Creating a voice. Analyse the openings of different first person narratives for evidence of distinctive character and voice, e.g. *The Color Purple, Oranges are Not the Only Fruit, Great Expectations* etc. Compare structure, tone, description, vocabulary, grammar, imagery and literary techniques in two.

Novel narratives. Students compare / contrast third person omniscient and first person narratives, e.g. the party scenes from Chapter 18 of *Pride and Prejudice* and Chapter 3 of *The Great Gatsby*. Can each be rewritten as the other?

Comparing protagonists. Divide the class in two, and choose two texts. Each half should write a detailed description of the protagonist of one of the texts. Pair up students from each group, and ask them to highlight any similarities between the characters, no matter how small.

Compare and contrast words. Model the use of comparative discourse markers such as ‘similarly’, ‘in contrast,’ ‘both’, etc. and then ask the students to write a paragraph in which they use a selection of these words.

Scrambled lines. When comparing poems, cut up the texts into lines and mix them up. Distribute in envelopes to pairs of students and ask them to separate the two (or more) poems and put them in the correct order. Ask them to identify how they could tell which lines went together.

Agree or disagree. Have the class stand and make a statement about one of the texts. If they agree they should go to the ‘agree corner’ or if they disagree they should go to the ‘disagree’ corner. Make the same statement about the second text and see in what direction they move.

Originals and reworkings. Use the Teachit resource Comparing Jane Austen’s novels with The Jane Austen Book Club (5429) to explore these two texts, or compare other pairs of texts, e.g. *Great Expectations* (ch.8) with Duffy’s poem *Havisham*, or *Hamlet* with *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. Use film clips for an extra dimension of comparison.

Capital comparisons. Students compare presentations of London in Wordsworth’s ‘Composed upon Westminster Bridge’, Orwell’s *Down and Out in Paris and London* (ch.XXXIX), and Bryson’s *Notes from a Small Island* (ch.2). Next, students write about their own town in different ways – sonnets work really well for this.

Deconstructing a comparison essay. Share a high quality comparison essay with the class and ask them to note when assessment objectives are met. They should then create what they think would have been the plan for this essay. Then give them a different question and have them do an original plan.

Poetry forms. Choose two poems with similar themes presented in different forms, e.g. *Funeral Blues* (Auden) and *Tropical Death* (Nichols) and enlarge onto A3 sheets. In pairs, students annotate the poems to show how form and other features reflect the cultures, opinions and emotions expressed.
theme, character, setting, context. Each group is assigned a theme, character, setting or context for the texts which are being compared. They should produce detailed comparative notes on their topic and then share with the rest of the class.

recipes for writing. In groups, students examine genres of fiction, e.g. gothic, detective, romantic, science fiction etc. Each group compares two or three texts in one genre and creates a list of ‘ingredients’ needed for genre success, from ‘lashings of…’ first, to ‘a pinch of…’ last.

reader reaction. Compare how writers influence reader reaction to their characters, e.g. Hardy’s omniscient narrator presents Tess of the d’Urbervilles as a victim; Browning’s dramatic monologue Porphyria’s Lover should shock. Create monologues to address readers, e.g. Angel in Tess, Ophelia in Hamlet.

crossing genres. Examine how different genres present similar themes, e.g. Plath’s ‘Morning Song’ and Frankenstein for presentation of attitudes to new life, or compare the presentation of ideas on education in The History Boys with the opening of Hard Times.

ranking statements. Put a series of statements around the room and give the class five minutes to circulate and study. They should then rank these statements in terms of relevance to their texts and note the differences. This can also be done with an interactive whiteboard.

statement spider diagrams. Assign each group a text and then hand around a piece of paper (A3) with a statement that could be relevant to each of the texts. Ask each group to annotate the statement with relevance to their text and then pass to next group. These can be photocopied for revision.

choose a symbol. Project a series of symbolic images which are relevant to one or more of the texts. Have the class use free association to arrive at a series of qualities for the symbol (rose: romantic, fragile, natural, love, thorny) and then discuss how these qualities are representative of the different texts.

venn diagram. Draw two large overlapping circles. In the shared area, students should write down what the texts have in common and in the separate areas they should note the differences.

swapping styles. Use Teachit’s resource Holden Caulfield and Harry Potter (7672), which prepares students to rewrite Harry Potter in the style of The Catcher in the Rye. Encourage students to rewrite a section of the novel you are studying with your class, in the style of another text. Try it with one of the texts they chose to compare in #3 above.

time capsules. Students compare distinctive fictional settings by choosing six items they’d put into a time capsule to represent the society of each text, e.g. The Handmaid’s Tale and Nineteen Eighty-Four. Teachit resources The Twelfth Symposium (11178) and Exploring Orwell’s use of symbolism (15205) are helpful for comparing these dystopias. Make a poster for each capsule.