

Stronger Starts Answer Key

Answers will vary. Sample correct responses are below.

1. Although both snacks are popular with students, trail mix and cheese crackers offer very different kinds of energy.
2. While both a city bus and a skateboard help people get around, they differ greatly in speed, purpose, and where they can be used.
3. Soccer and choir share teamwork and practice habits, but they require completely different skills.
4. Cats and turtles make interesting pets, yet they differ in their daily needs and how they interact with owners.
5. Solar power and fossil fuels both provide electricity, but they contrast sharply in their sources and long term effects.

Teacher's Guide

- Emphasize that a **strong compare and contrast topic sentence** clearly names the two items and hints at the relationship between them.
- Encourage students to use transition words that signal comparison or contrast right away.
- For differentiation:
 - Provide a model sentence frame such as "While both ____ and ____ share ____, they differ in ____."
 - Allow students who need support to brainstorm similarities and differences before rewriting.
- For engagement:
 - Let students write their own weak topic sentences and trade with a partner to fix.
- For extension:
 - Ask students to expand one of their improved topic sentences into a full compare and contrast paragraph.