

How to compare writers' perspectives

"In one of your English language exams, you'll be asked to analyse two texts and compare the writer's ideas and perspectives, analysing how similar or different they are and why. The text will often be about a similar subject, but each writer may be aiming to present a different idea or perspective. They will use different language, structure and grammar to do this. Each of these elements will be influenced by the purpose of the writing, why the text has been written.

Before you start writing, you should ask yourself, has it been written to entertain, inform, persuade, or argue a point of view? What impact does it have on the reader? Does it make you feel emotional? Does it communicate facts? Is it persuading you to think a certain way? Let's take a look at two sample texts, both written to give an opinion about women's role in society.

Text one is taken from a speech delivered to Parliament in 1945. "She merely risks her life to bring the children into the world. Often with agonising pain, she spends her days and hours in washing and cleaning for the children, clothing them, and feeding them all the hours of the day and night." Text two is taken from an online article. "I believe that everyone deserves equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender. I believe that we need to create an environment where diverse perspectives are valued. I believe that this is not an individual issue, but a social one." Firstly, it's important that you reference both texts all the way through your answer. Your introduction should link the purpose and form of the two texts. In this case, both texts have a similar purpose. They communicate the opinion of the writer about how women are treated in society using the form of a speech and an article.

The middle section of your answer should make two or three points comparing the two texts directly. You may want to focus on language choices, structure or grammar, but you should always mention the idea the writer is trying to express and the effect it has on the reader or audience. For example, in text one, the speech, the writer uses a third person perspective to describe the experiences of an ordinary woman.

On the other hand, text two from the online article uses the first person perspective to address the reader directly making it clear that she's expressing her own opinion and experiences. The speech uses emotive language such as risks her life, and agonising pain to build empathy with the audience and reinforce the seriousness of the problems facing women. In the online article, the repetition of, I believe, emphasises the strength of the writer's beliefs. It also creates a list to highlight the different types of inequalities that women face.

Your conclusion should summarise your main points, and again, mention both texts giving a final thought on how effectively the writers have achieved their purpose."