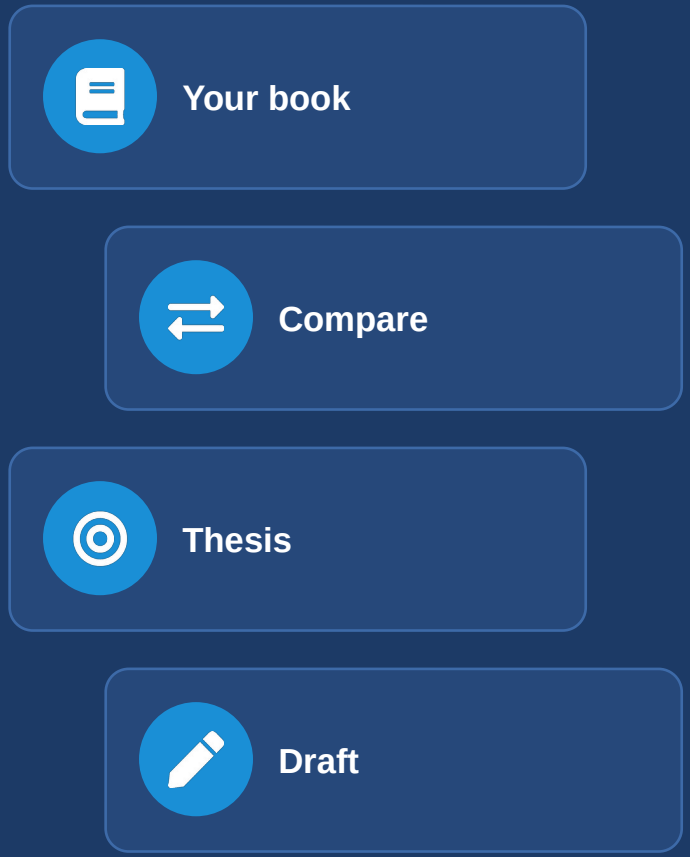
NBE3U Independent Study and Final, Lesson 3

Comparative Essay Workshop

Two texts, one argument



Today's goals

We are learning…

- To plan and draft a comparative literary essay.
- To write and cite with respect for First Nations, Métis and Inuit authors and communication styles.

I can…

- Write a comparative thesis.
- Plan integrated paragraphs with evidence from both texts.
- Use comparative transitions.
- Name authors and Nations accurately and cite sources respectfully.

Today's plan

Time	What we're doing	You will…
0–10 min	**Thesis**	Write
10–25 min	**Structure**	Plan
25–45 min	**Paragraph weave**	Practise
45–55 min	**Writing with respect**	Note
55–75 min	**Draft**	Write

Big idea

A strong comparative essay doesn't describe two texts side by side. It uses each text to light up the other and makes an argument neither could make alone, while treating the authors and the communities they write from with care.

Weak vs strong comparative thesis

Weak

- “Both texts are about residential schools, but they are different in some ways.”

Strong

- “Johnson and Zitkála-Šá both write back to settler readers about what ‘civilization’ costs, but where Johnson's speaker demands payment in public, Zitkála-Šá makes readers feel the cost from inside a child's routine, suggesting that quiet testimony can be as political as protest.”

Name the shared idea, the key difference, and why it matters.

Write your thesis

On page 1:

1. Start from your Check-in 3 question.
2. Name both texts and the shared idea.
3. State the key difference.
4. Say what reading them together reveals.

Two structures

Integrated (recommended)

- Each paragraph discusses both texts on one point.
- Shows real comparison.

Block

- Half on one text, half on the other.
- Risks becoming two essays.

Plan three points

On page 1:

1. Each point: one aspect (voice, form, image, setting, theme).
2. Evidence from both texts for each.
3. Order points from simple to complex.
4. End with your insight.

Comparative transitions

Purpose	Phrases
Similarity	Similarly · Likewise · Both… and… · In the same way
Difference	Whereas · By contrast · Unlike… · However
Deepening	Read alongside… · This sheds light on… · Together, the texts suggest…

Model: a woven paragraph

Task: Point 1: what “civilization” costs (original model written for this lesson).

Both writers borrow the language of settler “civilization,” its money and its machines, to expose what it really costs. Johnson's grieving daughter turns the settlers' own logic of payment against them: “When you pay for the land you live in, we’ll pay for the meat we eat.” Zitkála-Šá, by contrast, does not argue with the system out loud; she describes the school's “iron routine” and its “civilizing machine” from inside, so that the reader feels the cost in a child's body rather than in a bill. Read together, the two texts show two strategies for writing back: one demands that settlers settle their debt, the other makes them watch the machine at work.

Why it works

- Topic sentence names both.
- Evidence from each.
- Transition: “by contrast.”
- An insight neither text gives alone.

Practise the weave

On page 2:

1. Write one woven paragraph for Point 1.
2. Use one transition from the table.
3. Cite both texts.
4. End with what the comparison shows.

Writing with respect

Names and Nations

Use the author's full name and Nation or community as they describe it.

This book, not everyone

Write about this author's choices; don't generalize to all Indigenous peoples.

Cite every voice

Interviews, reviews and any teaching you were given permission to cite.

Analyse, don't judge lives

Evaluate the writing, not the author's or a community's experiences.

Draft

Remaining time:

1. Write your introduction and thesis.
2. Draft your first body paragraph.
3. Cite your book's edition (MLA).
4. Finish at home by the due date.

Quick check

- What does an integrated structure do?
- Give a transition that shows difference.
- What should your conclusion add?
- How should you name the author?

Exit ticket

1. Your comparative thesis.
2. Your three points.
3. Your essay due date.

Essay due: _____. Next: ISU Seminar.

Teacher reveal

Comparative transitions and respect

Similarity: Similarly, Likewise, Both… and…, In the same way

Difference: Whereas, By contrast, Unlike…, However

Deepening: Read alongside…, This sheds light on…, Together, the texts suggest…

Names: The author's full name and Nation or community as they give it, then the surname.

Generalizing: Write about this author and this book, not about “Indigenous people” as one group.