**The Crucible – witch trial compare-contrast research essay**

In 1952, Elia Kazan, the director of Arthur Miller’s first commercially successful play, *All My Sons*, faced the House Committee on Un-American Activities, which demanded he provide the names of fellow theater members who had also been members of the American Communist Party during the Great Depression. The experience inspired Miller to visit Salem to research the 1692 [Salem Witch Trials](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/brief-salem.html?c=y&page=2). Miller’s *The Crucible* hit the stage in 1953 as a dramatization of the Salem Witch Trials and a satirical allegory of [McCarthyism](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/episodes/arthur-miller/mccarthyism/484/). Today, in addition to a literal search for witches, the term “witch hunt” refers to any effort to, using weak or questionable evidence, search out and harass or condemn those with unpopular beliefs.

In this compare and contrast research essay, you will explore both the similarities and differences between *The Crucible* and a “witch hunt” of your choosing. Your evidence will come from The Crucible and credible sources.

**Possible witch hunts**:

1. [Japanese Internment](http://www.ushistory.org/us/51e.asp)
2. [Rwandan Genocide](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/rwanda/genocide/index.html)
3. The Holocaust
4. The Yugoslav wars
5. [Steroid witch hunt in Major League Baseball](http://www.torontosun.com/2012/06/20/steroid-witch-hunt-must-end)
6. Witch hunt on doping in professional sports
7. Native American Genocide
8. Post 9/11 attitudes toward Muslims
9. The Red Scare and the Joseph McCarthy hearings
10. [Darfur Genocide](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_in_Darfur)
11. Russian Pogroms
12. Just about any racially motivated incident
13. The current political climate – democratic and republican parties angrily blaming each other for any/all problems
14. [Other ideas](http://learni.st/users/34311/boards/7695-modern-day-witch-hunts)

**Length/Format**

* About 3 pages – not to exceed 4 pages
* Works Cited (4 sources minimum, including the movie “The Crucible”) should be on its own page (your document’s final page)
* **Word document format only** ***(NO Google docs, txt, pdf files, etc.)***
* Size 12 Times New Roman font only
* double spaced (no extra spacing between paragraphs)
* 1” margins on all sides
* Title on first line; essay starts on the next line (don’t worry about your name, the date, etc. - that comes with your electronic submission)
* Submitted electronically Monday, Dec. 7 at 11:59 pm.

**The Introduction:**

Start by introducing the comparison on a general level. Get more specific until you reveal your thesis statement at the end of the introduction. The Thesis statement should state that “The Crucible” and your chosen topic share both similarities and differences in three common features.

**Sample Thesis Statement**: *“The Crucible” and the second red scare share both similarities and differences in that one person spearheaded the campaign to expose alleged wrongdoing, people began to blame each other in order to lessen the severity of their own punishment, and the fear people felt elevated to mass hysteria.*

**The body:**

You do not need to follow the analysis paragraph structure we’ve been focusing on this year, but you should use evidence/analysis structure where you think it’s needed. The most effective way to organize a compare-contrast essay is by showing specific examples of similarities and differences feature by feature:

**Paragraph 1**: Introduction

**Paragraph 2:**  feature—eating habits

(similarities and differences between

Tyrannosaurus and Velociraptor)

**Paragraph 3**: feature—size and mobility

(similarities and differences between

Tyrannosaurus and Velociraptor)

**Paragraph 4**: feature - hunting habits

(similarities and differences between

Tyrannosaurus and Velociraptor)

**Paragraph 5**:  Conclusion

**Transitions**

***To Emphasize Similarities****:* ***To Emphasize Differences****:*

like; likewise; similarly;                                   unlike; on the other hand;

in the same way; also; as;                                          in contrast with; however; but;

just as; both                                                               instead; rather than; whereas; conversely

**The conclusion:**

Reread the body of your essay and ask yourself “So what now?”  What can you take away from the comparison? What might the comparison say about people/society/the world/the present? Use your answer to develop the conclusion. (For example, maybe you observe that your comparison seems to show that people always have and always will throw others under the bus to save themselves).

DO NOT simply repeat the similarities and differences you developed in the introduction and body of your paper.  Instead, tell your readers what the similarities and differences suggest.  Describe any new insights you have gained.

**DO NOT USE: In conclusion, all in all, etc.**

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|  | **Targets**  *meet the targets below thoroughly and creatively* |
| **Ideas - 50** | - A clear introduction effectively establishes purpose  - Clear and relevant thesis statement  - Clearly and completely proves and explores the thesis statement and similarities/differences through analysis and cited textual evidence (if you’re not citing evidence from the text in each paragraph, you’re not using enough evidence from the text)  - The ideas reflect considerable research depth and understanding of topics - The reader has no unanswered questions  - Conclusion effectively ties together main ideas and offers satisfying closure |
| **Organization - 25** | - Contains an introduction, unified body paragraphs, and a conclusion  - Thesis statement is located at the end of the introduction  - Supporting paragraphs flow logically and effectively - Sentences flow logically and effectively (support+analysis) - Transitions connect compare/contrast ideas effectively |
| **Sentence**  **Fluency - 15** | - Sentences have impact, fluency, and variety in structure, length, and beginnings  - Sentences are concise – every word must have meaning |
| **Conventions - 10** | - Very few conventional errors - Properly formatted works cited list - Evidence is correctly cited (grammatical integration or parenthetical notation) in the essay - Direct quotes correctly integrated into writing; direct quotes are part of larger sentences that help establish context for the quotes |