Comparison:

Assessment Objective (A03): *Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.*

Comparison questions test a reader's ability to:

- compare two texts
- consider the similarities and differences between the texts
- sustain a focus on the question and stated area for comparison.

Before answering:

1. This is the final reading question. Make sure you have left yourself enough **time**. Practise this!
2. Underline the key words in the question. You are likely to be asked to compare with a **specific** focus in mind – what is it?
3. Be sure that you understand the **focus** of the question.
4. Go through the different texts and highlight any evidence that you will use in your answer.
5. **Revisit** the question. Make sure your evidence and points will provide a clear answer to **focus**.

Useful compare and contrast connectives:

on the other hand
similarly
both
unlike
whereas
instead
however
conversely
like
yet
although
in contrast
likewise
as well as
alternatively
while

When writing your answer:

- be clear about which text you are referring to;
- support all points with evidence from the text;
- keep the **focus** of the question firmly in mind – reuse the words of the question to frame your answer if you need something to help you stay on track;
- keep an eye on your timing – this will be a higher tariff question so make sure you have left enough time for completion;
- you may not have the same amount to say about each text but make sure you try to give reasonably even consideration to both texts.

TOP TIP: Use the Question

1. Use the **bullet points**. These are deliberately given to help you. **Organise** your answer with these in mind.
2. The second bullet point tells you to look at **how** the writers get their ideas across. You must compare the ways the writers do this.

Checklist for improving your answer:

- ✓ Have you used evidence to support your answer?
- ✓ Have you responded to the focus of the question?
- ✓ Have you considered points from both texts?
- ✓ Have you made it clear which text you are referring to?

Some examples of previous comparison questions

Both of these texts are about **tightrope walkers crossing Niagara Falls**.
Compare:

- **what** Blondin and Nik Wallenda **did** during their crossings of Niagara Falls;
- **how** the writers try to convey the **dangers** of crossing Niagara Falls. [10]

Both of these texts are about **volcanoes that have erupted**.
Compare:

- **what** the writers **could see and hear** of the erupting volcanoes;
- **how** they get their experiences across to their readers. [10]

Both of these texts give an account **of a mining rescue**.
Compare:

- **what** the writers tell us about what happened on the **day** when the miners were rescued;
- **how** the writers try to show the **drama** of the **day** of the rescues. [10]

These questions are usually accompanied by an instruction such as:
You must use the text to support your comments and make it clear which text you are referring to.

This information is intended to help you so ensure you read it carefully.