

Assessment:

1. Do you have a clear topic sentence that states the main idea clearly and simply?
2. Is each quote introduced, so the reader knows what to make of it?
3. Is each quote punctuated perfectly.
4. Is each quote discussed enough so that the read understands what you wanted them to notice about it?
5. Do you use a transition between parts of the paragraph?
6. Is the paragraph unified—everything in it relates clearly to the topic sentence?

Transitions to compare two things

in the same way	as	as well as	like
similarly	also	have in common	
likewise			

Transitions to contrast two things

but	nevertheless	as opposed	instead
conversely	even though	on the other hand	however
yet	otherwise	counter to	on the contrary
although	even so	whereas	

Compare/Contrast: Longfellow and Whitman

Topic Sentence: Both poets believe that the American Dream is worth the challenges it poses.

Quote Set up: Longfellow promises great rewards for those who set and pursue admirable goals. He states,

Longfellow Proof Text: “Lives of great men all remind us/ We can make our lives sublime./ And departing leave behind us / footprints in the sands of time.”

Discussion: This line reminds us that our forefathers accomplished great things. After all, had it not been for men like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, Americans would still be subjects of the English crown. Longfellow cautions, though, that dreaming takes work and patience.

Longfellow Proof Text: He warns us that we must “learn to labor and to wait.”

Transition: Similarly,

Quote Set Up: Hughes years for the days when the American Dream was “fresh” and “new.” He writes,

Whitman Proof Text: “Let American be America again. / Let it be the dream it used to be. / Let it be the pioneer on the plain / Seeing a home where he himself is free.”

Discussion: Hughes reference to the “pioneer on the plain” evokes the lightness and happiness that people experience when they are free and independent in a world filled with opportunity. The pioneers, usually poor and equipped with nothing more than hope, independence, and stubbornness, symbolize the spirit of the American Dream.