

FIGURE 16.4 Flowchart for Revising a Comparison or Contrast Essay

QUESTIONS

1. **Highlight** your thesis statement. Does it identify the subjects being compared; (indicate whether you will compare, contrast, or both, and state your main point)? Does it indicate your purpose (to express ideas, inform, or persuade)?

YES

2. Write the basis of comparison at the top of the page. Is your basis of comparison clear? Does it clearly relate to your thesis?

YES

3. List your points of comparison. Place a ✓ next to the sentences that focus on similarities. Mark an X next to sentences that focus on differences. Have you included all significant points of comparison? Do you fairly examine similarities and differences? Is each similarity or difference significant, and does each support your thesis?

YES

4. **Underline** the topic sentence of each paragraph. Does each paragraph have a clear topic sentence? If you are using point-by-point comparison, is each paragraph focused on a separate point or shared characteristic?

YES

REVISION STRATEGIES

NO

- Revise your thesis using the suggestions on p. 382.
- Brainstorm reasons for making the comparison. Make the most promising reason your purpose.

NO

- Ask a friend or classmate to help you think of a clear or new basis for comparison.

NO

- Delete any discussion of similarities or differences that are not significant or do not support your thesis.
- Review your prewriting to see if you overlooked any significant points of comparison. If so, revise to add them.
- If you have trouble thinking of points of comparison, conduct research or ask a classmate to suggest ideas.

NO

- Follow the guidelines for writing clear topic sentences (pp. 161–64).
- Consider splitting paragraphs that focus on more than one point or characteristic and combining paragraphs that focus on the same one.

QUESTIONS

5. Draw a wavy underline under the concrete details in each paragraph. Do you include enough details to make your comparisons vivid and interesting? Have you provided roughly the same amount of detail for both subjects?

NO

REVISION STRATEGIES

- Add or delete details as necessary.
- Review your prewriting to see if you overlooked any significant details.
- Research your subjects to come up with additional details. (See Chapters 22 and 23.)

YES

6. Draw a graphic organizer of your essay, or review the one you did earlier. Did you use either point-by-point or subject-by-subject organization consistently throughout the essay? Will your organization be clear to your reader?

NO

- Study your graphic organizer to find inconsistencies or gaps.
- Reorganize your essay using one method of organization consistently.
- Add transitions if necessary.

YES

7. Reread your introduction and conclusion. Does the introduction provide a context for your comparison? Is the conclusion satisfying and relevant to the comparison?

NO

- Revise your introduction and conclusion to meet the guidelines in Chapter 7, pp. 147–50 and 150–51.
- Consider proposing an action or way of thinking that is appropriate in light of the comparison.