

In support of  
practical tasks



## Patterns of Organization

There are two basic patterns of organization for developing a comparison and contrast essay. Although they are called by various names, we will call Pattern A the *Point-by-Point* organization and Pattern B the *All of One/All of the Other* organization. To show how these patterns work, let's consider the topic of two automobiles: the Road Runner XL and the Speed Demon 280. Your points of comparison might be the cost of maintenance, performance, and comfort.

### Pattern A (Point-by-Point)

In this pattern, each **point of comparison** is discussed separately. Study the following organization.

**Thesis Statement:** The Speed Demon is a better car than the Road Runner.

- I. Cost of Maintenance
  - A. The Road Runner
  - B. The Speed Demon
- II. Performance
  - A. The Road Runner
  - B. The Speed Demon
- III. Comfort
  - A. The Road Runner
  - B. The Speed Demon

Pattern A (Point-by-Point) is useful for organizing complex topics. It is an easy pattern to follow because the comparison/contrast is made clear throughout the essay. For example, a paragraph comparing the cost of maintenance of the two automobiles might be developed as follows:

The Road Runner and the Speed Demon differ in cost of maintenance. The Road Runner is rather expensive to maintain. This car gets poor mileage, with 23 miles per gallon on the highway and 18 miles per gallon in the city. Moreover, it requires the more expensive premium gasoline. In addition, the Road Runner needs a tune-up every four months and an oil change every 90 days. The average driver who owns a Road Runner must pay approximately \$1,400 a year to keep this car running. The Speed Demon, on the other hand, is quite economical. It gets an impressive 38 miles per gallon on the highway and 34 in the city, and unlike the Road Runner, the Speed Demon takes the less costly regular gasoline. In addition, whereas the Road Runner requires tune-ups and oil changes, the Speed Demon requires little maintenance. It needs to be tuned up only every 12 months; the oil needs to be changed only every four months. In summary, instead of paying \$1,400 per year to keep the car running, the owner of a Speed Demon spends only \$600, which is significantly less.