

Core C | American Lit - Compare/Contrast Essay – American Romanticism Unit

Essay Prompts (choose one OR write one of your own):

“The Raven” and “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d” both develop the theme of grief and death. Compare and contrast how each poem develops the theme, making sure to point out both similarities AND differences. How do Poe and Whitman view death? How do they utilize literary devices like symbolism and imagery to communicate their views? Use examples from the text of each poem to support your answer.

Or

Throughout the unit on American Romanticism we have studied works by both Transcendental Optimists and Transcendental Pessimists. Compare and contrast the traits of each view, using examples from multiple works. How does the view of man differ between the Optimists and Pessimists?

*You may choose an original prompt if you have another idea for a compare/contrast essay. You must discuss this with me first.

Organization:

Introduction – Use the typical introduction format (hook – narrowing (background) – thesis). Remember to start by relating to your topic in a general way to grab attention (hook) and then narrow into your specific thesis.

Body – You may use either the point-by-point or the block organization method discussed in class

Conclusion – This is the last chance you have to persuade your reader – follow these three steps: restate your thesis (in different words), summarize your main points (remember to transition between ideas), and leave the reader on a strong, emotional note (tie back in to hook, if possible!).

**Remember that you must use transitions between paragraphs (to transition from one main point to the next) and within paragraphs (to transition from one sentence/idea to the next).