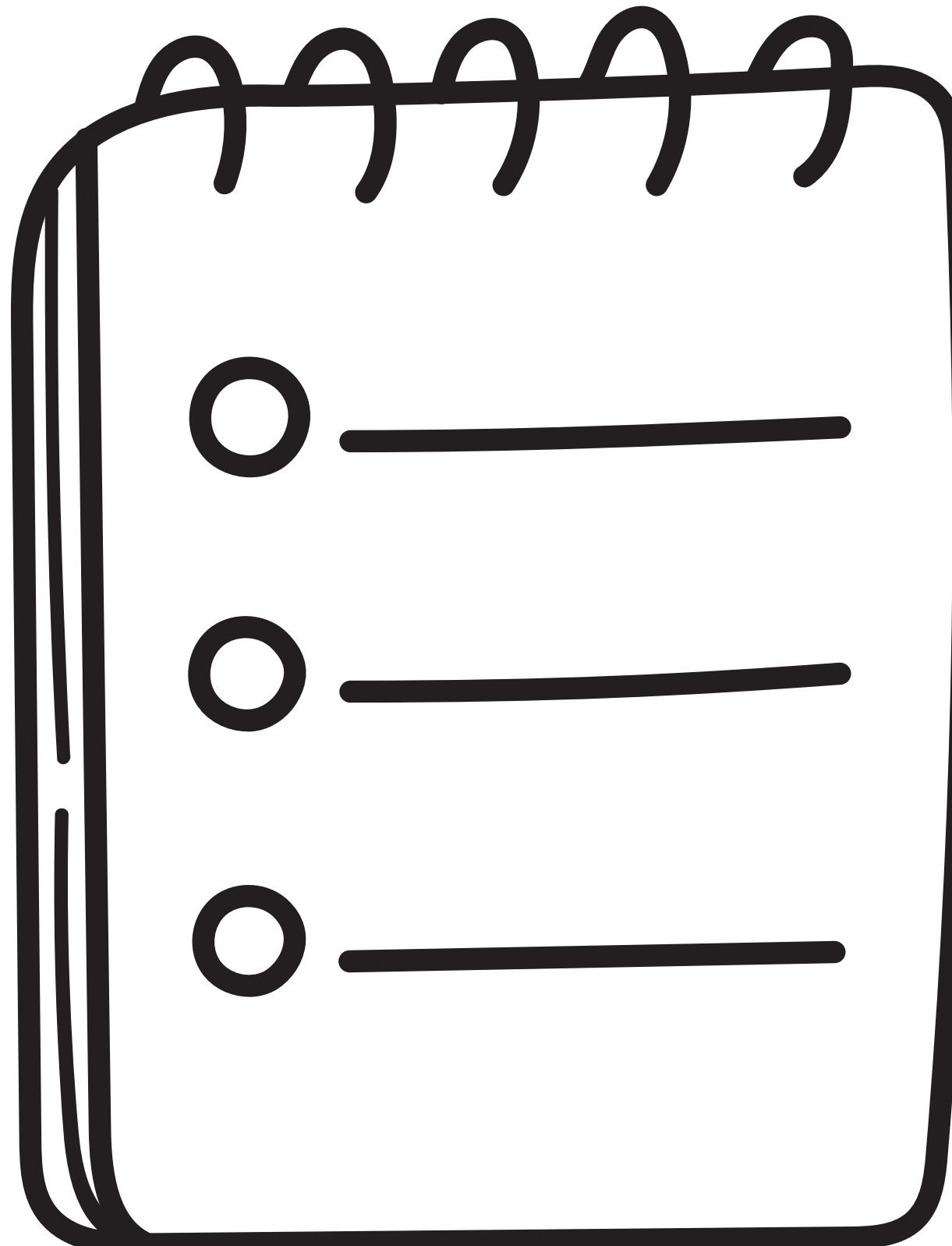




# Writing Compare & Contrast Essays

English Language Arts





# Lesson Objectives

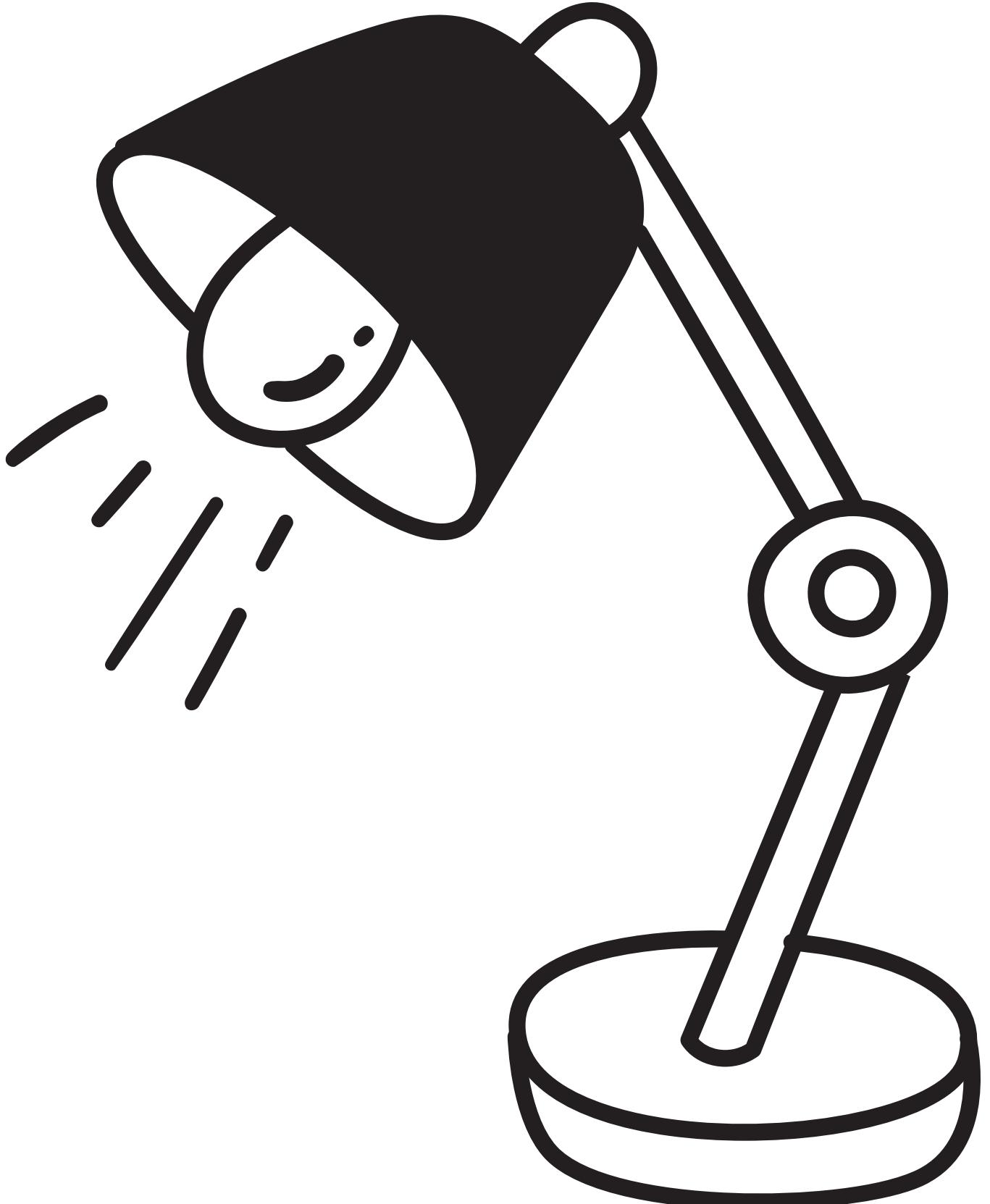
Students will understand the purpose of a compare and contrast essay and explain why it is used in writing.

Students will differentiate between the point by point and block methods of organizing a compare and contrast essay.

Students will organize and write an essay effectively comparing and contrasting specific elements of subjects.

# Introduction

A compare and contrast essay is a type of academic writing that explores the similarities and differences between two or more subjects. The goal is to provide an analysis that helps the reader understand how the subjects are alike in some ways and different in others. These subjects could be anything from literary characters, historical events, or themes in a story, to more complex ideas like different philosophical or political ideas.





# Why Write Compare Contrast Essays?

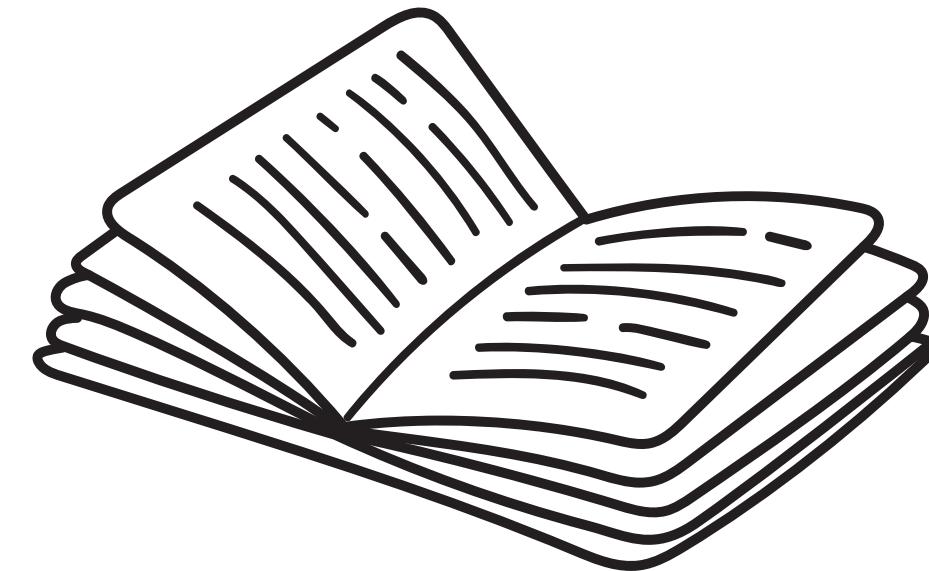
Writing compare and contrast essays can help you build critical thinking skills because they require you to analyze subjects deeply and consider multiple perspectives. These essays also enhance analytical writing skills, since you must break down and assess the similarities and differences between topics. Additionally, this type of writing promotes the ability to organize complex ideas logically, allowing you to present clear, well-structured arguments.

# Choosing a Topic

A good comparison involves selecting topics that share a common theme but have distinct differences that can be analyzed. This balance allows for meaningful comparisons and contrasts, as the subjects are related enough to be compared but different enough to reveal interesting insights. For example, comparing two literary characters from the same novel works well because they might share similar roles or functions within their narratives, yet differ in traits or impacts on the plot.



# Compare & Contrast Essay Organization



Point by point organization is a method where each body paragraph focuses on a specific point of comparison between the subjects. This method alternates between the subjects throughout the essay, comparing them side by side based on specific criteria.

Block method organization is a structure used in compare and contrast essays where each subject is discussed separately in its own "block" before moving on to the next. This method allows the writer to focus entirely on one subject at a time.



# Point by Point Essay Structure

- Introduction Paragraph
- Body Paragraph 1: Compare Subject A and Subject B on Point 1.
- Body Paragraph 2: Compare Subject A and Subject B on Point 2.
- Body Paragraph 3: Compare Subject A and Subject B on Point 3
- Conclusion Paragraph

# **Advantages of Point by Point Organization**

Point by point organization allows for a balanced discussion, as both subjects are analyzed in the same context, making it easy for the reader to follow the similarities and differences.

This structure keeps the writer focused on specific points of comparison, preventing the essay from becoming overly descriptive about just one subject.

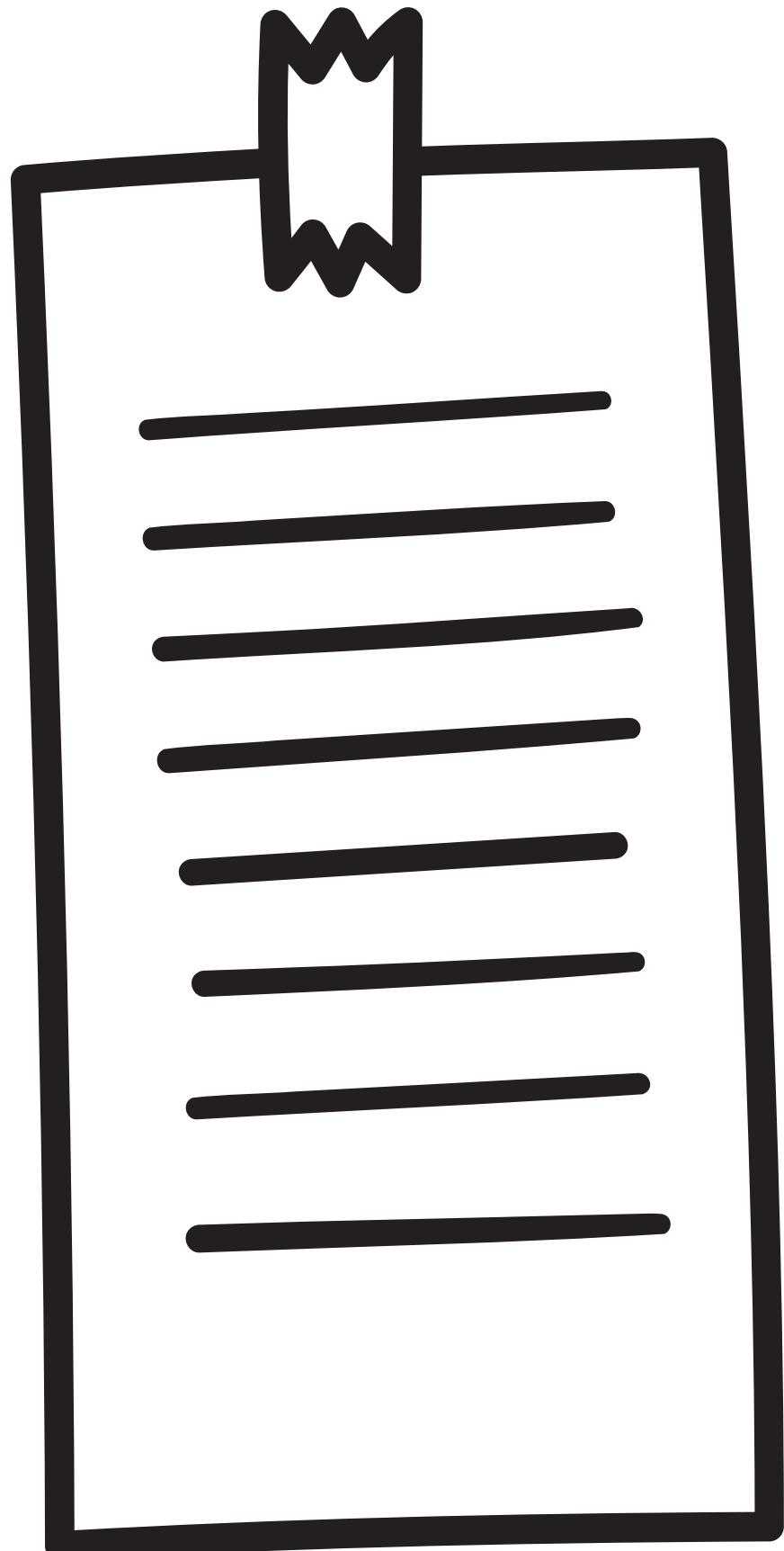
# **Disadvantages of Point by Point Organization**

Point by point organization can become repetitive if the writer doesn't effectively integrate the points or use varied transitions, leading to a back-and-forth that feels redundant.

Keeping the analysis balanced can be difficult, as it's easy to inadvertently give more attention to one subject over the other, weakening the analysis.

# Block Method Essay Structure

- Introduction Paragraph
- Body Paragraphs
  - Block 1: Discuss all aspects of Subject A in a series of paragraphs.
  - Block 2: Discuss all relevant aspects of Subject B in a series of paragraphs, covering the same points as Subject A.
- Conclusion Paragraph



# **Advantages of Block Method Organization**

This method allows the writer to give undivided attention to one subject at a time, which can lead to a more thorough and detailed analysis of each.

The block method may be easier to organize because you can focus on completing all your thoughts about one subject before moving on to the next.

# **Disadvantages of Block Method Organization**

One challenge is that readers may find it harder to make direct comparisons if the points aren't connected until the end of the essay.

There is a risk that the essay might focus too much on one subject while neglecting the other, making the comparison feel lopsided or incomplete.

# Common Mistakes to Avoid When Writing a Compare & Contrast Essay



One common mistake is choosing subjects that are too different. This can make creating a meaningful comparison difficult.

Another issue is forgetting to compare while focusing solely on contrasting, which can result in an imbalanced analysis.

Additionally, having a weak thesis statement can confuse the reader and weaken the overall argument of the essay.