

Compare and contrast essay: paddling

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All paddling sports have a few things in common whether that sport is canoeing, kayaking, or dragon boating. For one, each participant uses a paddle. Secondly, paddling sports are done on the water. But dragon boating has some inherent differences from canoeing and kayaking that set it apart. Dragon boating is a team sport.

In addition, while a kayak or canoe can hold a few people, nothing compares to the size of a dragon boat. A dragon boat holds twenty paddlers, a steersperson, and a drummer, whereas a kayak or a canoe cannot hold that many participants. Because so many people are involved in dragon boating, it requires a great deal of teamwork in order to get the boat to work properly. In a dragon boat, having a few people paddling with a different rhythm can mean that the boat does not head in the right direction or does not move at all. The steersperson and drummer must have a good communication system for the safety and speed of the entire boat.

There are, however, some similarities between dragon boating and its sister sports of canoeing and kayaking. The safety equipment is largely the same with whistles, life jackets, throw bags, and bail buckets being used in all three of the sports. The paddling of a canoe is similar in style to a dragon boat, with the paddle being similar in shape and the techniques of paddling, prying, drawing, turning, and stopping the boats also being the same.

Dragon boats, canoes, and kayaks can all be used on lakes, rivers, and in the ocean, with only the depth of water determining whether the dragon boat must stay behind. But perhaps the biggest difference between dragon boating and the other two sports has to do with its competitive nature. I've

seen kayak races and canoe games but I've never seen recreational dragon boat outings.

Lots of people own personal canoes and kayaks and take them out on weekends. This is not so with a dragon boat. It is difficult to purchase, store, and maintain. A weekend outing is tricky, as twenty-one friends are needed. Most dragon boats are only seen and used during festivals and smaller competitions, with teams being put together for the purpose of racing. Each of the paddling sports is similar in nature, though each boat is unique in its capacity, shape, and purpose.

Those who canoe might find that some of their paddling skills can transfer over to the sport of dragon boating. And those who kayak may find the same thrill on the water in a larger craft. But a dragon boat remains unique in a variety of ways.