

3. The Simple In-Class Compare & Contrast (or “To What Extent”) Essay Outline: The Similarities and Differences Between Automobiles and Bicycles

INTRO.
PARA.

Topic: Compare and contrast automobiles with bicycles.

Thesis: The **differences** between automobiles and bicycles **are more significant than their similarities**.

[This thesis can, of course, be reversed.]

Warnings: Avoid saying “X and Y are similar and different.” This is a contradiction! Also, make sure the final sentence is pro-thesis; it must contrast with the topic sentence of BP1.



BP1
Anti-Thesis

Topic Sentence: **To be sure**, cars and bicycles do share some similarities in terms of function and ownership.

Example 1 - both move you from A to B

Example 2 - both are private modes of transportation;
don't rely on public transit schedules or funding

Discuss both sides of the issue (i.e. both bicycles and cars).



BP2
Pro-Thesis

Topic Sentence: **Nevertheless**, these two transportation technologies have more significant differences when we consider issues such as speed, weather, cost and health.

Example 1 – cost (+ bicycle)

Example 2 – impact on health (+ bicycle)

Example 3 – speed (+ car)

Example 4 – weather dependencies (+ car)

Discuss both sides of the issue (i.e. both bicycles and cars).



BP3
Pro-Thesis

BP3 is optional if you have enough time and evidence. In our example above, we can easily split BP2 into two BP's: cost and health vs. speed and weather. Please ensure that there is a clear reason for splitting the pro-thesis argument into two. *Don't create two BP's that discuss the same topics or examples!*



CONCL.
PARA.

1. Restatement of topic and thesis
2. Summary of main points
3. Generalization: Why *are* the differences between the automobile and bicycle more significant?

For longer take-home and research essays, more paragraphs will likely be needed. Consider turning each BP point/example into a separate BP.

4. The Complex (Topical) Compare and Contrast Essay Outline: The Similarities and Differences Between Automobiles and Bicycles

INTRO.
PARA.

Topic: Compare and contrast automobiles with bicycles.

Thesis: The **differences** between automobiles and bicycles **are more significant than their similarities**.

...or...

Thesis: Generally speaking, the automobile is a **more effective form of transportation** than the bicycle.

↓

BP1

Topic Sentence: **It is true** that the bicycle is a more **environmentally sustainable** form of transportation than automobiles.

Ex. 1 - the bicycle does not use fuel; the auto does
Ex. 2 - the bicycle does not emit exhaust; the auto is a major emitter of carbon dioxide
Ex. 3 - bicycles use fewer metals and other materials than the automobile

Discuss both sides of the issue (i.e. both bicycles and cars).

↓

BP2

Topic Sentence: **Nevertheless**, the automobile can go **faster and farther** in a given period of time.

Ex. 1 - the bicycle can often match the automobile in urban settings
Ex. 2 - in suburban and rural settings, however, the automobile goes faster and farther
Ex. 3 - long distance travel

Discuss both sides of the issue (i.e. both bicycles and cars).

↓

BP3

Topic Sentence: **Moreover**, the automobile can **carry more persons and cargo**.

Ex. 1 - the bicycle can carry one or two riders, sidebags, and perhaps a small trailer
Ex. 2 - even compact cars can carry four passengers and cargo, plus use a roof rack and/or trailer

Discuss both sides of the issue (i.e. both bicycles and cars).

↓

CONCL.
PARA.

1. Restatement of topic and thesis
2. Summary of main points
3. Generalization: Why *is* the automobile a more effective form of transportation?

For longer take-home and research essays, more paragraphs will likely be needed. Consider turning each BP point/example into a separate BP.