

HUNTER COLLEGE READING/WRITING CENTER
Writing Across the Curriculum: The CUNY Proficiency Exam
Drawing a Relationship

As part of Task 1 of the CPE exam, you will be asked to draw a relationship between some aspect or idea of the long reading, which you receive two or three weeks prior to the exam and the short reading, which is distributed at the exam itself.

In drawing a relationship between the two readings, you should consider ways that the subject matter or the ideas of the two authors are similar or different. One way to do this is to consider whether the two authors would agree with each other, whether they would disagree, or whether they would agree in part but offer differing perspectives.

Both the long reading and the short reading tend to fall into a genre called social critique, which “describes, analyzes, or offers opinions” about the behavior or thinking of a group or groups. The subject matter of the two readings is always related in some way although there are differences between the two works as well.

For example, the author of the long essay may critique how Americans isolate themselves into communities they can afford while the author of the short reading may critique how Americans avoid confronting social problems. The essential connection between the two readings might be that Americans isolate themselves into communities (the long reading) *because* they are avoiding dealing with social problems (the short reading).

Making such connections between the two readings is the work of the drawing a relationship portion of the Task 1 assignment.

As you write about the ideas of the two writers, it is important to clearly *paraphrase* each author’s thinking. The questions below will help you prepare to do this.

Both authors will provide data, facts, anecdotes, examples, or counterarguments to illustrate or support their argument. As you write about the ideas of the two writers, you should refer to these methods of support in your own discussion.

As you work on drawing a relationship between the long and short readings, consider the following questions:

- 1. What is the subject matter of each of the readings? How are they related?**
- 2. What group or groups are each of the authors discussing?**
- 3. Are the actions or thinking of these groups the same in both readings? In what way do they agree or differ?**
- 4. What opinion does each author have about the actions or thinking of the group or groups they describe? Are their opinions in agreement or not?**
- 5. What reasons does each author give for feeling as they do? How are these reasons related?**

NOTE: Drawing a relationship between the two readings is only one part of the Task 1 assignment. Refer to each part of the sample writing assignment as a guide to your preparation. Then refer to the CPE handouts for the other parts of the assignment.