Major and minor keys can be compared or related in a number of ways. The two most common relationships are relative and parallel.

**Relative keys** have the same key signatures and the same pitches in the scale, but different tonics.

C major and A minor are relative keys. They have the same key signature, use the same pitches in the scale, but have different tonics.

**Parallel keys** have the same tonic pitch, but use different pitches in the scale.

C major and C minor are parallel keys. They have the same tonics, but use different pitches in the scales.

**Summary:** Relative = same key signature, different tonic pitch  
Parallel = same tonic pitch, different key signature
Practice questions:

1. What is the relative minor key of E major?
   a. E minor
   b. F# minor
   c. C minor
   d. C# minor

2. What is the relative major key of G# minor?
   a. E# major
   b. E major
   c. B major
   d. C# major

3. What is the parallel minor key of E major?
   a. E minor
   b. F# minor
   c. C minor
   d. C# minor

4. What is the parallel major key of D minor?
   a. E# major
   b. D major
   c. F major
   d. Bb major

Answers: 1. d  2. c  3. a  4. b