

DARCY'S 2.10 COMPARISON ESSAY



2.10 Comparison Essay: Introduction Paragraph

"It's not what happens to you. It's what you do about it." This is the motto of W. Mitchell, a man who was living an ordinary life when tragedy struck him. He crashed his motorcycle and was burned over much of his body. His face, even after many surgeries, was unrecognizable. He was stuck in a wheelchair and often in a lot of pain. There were many times he wanted to give up. Something changed in him, though, and he decided to change his attitude and turn this negative event into something positive. Now this once ordinary man has become a famous motivational speaker who travels the world inspiring others. It's easy to think that having a good life is all about successes. You think that if you get a good job, marry a beautiful person, have perfect kids, then that equals a good life, the truth is that everyone fails sometimes. Failure doesn't mean someone can't live a good life, though. Sometimes failing can cause us to wake up and appreciate life. Two short stories show this idea very well. Long, Long After School" by Ernest Buckler is about a man named Wes Holman, who had a rough life. He wasn't very well-liked. He experienced teasing in school, and never had friends. People might say he was a failure. However, he meets someone who understands what he has been through and who sees the great things inside of him, and that changes his life forever. The short story "Supertoys Last All Summer Long" by Brian Aldiss is about Mrs. Swinton and her family. Mrs. Swinton has the kind of life most people would say is successful, but she isn't happy. When looking at these two characters, it becomes clear that attitude matters much more than success and failure when it comes to living a good life.

Be sure to cite the source where you found this quotation, such as a website, and either mention it in the sentence, or place the web address in parentheses at the end of the sentence.

Great attention getter! You tie it in really well to the rest of the introduction.

Try to avoid using "you" in your essay. Instead, you can use "people," "individuals," or "one."

Comma splice. You have joined two sentences with only a comma. Try correcting it with a semicolon (;), a period, or add a conjunction like "but" or "though."

Strong thesis! It answers the essential question and takes a clear stance on the topic.

DARCY'S 2.10 COMPARISON ESSAY (CONTINUED)



2.10 Comparison Essay: Body Paragraph #1

The character of Wes Holman in the short story “Long, Long After School” is an example of how a person who is seen as a failure in society’s eyes can still live well with a positive attitude. Wes did not have a lot of successes in his life. He wasn’t popular, and people were often mean to him. **He** never had a girlfriend, and even as an adult, he didn’t have a job that most people would consider successful. However, his grade three teacher changed everything. She wasn’t very popular either, and people weren’t all that nice to her, but she was nice to Wes. She inspired him to work hard in school, leading him to be voted “best all-around student” (p. 252). That hard work and learning stayed with him throughout his life, and even as an adult, “His tiny house . . . is furnished with almost nothing but books, and he can quote anyone from Seneca to Henry James” (p. 250). Miss Tretheway also helped Wes feel valued and cared for. When he punched his fist through a window after some girls were mean to him, Miss Tretheway visited him every day at the hospital. She even donated blood for him when no one else would. During one of her visits, she **complemented** him by saying he was “a fine young specimen” (p. 253). Miss Tretheway didn’t completely change his life. Wes didn’t become rich and popular, but it changed the way he saw his life. **When he thought about Miss Tretheway, he saw her as a beautiful person (when most would agree she was pretty plain), which is a great example of how his attitude allowed him to see his life as good, even if others didn’t.**

Remember to vary the lengths and beginnings of sentences to create sentence fluency. You have lots of sentences that begin with nouns or pronouns like “he,” “she,” “Wes,” and “Miss Tretheway.”

Here is a good example of a word that spell check would not catch. You want the word “complimented” here instead.

I love how you use the last sentence of the paragraph to tie your ideas back to the thesis.

DARCY'S 2.10 COMPARISON ESSAY (CONTINUED)



2.10 Comparison Essay: Body Paragraph #2

The character of Mrs. Swinton from the short story "Supertoys Last All Summer Long" is an example of how a person who is seen as a success in society's eyes doesn't automatically have a good life if that person has a bad attitude. Mrs. Swinton was a "beautiful person" (p. 10). She lived in a world where it was "always summer" (p. 9) in the best house money could buy. But "Time waited on her shoulder with the manic sloth it reserves for children, the insane, and wives whose husbands are away improving the world" (p. 9). Her life was perfect, but she was bored. She was also depressed because the government wouldn't grant her a permit to have children. Instead, she had a robot child named David. David loved her very much and was constantly trying to prove his love to her, writing and rewriting love notes to get them just right. She "had tried to love him" (p. 9), but clearly didn't, and David sensed it. Instead of enjoying the love David was showing her, she **blew it off**, telling her husband David had a malfunctioning "communication centre" (p. 16). When she was finally allowed to have a child, she seemed happy in the moment, but her next thought was to consider getting rid of David. He wasn't perfect, and he wasn't exactly what she wanted. Mrs. Swinton had everything she needed but didn't appreciate it.

You incorporate some excellent textual evidence in this essay, which really helps support your thesis. Well done!

Avoid colloquial language (slang).

DARCY'S 2.10 COMPARISON ESSAY (CONTINUED)



2.10 Comparison Essay: Body Paragraph #3 and Conclusion






These characters show that what matters is one's own attitude about life, not whether one has all of the things society tells us will make us happy. The community where Wes Holman has lived all his life sees him as a failure: the guy they used to tease, the guy who never had a girlfriend. However, he found Miss Tretheway, who believed in him and saw value in him. He found happiness and success in his own way by enjoying his time with her and becoming educated. On the other hand, Mrs. Swinton had every ingredient for a happy life: beauty, wealth, people to love her, but it wasn't enough. She was "in despair" (p. 15) because her life wasn't perfect. Then she got the news about having a "real" child. Even though she was happy in that moment, the reader knows that it won't last. Her inability to appreciate the positive things in her life would eventually make her depressed again. Living well, for her, just wasn't possible.

You've done a nice job with this last body paragraph. You clearly discuss how the **OUTCOME** of each character's life depended on whether he or she responded **POSITIVELY** or **NEGATIVELY** to the essential question.

A person's attitude about life is so much more important than whether others see that person as a success or failure. We can all learn a lot from people like Miss Tretheway, Wes Holman, and W. Mitchell. Take a look at your own life and see how much you already have to appreciate. We will all experience success and failure in our lives. No getting around it. If we take W. Mitchell's advice, we can decide to have a good attitude no matter what happens. That's the recipe for living well!

A great way to rephrase your thesis!

Sentence fragment. How could you turn this into a complete sentence?

2.10 Comparison Essay				
Value	Thought and Support	Form and Structure	Matters of Choice	Matters of Correctness <i>Proper sentence structure, usage, grammar, and mechanics</i>
 Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You present <i>insightful ideas</i> . <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your support from the texts is <i>precise and effective</i> .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You <i>skillfully</i> develop a unifying effect (organizational structure) through your thesis, topic sentences, and introduction and conclusion. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You arrange your ideas and details <i>effectively</i> , including the use of the I.C.E. method.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You use <i>precise and effective diction</i> (word choice). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You <i>frequently and skillfully</i> use a variety of sentence lengths and sentence structure to create fluency .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your writing demonstrates <i>confident control</i> . <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You have <i>few and insignificant errors</i> , given the complexity of your work.
 Proficient	<input type="checkbox"/> You present <i>thoughtful ideas</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> Your support from the texts is <i>specific and relevant</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/> You <i>capably</i> develop a unifying effect (organizational structure) through your thesis, topic sentences, and introduction and conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> You arrange your ideas and details <i>appropriately</i> , including the use of the I.C.E. method.	<input type="checkbox"/> You use <i>specific and generally effective diction</i> (word choice). <input type="checkbox"/> You <i>sometimes</i> use a variety of sentence lengths and sentence structure to create fluency .	<input type="checkbox"/> Your writing demonstrates <i>competent control</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You have <i>minor errors</i> that <i>do not impede</i> clarity in your work.
 Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> You present <i>appropriate ideas</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> Your support from the texts is <i>appropriate, but general</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/> You <i>adequately</i> develop a unifying effect (organizational structure) through your thesis, topic sentences, and introduction and conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> You arrange your ideas and details <i>straight-forwardly</i> , including some use of the I.C.E. method.	<input type="checkbox"/> You use <i>appropriate diction</i> (word choice). <input type="checkbox"/> Your sentences are generally <i>straightforward and clear</i> but lack much fluency .	<input type="checkbox"/> Your writing demonstrates <i>basic control</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You have <i>numerous errors</i> , but your writing is <i>clear</i> .
 Limited	<input type="checkbox"/> You present <i>superficial ideas</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> Your support from the texts is <i>over-generalized or lacking relevance</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/> You <i>inadequately</i> develop a unifying effect (organizational structure) through your thesis, topic sentences, and introduction and conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> You attempt to arrange your ideas and details but do so <i>ineffectively</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/> You use <i>imprecise and/or inappropriate diction</i> (word choice). <input type="checkbox"/> Your sentences frequently <i>lack fluency</i> and are often unclearly written.	<input type="checkbox"/> Your writing demonstrates <i>faltering control</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You have a <i>range of errors</i> in your work that lead to a <i>lack of clarity</i> .
Resubmission Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Your attempt to respond is <i>insufficient</i> . Contact your teacher to discuss suggestions for improvement and resubmission of your work.			
TOTAL: 64/70 = 91%	28/30	18/20	9/10	9/10
 Assessment	<p>Areas of strength: Darcy, the hard work you put into your plan and outline really paid off! This essay is logically organized and easy to follow! You include convincing evidence from both texts to support your point. You do an especially good job of explaining how the evidence proved each paragraph's topic sentence.</p> <p>Might I suggest: Keep striving to use sentence variety to create fluency in your writing. Also try to avoid using the second person (you) in a formal essay, and avoid colloquial language (slang) as well. At times you used the I.C.E. method really effectively to introduce and explain your evidence. Be sure to do that consistently!</p>			