Comparison/Contrast Writing

Compare and Contrast essays are used in order to discuss two separate ideas, and though their structure does not differ too widely from that of a typical essay, they do have a simple structure that can help you plot out your overall argument. Remember, Compare and Contrast essays are used to show your instructor that you can discuss the details of two ideas in-depth.

Organization
This type of essay can be organized in two possible ways: **Point by Point** or **Subject by Subject**.

**Point by Point**
1. Point 1
   a. Subject A
   b. Subject B
2. Point 2
   a. Subject A
   b. Subject B
3. Point 3
   a. Subject A
   b. Subject B

**Subject by Subject**
1. Subject A
   a. Point 1
   b. Point 2
   c. Point 3
2. Subject B
   a. Point 1
   b. Point 2
   c. Point 3

Notice that the Subject and Points are reflected in the same order in each new paragraph. This is important to maintain because it helps keep your paper organized.

Example:

**Point by Point**
1. Tone
   a. Piano A
   b. Piano B
2. Design
   a. Piano A
   b. Piano B
3. Keyboard
   a. Piano A
   b. Piano B

**Subject by Subject**
1. Piano A
   a. Tone
   b. Design
   c. Keyboard
2. Piano B
   a. Tone
   b. Design
   c. Keyboard

Thesis Statements
Do not use vague generalizations:

✗ Piano A and Piano B are alike and different in many ways.
✓ Even though Piano A and Piano B have similar keyboards, Piano B has a preferable tone and a more attractive design.

Conclusion
Reword the Thesis Statement by naming the 2 subjects and reviewing the 3 points:

✓ Regardless of the similarity in the keyboards, Piano B is a better choice because its tone is more pleasant and its design more appealing.