Let’s look at a student’s management of a comparison/contrast essay. This essay, called “The Truth About Cats and Dogs,” was written by a student named Maria Castillo. See if you can identify her main point as you read her essay.

The Truth About Cats and Dogs

The majority of people in the world will say that dogs are man’s best friends and that cats were put on this earth to aggravate dogs. Some people are closet cat lovers, meaning he or she is afraid to tell family and friends that they actually like cats. Others will proudly state, “I hate cats, except for yours.” People who resist cats do so because they believe they are; aloof, self-centered, and dull. People prefer dogs because they are friendly, protective, and playful. However, cats exhibit these same qualities and deserve the same respect as dogs.

Dogs have always been considered to be friendly, but cats can also fit this description. Dogs stay by their owners’ sides and live to make their masters happy. They are the first to greet their family at the front door, they want nothing more than to be praised by their owners. Yet cats are much the same way. They, too, will be at the front door when their family gets home and are always excited to see them. They usually sit near their owners just to be by their sides. And despite what some people believe, a cat does come when they’re called. Birds do not sit with their owners unless they are trained. Cats are very friendly to their owners.

As much as dogs love to play, so do cats. Most dogs love to play with chew toys, searching for the hidden-squeaker treasure. They often parade around with their “kill” until their masters notice their triumph. Some owners will awaken to find that their dogs
have strewn all their toys all over the house. Dogs love the toys they know are theirs. However, so do cats. Cats will make a toy out of anything that will slide across a tile floor, whether it’s a hair clip, a milk jug ring, a toy mouse, or a spool of thread. They can amuse themselves for hours. If the toy-of-the-day gets trapped under the refrigerator, cats will whine and wait for their owner to get the toy. Cats just love to play.

Even though dogs are great defenders, cats have been known to protect the family as well. Dogs bark or growl whenever they want to alert their owners to possible danger. They stand at the door and wait for their owners to check for danger. If they see their owner being attacked, they will attack the enemy. Most people think cats would just stand by and watch, but this simply isn’t true. Cats also alert their owners of danger by growling or standing to stiff attention. They, too, stand near the door waiting for their owner to react. Cats have been known to bite people who harm their loved ones. Cats can be excellent watch animals.

Dogs and cats are a lot alike. People say cats are very different from dogs, but this is not the case. The truth is, most people love to hate cats. It’s now an old American pastime. But it’s time for all cat lovers to unite and prove that it can be a cat-eat-cat world too.