**Teacher’s message:**

Your body paragraphs themselves need to be more focused on specific points for each.

So that we are more clear in your argument, I want you to go ahead and make sure you have the following organization:

Introduction: A good introductory paragraph will have the following: an introduction to the topic being discussed, any key definitions, ends with your thesis.  
Body Paragraph 1: Quick summary of each work and its genre.  
Body Paragraph 2: Similarities in the two works.  
Body Paragraph 3: Differences in the two works.  
Conclusion: A concluding paragraph should summarize your overall paper.

I want each paragraph to be organized as follows:

A- Answer/Assertion/argument. This is your answer or topic sentence. It is an idea that supports your thesis and guides what your paragraph will focus on.  
E-Evidence from the 1st text to support your idea. (Parenthetical citation, need 2 sentences of explanation for every 1 sentence quoted or paraphrased)  
E- Explanation. At least two sentences that explain the importance of the evidence. 1 sentence that explains how the evidence supports the paragraph’s answer or topic sentence, and another that ties the topic and evidence back to the thesis or main idea of the story.

E-Evidence from the 2nd text to support your idea. (Parenthetical citation, need 2 sentences of explanation for every 1 sentence quoted or paraphrased)  
E- Explanation. At least two sentences that explain the importance of the evidence. 1 sentence that explains how the evidence supports the paragraph’s answer or topic sentence, and another that ties the topic and evidence back to the thesis or main idea of the story.

 These formulas will make it easier for you to organize this paper, and the paragraph formula works for any essay.

**Part 2:**  
After your literature choices and thesis have been approved by your teacher, create a well-written essay of **at least 300 words** comparing and contrasting the writing style and/or narrative structure of the two works. Include plenty of evidence from the literary texts you are comparing. Cite your sources if need be.

**Absurdity in literature**

That elusive feeling that originates quite spontaneously in the depths of the soul itself,  "the absurdity". In its depth, this feeling is similar to heartstrings, which may not appear outwardly at all, but intensely exhaust a person from the inside. Only courageous authors are capable of touching such extraordinary and deep human feelings, and Neil Gaiman is one of them. This author knows how to engage these human emotions in whatever form the work may be, novel or comic book. The Sandman comic book and the novel Good Omens are good examples of it. Although both works being written by Neil Gaiman, and addressing the theme of absurdity in our lives, the novel Good Omens and the comic book The Sandman are considerably different in their perception of absurdity, concepts of good and bad, structure and characterization.

The book Good Omens tells us a story about a demon and an angel who overtime ended up being friends. Demon Crowley is given the task of substituting Antichrist for the son of the American diplomat. Crowley and Angel Aziraphale realize that the end of the world does not bode well for them regardless of the outcome of the final battle. Both try in various ways to participate in the education of the future Antichrist. Good Omens teases the modern lifestyle: synthetic foods; fancy and expensive restaurants that leave people hungry; low-calorie foods with whose help we lose our health. The book is a scathing denunciation of Christianity. It teases basic biblical tenets and whether or not we understand them correctly.

From Doctor Fate to a serial killer convention in a hotel, the author looks into some very dark places as The Sandman saga unfolds. Essentially, where there is sleep, there are nightmares, and in The Sandman, readers were shown nightmares that are impossible to forget. The Sandman horror comic book is about the Sandman, the Prince of Stories, or simply Dream. He is one of the seven (there are also Destiny, Death, Destruction, Desire, Despair, and Delirium). Each of the seven Endless has absolute power within its aspect, they are older than gods and can also slightly influence its opposite. Of course, the aspect lords are far from getting along with each other, and people (and not only) appear in the story to make their own intrigues. It is on the complex relationship of the seven Endless and builds the entire plot. Given that the protagonist commands dreams, the narrative sometimes takes their illogic and absurdity from night dreams. The story itself is sweeping, dealing with monumental things and events like the creation of life and the essence of the universe. For example, you can find out who existed in the infinite space of space at a time when the Earth was completely uninhabited, and get to know the personified stars.

 One of the most important topics touched upon in Good Omens is good and evil, what they represent, and whether there are any clear boundaries or limits to them. The absurdity begins at the beginning of the book when the reader learns that the two main protagonists, who seem to be the worst enemies, are longtime friends. Despite the fact that judging by the theme of the work "Apocalypse," the book Good Omens is not a horror genre at all, it is a comedy with a mixture of fantasy. First of all, the book makes a very ironic mockery of the situations at work that the main characters encounter, and not only. The novel represents different absurd situations which are very common in our society: employees in competing offices help each other in their work and share information, in spite of bans; management treats the tasks of subordinates formally and does not bother to delve into them, bosses do what they like, management hiding their mistakes from superiors, attributing other people's merits, etc. Secondly, the ultimate nightmare, the birth of the Antichrist, turns into a typical tug-of-war contest between longtime friends, à la who can better influence the child and drag him to his side. The story turns into an observation of a fun game that you begin to feel the excitement along with the main characters and cheer for one of them to win. Therein lies the main absurdity of the work, which at the first sight seems to be quite frightening in its subject matter, but in the end turns out to be a full-fledged comedy.

Apocalypse and nightmares are both very frightening themes that are intimidating by their very titles. If the commonality of these works is discussed, then we can clearly see how absurdity is played out in both. The Sandman is a comic book that inspires horror through terrifying illustrations and colorful descriptions of creepy dreams, with a well-developed plot. What can be gleaned from reading this comic book is how absurd and simple the truth of our human lives is: "What we acquire too cheaply, we value too poorly: only a high price gives value to everything." In this context, "cheap" does not always mean monetary - it can also imply, for example, that if an achievement requires you to expend a little of your energy and effort, you are likely to forget about the accomplishment very soon, and it will mean absolutely nothing to you.

 Despite the fact that both works are similar in the darkness of the general theme of the works and involving the subject of absurdity, as previously discussed Good Omens is a total comedy, whereas The Sandman is not even remotely friendly or funny. The sixth volume of The Sandman is remarkable in that it has no general plot like the previous five, and in contrast to Good Omens, is a collection of about a dozen complete stories, each of which evokes different emotions, but all are read in the same breath thanks to Gaiman's intriguingly written dialogues and unconventional plot solutions. When we fall from a great height in life, an imminent finale awaits us. If we fall from a great height in a dream, there are options. You can, as in life, fall and crash. You can wake up. And... you can fly! Each of the main characters faces the need to make a leap of faith. And in order to do so, they must overcome a major obstacle: their fear. In fact, the small overture "Fear of Falling" reflects as a drop in the sea, all the further content of the collection. It is this author’s manipulation of fears, and the emotions one encounters with one's nightmares, that gives this comic even more horror charm since nightmare is something that everyone can experience, and sometimes it may feel so real...

This universe is saturated with all kinds of allusions, innuendos, and references. In the comics, Neil Gaiman decided to use other methods of stylizing the text and developing the characters. One might find references to Gilbert Chesterton or the “Elder Edda”. You might think of the comic strip about the former Sandman, or you might recall Christopher Marlowe's The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus. The historical characters are also interestingly portrayed: in the pages of the comic, you can meet Octavian Augustus in the heyday of the Roman Empire, Robespierre administering his bloody justice during the French Revolution, Shakespeare, and many others. It takes a broad-minded reader to get more enjoyment out of reading. And The Sandman expands it willingly.

No comic book has ever captured the essence of dreams as accurately as The Sandman did. After all, what is a dream? Disorderly chaos that manages to operate according to an almost inconceivable internal logic. It is impossible to describe them objectively, but Gaiman manages to give subjectivity meaning and form. Sounds like an absurdity, doesn't it?

His dream world is a pretentious, indescribable place. And yet as you read, you take it in as a home. The universe of The Sandman is almost instantly accessible and comprehensible, even if you don't actually realize a tenth of the laws by which it works.

Comparing these two writings, one can conclude that the dark theme of work can include absolutely any genre of work, because the most important thing is from what perspective the author will choose to look at the situation, how he will present his thoughts, on what moral values he will accentuate the reader and what is his main message. In both works, Gaiman managed to make readers feel a sense of the absurd. What is the difference, though? In Good Omens, the author lets us reflect on the absurdity of certain concepts that have had clear character and boundaries for years, thus playing with our thinking. The Sandman, meanwhile, makes us feel absurdity on an emotional level, playing with those feelings that are deep in our subconscious, as if subconsciously forcing us to set boundaries in what sleep is - we don't understand it immediately, but we feel it. That is kind of unexplainable, but now it makes sense why Neil Gaiman is considered a masterpiece author!

**Sources**:

Good Omens by Neil Gaiman & Terry Pratchett

The Sandman by Neil Gaiman