

How to Write a Comparison/Contrast Essay: From Thesis to Final Draft

Step 1: Make your Thesis (your opinion of the two related subjects)

Example: Savannah Nevelow's Thesis – Jenny wins over Misha

Step 2: Make a Topic (that is the "Point" for Each Body Paragraph) Outline*

*Note: Comparison/Contrast essays can be structured Subject-by-Subject, but for this guide, we'll do Point-by-Point.

Instructions: In a Comparison/Contrast, Point-by-Point structure, the topics (or "points") are in importance order: your top three or top four characteristics, as explained in "Chapter 9: Comparison and/or Contrast" in [Structures](#).

Example:

Thesis: Jenny wins over Misha

- I. Honesty = Jenny vs. Misha
- II. Loyalty = Jenny vs. Misha
- III. Jealousy = Jenny vs. Misha

Restated Thesis: Jenny wins over Misha

Step 3: Turn your Topic Outline into a Topic Sentence Outline

Example:

Thesis Statement: At this point, Jenny is the one I talk to about everything, and she's there every time I need her, unlike Misha.

- I. To be friends with me a person has to be honest.
- II. Having a loyal friend is also well worth my time.
- III. Finally, how do we deal with jealousy in a friendship?

Restated Thesis Statement: In conclusion, Misha and Jenny are very different people

Step 4: Make a Tiny Rough Draft from Your Sentence Outline

Instructions: Put all the info of your Sentence Outline in Paragraph form. You'll have

1. your Essay Title, which is a Keyword or Keywords of your Thesis Statement,
2. your Intro paragraph's Thesis Statement,
3. your Body Paragraphs' Topic Sentences, and
4. your Conclusion paragraph's Restated Thesis Statement

Example:

Contrast (Point-by-Point): Best Friends

Intro paragraph: At this point, Jenny is the one I talk to about everything, and she's there every time I need her, unlike Misha.

First body paragraph/ section: To be friends with me a person has to be honest.

Second body paragraph/ section: Having a loyal friend is also well worth my time.

Third body paragraph/ section: Finally, how do we deal with jealousy in a friendship?

Conclusion paragraph: In conclusion, Misha and Jenny are very different people.

Step 5: Expand Your Tiny Rough Draft, Starting with Intro Paragraph

Instructions: Use the information on pages 22-25 in [Structures](#) -- 1) to start your Intro paragraph, 2) to write your Body paragraph's supporting details, and 3) to finish your Conclusion paragraph.

Example (for a minimum **1000 word** rough draft):

Contrast (Point-by-Point): Best Friends

Intro paragraph (100-150 words): People come into your life in different ways. They can be acquaintances, friends, or even best friends. In this case, I have five best friends, or so I thought. For the sake of this paper, I'll focus on just two of them. The difference between the two is very easy to point out: one is named Jenny, and she is really mature and acts her age. The one named Misha is immature and childish. Jenny is my overall best friend; she is artsy and so smart. She has this sense of humor that definitely matches me and just makes life so much more tolerable. We are basically sisters from different families. As for Misha, she is very straight forward and blunt. She has this rude demeanor that she puts off into the universe. At this point, Jenny is the one I talk to about everything, and she's there every time I need her, unlike Misha.

First body paragraph/ first section of two body paragraphs (250-275 words): To be friends with me a person has to be honest. Between Misha and Jenny it's a no brainer: Jenny has and always will be honest with me. She always tells me when I'm messing up and doing something completely wrong with my life. She knows exactly how to word it to not make me feel bad. Jenny always seems to put my feelings first. That really shows how much she loves me and cherishes me as a friend. For example, back in 2013 I wasn't making the best decisions in life. I ended up taking her to a bar, and we both left with this man we

didn't know who was having a party. I was driving and I drank at his house, so I couldn't drive home. She was so mad at me that she told me I was really destroying my life and I needed to straighten up. After that day, I didn't do anything that stupid again. I was so grateful that she was honest with me and that she put my feelings into play. But **Misha**: what can I say? She is extremely blunt but in the most hurtful way. She tends to put her needs and wants before everyone else. It seems to me that she likes to keep secrets from me, asking others to do the same. I definitely don't see her as honest unless it's to her benefit. Just recently, she and I were in a huge fight because she was trying to get my boyfriend to keep secrets from me. Misha tried to barter with me and tell me that if I kept secrets from my overall best friend Jenny, then we could continue to be friends. To me that doesn't make her a very honest friend.

Second body paragraph/ second section of two body paragraphs (250-275 words):

Having a loyal friend is also well worth my time. Jenny is definitely a loyal friend. I never have to worry about her taking sides or choosing someone else over me. For example, there was a fight between Misha and me where she was talking bad about me, really hurting my feelings. Jenny just stopped talking to her. She chose to tell me she was pregnant before Misha, showing me that not only could I trust her, but she was being loyal to me because I have only ever been honest with her and I chose not to hide things from her. In contrast, **Misha** is not a very loyal friend. She talks bad about people behind their back. For example, Misha constantly would tell people that I am a spoiled brat, that I don't spend enough time with my daughter and would constantly tell lies about me to friends and my boyfriend. She isn't a very loyal friend. I recently found out that she was telling all the secrets I told her in confidence to anyone who would listen. This means I can no longer consider her to be a loyal friend.

Third body paragraph/ third section of two body paragraphs (250-275 words): **Finally,**

how do we deal with jealousy in a friendship? For me, I back away if I'm getting jealous; then I have to reevaluate myself. In almost every friendship, there is some type of jealousy. When it comes to **Jenny**, I have only known of one time that she has gotten jealous. I had become really close with our mutual friend Misha, and we were hanging out all the time up until I realized her true self. I know Jenny was jealous of all the time we were spending together, because she doesn't live in town. In contrast, I don't even know where to start with **Misha** and jealousy. She has really made it known that she is jealous of my friendship with Jenny and that Jenny chooses me over her. For one I am more mature than Misha and two I'm always honest with Jenny and she's not, which is her choice. That doesn't mean she should take her jealousy out on me by starting drama and rumors. Misha kept telling people that I was jealous of her for so many reasons. She said I was jealous because my boyfriend would only talk to her about important things. For one, we all used to be best friends, so at first he would only talk to her. Now he is slightly opening up to me. The only issue I'm having is that Misha can't keep her mouth shut and likes to "talk smack" about me and tell my boyfriend that I'm jealous of her when really I'm just angry that he still wants to be friends with her even though she treats me so terribly.

Conclusion paragraph (100-150 words): **In conclusion, Misha and Jenny are very different**

people. Jenny is the type of friend you never want to let go of. She is the kind of best friend that everyone wants. Jenny is my other half. She has every characteristic that makes an amazing best friend. Misha: well, she can be someone's best friend, just not mine. She chose to be rude, disrespectful, and childish, which definitely makes it hard for me to want to be friends with her. Honesty and loyalty are some of the characteristics that are very important in any kind of relationship. Jealousy: it's part of life and any type of relationship. To me it is how you handle it when it does come into play. When it comes down to it, if people can't be honest and loyal and they don't know how to deal with jealousy the right way, then why on Earth would you want them in your life? My best friend Jenny is an overall amazing person. At the end of the day that's all you can ask for.

Step 6: Transform Your Rough Draft into a Final Draft

Instructions: Revise for body paragraph structure, edit for errors, and format in [MLA Manuscript style](#) for a Final Draft.

Example: see [Savannah Nevelow's Comparison/Contrast, Point-by-Point Final Draft, "Contrast \(Point-by-Point\): Best Friends"](#).