Comparing

Advertising and marketing

Skill: comparing
Vocabulary: work topic vocabulary
Exam practice: Advanced Paper 2 Part 2

Improve your writing skills: comparing

What is comparing?
Comparing involves describing and/or discussing the similarities and differences between two or more things. One of the key skills when comparing is to be able to recognise and focus on the most important and relevant similarities/differences, and ignore the less relevant ones.

1 The skill of comparing
A involves focusing more on similarities than on differences.
B is essentially the opposite of the skill of contrasting.
C could also be referred to as ‘comparing and contrasting’.

Why is comparing important?
Comparing is a central element of evaluation. When you’re evaluating two or more things to determine which is the most suitable, the best, etc, you have to compare them. It is also a useful technique when describing something unfamiliar. By comparing the unfamiliar with something more familiar, you help your readers understand the unfamiliar object, situation, etc more clearly.

2 Which statement involves description rather than evaluation?
A The XYG30 is less effective for workplace communication.
B The XYG30 looks not dissimilar to an everyday smartphone.
C The XYG30 is certainly more than capable of winning the speed test.

How do you compare?
Ways to express comparisons in English include using comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, using words and phrases used for comparing, such as A key difference between them is, One aspect they all have in common is, etc, using words and phrases for linking similar ideas, such as both, equally, similarly, etc, and using words and phrases for linking contrasting ideas, such as whereas, in contrast, etc.

3 Which word or phrase would we probably not use for comparing?
A seem like
B likewise
C unlike

How is comparing important in Advanced?
Comparing is important both parts of Advanced Paper 2. In the essay in Part 1, you may want to explain an idea by comparing it with something more familiar. You may also want to describe some ideas as more/less important/relevant/etc than other ideas. Comparing is also important in Part 2. In all the text types you might write in this part, you need to be able to evaluate by talking about the relative sizes, qualities, etc of two or more things, and compare unfamiliar ideas to familiar ideas.

4 In Advanced Paper 2, comparing is important in Part 1
A but not particularly relevant to Part 2.
B and all Part 2 text types.
C and some Part 2 text types.
Get started

Look at the photo and answer the questions.

■ What are some effects of seeing too many adverts in our daily lives?
■ Is advertising beneficial? Why? / Why not?
■ What do you imagine working in advertising is like? Tick the descriptions you agree with.

- __ fast-paced
- __ competitive
- __ laid-back
- __ sedentary
- __ imaginative
- __ rewarding

Develop your vocabulary

1 Match to make sentences.

1 The human resources manager was headhunting ___
2 Even though we’re not sure of the plan, let’s press ___
3 If you dress professionally for work, you’ll project ___
4 The ad was designed to target ___
5 Although Evan only started two weeks ago, he’s already learned ___

2 Choose the correct word to complete each sentence.

1 Darren, can you please show the clients / consumers in? I’d like to present the advertising campaign we developed for them.
2 We’d like the adverts to feature prominently / extremely round town, so they should appear on buses, in bus stops, in main squares and on major traffic routes.
3 The subtitle / caption at the bottom of the photo says the company was established in 1936.
4 The bank has a display of catalogues / pamphlets describing the range of services it offers.
5 The number of personnel / labour working in the marketing department exceeds 100.

3 Write a word or phrase from the box in each gap.

- campaigns
- direct mail
- hoardings
- placement
- slogans

It is clear that advertising has spread to every walk of daily life, and it seems that no public surface is off limits for advert (1) _________. You can see adverts at bus stops, on the sides of buses, high above you on giant (2) _________, and even on the pavement. Sometimes we love advertising, such as when we read catchy (3) _________ that soon find their way into our daily language. Other types of advertising, such as (4) _________, which is delivered through the letterbox, often ends up in the bin seconds after it arrives. Even if a lot of advertisements are ignored, it must be worth the company’s expense to create them. The truth is that the reason companies spend so much money on advertising (5) _________ is that it usually pays off.
Develop your writing skills: comparing

1 Underline comparison words and phrases in these sentences.
   1 Advertising is one of the most competitive fields in the world today.
   2 The employees of an advertising firm strive to create campaigns that are more creative and attractive than other firms.
   3 A campaign with a good slogan and an effective plan at targeting the right audience is more likely to be a success than one that lacks even just one of those aspects.
   4 A key difference between the two is the creativity involved in developing an ad campaign.
   5 Advertising professionals include graphic designers and copywriters who are equally involved in the ad creation, but have different tasks.
   6 A graphic designer works on the image of the advert, whereas the copywriter develops slogans and captions.

2 Read the exam task and answer the questions.
   You see the following notice at the language school where you study English.

1 What is the exam task asking you to write?

2 Why is the school asking students to come up with ideas for its website?

3 Who will you address the text to?

4 How many sections will you talk about?

5 Besides outlining sections, what else will you do in your text?

3 Look at the exam task in exercise 2 again and write sentences to compare the following suggestions, using the words from the box. There is an example given.

   as helpful as  ■ less fun  ■ less suitable  ■ less useful  ■ more appropriate  ■ more useful

Example:
1 games for learning English / tips for job interviews
   The games for learning English section might be less useful for business English students than the tips for job interviews section.
2 exam practice / games for learning English

3 tips for job interviews / job listings

4 games for learning English / business English vocabulary learning

5 exam practice / business English vocabulary learning

6 job listings / games for learning English
4 Read the exam task and decide if the statements are true (T) or false (F).

Your advertising company is looking to become a multinational business and you have attended a meeting on the subject. You have been asked to write a report discussing the details of the meeting.

**Location**
- North America: easy to set up, expensive
- Latin America: cost-effective, language barrier

**Staff**
- some in-house staff could relocate
- better to hire new staff

**Conclusion**
- Latin America more attractive option
- best to press ahead within the month

1. The topic of the exam task involves the expansion of a company. __________
2. The notes in the exam task belong to your manager. __________
3. The notes contain at least three instances of comparison words. __________
4. Your report is likely to contain a comparison of location choices. __________
5. The exam task is specifically asking you to compare location and staffing choices. __________
6. Your report will NOT include your recommendations. __________

5 Look at the exam task in exercise 4 again and tick which of the following are the most appropriate comparisons for the report.

1. Setting up the new location in North America is less attractive due to the cost involved. __________
2. Latin America is cost-effective and the language barrier would be a greater challenge to face than in North America. __________
3. It is most important that we convince our in-house staff of the attractive option of relocating to the new business. __________
4. Hiring new staff means we will not have to concern ourselves with relocating existing staff, who may be considerably less likely to move to a foreign country. __________
5. The ease of setting up a location in North America makes it the most attractive option. __________
6. The best way forward is to begin setting up the new business as soon as we can. __________

6 Read the text and answer the questions.

Foreign advertisements can be very clever, often more so than those in my native USA. One of my favourites is a public service announcement in Norway about fire safety.

In this ad, a couple is getting ready to go to bed, and the woman tells the man to unplug the kettle because even though the risk is small, there is a chance of fire. The man scoffs, but the woman says, ‘What could possibly go wrong by unplugging the kettle?’ The next morning, the man gets ready for work, takes a sip of cold watery tea, spits it out on his work clothes, changes his shirt, is then late for work, misses his bus and one thing leads to another. He ends up in an Amazonian rainforest dressed like a tribal person.

The ad ends by saying the chances of this happening are one-millionth of one per cent, but the chances of fires due to electrical causes are 40%. Compare this to a typical fire safety ad in the States, and you’ll find that it’s much more memorable. The Norwegian ad is doing a better job of preventing fires, wouldn’t you agree?

1. What is being compared in this text?
2. What words are used to make comparisons?
3. Why does the writer familiarise us with the advert’s storyline?
4. What is being compared in the advert?
5. Which ad does the writer prefer? Why?
6. What does the writer conclude about the fire safety advert from Norway?
Look at the information below. Complete the text using words from the box and your own words where necessary.

**Aid laundry detergent – advertising campaign and sales results:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livingston:</th>
<th>Bradvale:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign favoured most by the 45–54 age bracket</td>
<td>Campaign favoured most by the 25–34 age bracket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floral scent preferred more than the unscented version</td>
<td>Floral scent and unscented brands sold equally well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large economy-sized boxes sold more in comparison to smaller boxes</td>
<td>Smaller boxes far outsold large economy-sized boxes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

higher ■ perform ■ preferred ■ responsive ■ whereas

---

**To:** Amy Partridge  
**From:** Alex Fisher  
**Subject:** Aid campaign  
**Date:** 24th November

**Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to detail the company’s recent advertising campaign for Aid laundry detergent. Included are results of the campaign in the cities of Livingston and Bradvale.

**Age groups**

In Livingston, the campaign seemed to work best in the 45–54 age bracket, whereas in Bradvale, the campaign was more successful with the 25–34 age bracket. Thus, in regard to the advertisements, younger people in Bradvale were preferred to the older people in Livingston.

**Scent**

As far as scents are concerned, the floral scent seemed to perform better than the unscented version among consumers in Livingston. However, in Bradvale, consumers didn’t show a preference to either one. It would seem that consumers in Livingston preferred floral scent than the Bradvale consumers.

**Boxes**

Regarding product size, sales of large economy-sized boxes were higher in Livingston than in Bradvale. On the other hand, smaller boxes greatly outsold the economy-sized ones in Bradvale.

**Conclusion**

These results are quite surprising, as we were expecting the same age groups in both areas to be most responsive to the campaign. I suggest we run the campaign locally in two or three other cities before finalising the national campaign.
Read the exam task and choose the correct word or phrase.

You recently reviewed a printed advert for your product and you have made the following notes about the advert.

**Style of advert**
- product too small, doesn’t feature prominently enough
- colour scheme brighter than originally agreed upon, not consistent with brand

**Slogan**
- catchy, but could be better
- would prefer something shorter, more like last year’s campaign

Write a letter to your advertising company’s account representative, Janice Styles, explaining the problems with the advert and suggesting what you would like done about it.

**The exam task requires you to write a letter/report.**

**In this task, you are playing the role of a(n) client/advertising manager.**

**The design work in the ad seems to be much smaller/larger than the product.**

**From the notes, it seems that last year’s slogan was more/less successful.**

**Your text will have two/three purposes.**

Using the notes from the exam task in exercise 8, match the endings to the sentences to make comparisons.

1. In reviewing the advert, it seems that the product …
   - a. more consistent with our company’s brand.
2. Regarding our brand colours, I would like a colour scheme that is not …
   - b. shorter in length and sold the product successfully.
3. The colour scheme we originally agreed upon was …
   - c. features less prominently than we would like.
4. In terms of the slogan, it would be great if you could make it …
   - d. as bright as the one that appears in the advert.
5. We prefer the slogan for last year’s campaign, which was …
   - e. catchier and more memorable.

Complete the main body paragraphs of this letter. Use the information from exercises 9 and 10.

```
Dear Ms Styles,

I am writing with regard to the recent printed advertisement that your company made for our product. The advertisement has some promising aspects in its design. However, there are a few issues that I would like to be resolved before we agree to use it.

[paragraph]

Please ensure that the above changes to the advertisement are implemented and send us the new one as soon as it is ready. Do of course let me know if you have any questions.

Best regards,
Caroline Watkins
```
Exam focus: comparing in Advanced

1 Look at the first exam task on page 21 and complete the sentences.

1 This exam task is asking you to write a(n) ________________.
2 The campaign will focus on advertising Engeltown as a(n) ________________.
3 Your proposal will be written to the ________________ of Engeltown.
4 In your proposal, you will suggest ideas for ________________ to be used in the campaign.
5 In the second part of your proposal, you will identify the ________________ of the campaign.
6 Additionally, you will suggest where the ________________ of the adverts will be.

2 Look at the first exam task on page 21 again and answer the questions.

1 What will be compared in this exam task?
2 What wording is used in the exam task to show that comparing will be involved?
3 Why is comparing important in this exam task?
4 What kind of title would you give your text?
5 What could your headings be for this text?

3 Tick the phrases that would be useful for the first exam task.

1 quaint, rural character ___ 5 travel websites ___
2 large hoardings ___ 6 industrial centre ___
3 business travellers ___ 7 historical buildings ___
4 city dwellers ___ 8 close proximity to nature ___

4 Write sentences using these phrases to make your ideas the more appealing choice.

1 I feel confident / our proposal

2 The ideas I propose / important aspects

3 These suggestions / the best campaign

4 People / certain to visit Engeltown

5 Engeltown / reasons to visit

6 Best advert placement / people book online

Skills tip
In Advanced Paper 2 Part 2, could you

a include headings for proposals and reports?  Yes / No
b use bullet points for ideas in reviews?  Yes / No
Exam practice: Advanced Paper 2 Part 2

Part 2
Write an answer to one of the questions 1–3 in this part. Write your answer in 220–260 words in an appropriate style.

1 You see the following notice in a school where you are studying English.

The national tourism board has given our town, Engeltown, a grant to spend money on an advertising campaign that showcases our town’s tourist attractions. The town council invites you to send a proposal outlining ideas to include in the campaign’s slogans and suggestions for the most appropriate target audience and placement of the adverts. A decision can then be made about how the money should be spent.

Write your proposal.

2 You recently attended a job fair as the human resources representative of an advertising company. Here are your notes on some of the candidates interested in working at your company.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Personality</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• mostly bachelor’s degrees, few master’s degrees</td>
<td>• many project good image</td>
<td>• promising candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• inexperienced, eager to learn</td>
<td>• good communicators, good-natured</td>
<td>• CVs of most qualified attached</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your manager has asked you to write a report summarising the job candidates you met and recommending whether they would make suitable employees.

Write your report.

3 You see the announcement below in a monthly magazine called Ad World.

Best and worst adverts
Adverts sometimes make us laugh, and sometimes they annoy us beyond belief. We would like to publish our readers’ favourite and least favourite adverts, whether they are on television, in print, online or on hoardings. Send in a review which describes the best advert and worst advert you have seen and give reasons for these choices.

Write your review.