

COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

1. Find the similarities and differences between the words in pairs.

1. a telescope and a microscope
2. a submarine and a dolphin
3. a computer and a calculator
4. a desert and a jungle
5. a photocopier and an x-ray machine

Stage 1 Comparison



Satellite view of the River Nile

1 Look at Tables 1 and 2 and complete these sentences. If necessary, look at Appendix 1, Section 3, Comparisons. Put one or more words in each space.

Table 1

- a The Nile is _____ the Mississippi-Missouri.
- b The Amazon is _____ long _____ the Nile.
- c The Nile is _____ river in the world.
- d The Mississippi-Missouri is _____ the Amazon.
- e The Yangtse is _____ river in China.

Table 2

- f In Beijing, January is a _____ month _____ December.
- g July is a _____ month _____ June.
- h There is _____ rain in May _____ in March.
- i July has the _____ rain; in other words, July is _____ month.
- j August is _____ warm _____ July.
- k December and January are _____ months.
- l The rainfall in February is _____ in March.
- m April is _____ wet _____ October.
- n The rainfall in November is _____ in May.
- o July is the _____ month, and also _____ month.

Table 1: The Longest Rivers in the World

1	The Nile (Africa)—4,160 miles (6,695 kilometres)
2	The Amazon (South America)—4,080 miles (6,570 kilometres)
3	The Mississippi-Missouri (North America)—3,740 miles (6,020 kilometres)
4	The Yangtse (Asia: China)—3,430 miles (5,520 kilometres)

Table 2: Temperatures and Rainfall in Beijing, China

Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Temperature (°C)	-4.7	-1.5	5.0	13.7	19.9	24.5	26.0	24.7	19.8	12.5	3.6	-2.6
Rainfall (cm)	0.2	0.5	0.5	1.5	3.6	7.6	23.9	16.0	6.6	1.5	0.8	0.2

Note: The first month is January (J), the last is December (D).

Stage 2
Extended Comparison

1 Read the following carefully.

Several years ago, some research was conducted at Manchester University into the amount of time that overseas postgraduate students spent listening to spoken English and speaking English. Sixty students co-operated by completing questionnaires.

It was found that an average of $22\frac{3}{4}$ hours per week were spent listening to English and only $6\frac{1}{4}$ hours speaking English to English people. An analysis of the time spent listening to English showed that lectures accounted for 5 hours and seminars 2 hours. An estimated $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours were spent in serious discussion while 2 hours were devoted to everyday small-talk. Watching television accounted for $5\frac{1}{4}$ hours and listening to the radio $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Going to the cinema or theatre only accounted for an average of $\frac{3}{4}$ hour per week.

The following sentences are based upon the information contained in the text above. Complete the sentences by choosing from the list of words and phrases below: use each word once only. Make sure that you keep the same meaning in the sentences as in the text.

Choose from these words: *biggest; as much . . . as; more . . . than (twice); least; most; not so many . . . as; as many . . . as; the same . . . as; greater . . . than.*

- a The students spent considerably _____ time listening to English _____ speaking it.
- b A _____ amount of time was spent in lectures _____ in seminars.
- c Nearly _____ hours were spent listening to the radio _____ watching television.
- d The _____ popular way of listening to English was by watching TV.
- e _____ number of hours was spent in everyday small-talk _____ in taking part in seminars.
- f The _____ popular way of listening to English was by going to the cinema.
- g _____ hours were spent in serious discussion _____ in watching television.
- h Nearly _____ time was spent in watching television _____ in speaking English.
- i _____ time was spent in serious discussion _____ in everyday small-talk.
- j The _____ surprise in the survey was the small number of hours spent speaking English to English people.

1 Look at the following table carefully.

Writing in English: Manchester University (50 students)

% students	type of writing	(average) frequency	(average) length
52	essay	5 per term	2000 words
34	report	2 per term	4000 words
14	dissertation	1 per year	8000 words
12	thesis	1 after 2-3 years	300-1000 pages

The information in the table can be described (as an alternative to using the table). Notice the construction of the following sentence:

52% of the students wrote essays, of an average frequency of 5 per term, of an average length of 2000 words.

Now read the following paragraph, which describes some of the information contained in the table. Complete the spaces with information from the table.

A survey was conducted among _____ overseas postgraduate students at _____. The purpose of the survey was to discover the type, _____ and _____ of academic writing that was expected of the students by their supervisors or tutors. _____ of the students _____ reports, of an _____ 2 per term, _____ average length _____.

Compare and Contrast

- The Venn Diagram allows students to see how two things are alike and how they are different.
- A student could use a Venn diagram to write a comparison/contrast essay by simply using the three sections of the diagram to make three paragraphs (two contrasting paragraphs, and one comparing paragraph).

Examples:

- Compare/Contrast the governments of two countries
- Compare/Contrast mammals and reptiles
- Find the least common multiple of two numbers
- Compare/Contrast a pyramid and a cube

