Comparison/Contrast Essay Guide

1. Choose a topic you know and care about such as comparing cheerleading to gymnastics, soccer to hockey, two movies, two video games, two athletes, two books…
2. Research some facts and jot them down separately for each topic. Make a list, Venn Diagram, or outline of the important similarities and differences of your two topics.
3. Decide if you want to show the similarities and differences in separate paragraphs or discuss the similarities and differences point by point as you go.
4. Form a strong thesis, which goes in the first paragraph. The thesis should focus on the greatest similarity and difference. For example, Tom Brady and Peyton Manning are both great quarterbacks; however, Tom Brady is the better of the two head to head.
5. The paper may be organized several ways but the simplest way would be in the following manner:
6. Introduction with thesis
7. Similarities
8. Differences
9. Conclusion
10. Some of the transition words to use in a comparison/contrast essay are the following: on the other hand, to the contrary, unlike, whereas, conversely, similarly, most importantly, however, furthermore, moreover, in addition, in contrast, as well as, differ, comparatively …
11. Don’t just offer your own opinions. Use facts and evidence from some google research.
12. Stay in third person. Avoid “I think…” Avoid “you” Avoid contractions.
13. Make sure to write a rough draft, edit, use spellcheck, and rewrite clearly.
14. Name, grade, date, and title go at the top on either side. ¾ to 1 page will suffice.