

Could B. You

Eng 101

Professor Brown

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Cats and Dogs

The world has always been divided into two categories; cat owners and dog owners. **[A semi-colon must connect two complete sentences. The phrase after your semi-colon cannot stand as its own sentence, so you cannot use a semi-colon. Instead, when you have an independent clause introducing a list, you can use a colon : .]** Different personalities and lifestyles revolve around the ownership of each pet. Undoubtedly, cat makes a much better pet. **[<Countable nouns, such as “cat,” need an article (a, an, the) before them. If you are talking about a cat in general, then you should use “a,” which is used before words that begin with consonants.]**

Cats are less expensive pets. You can feed a cat for about \$100 a year. One other big expenses is the cat litter, which will probably cost another \$150 a year. **[<Are you pointing out “one” expense? If so, then you should not use the plural “expenses.”]** Finally, the occasional veterinary bill for a cat runs about \$50 a year, which includes rabies shots, worms vaccines, and giving flea medicine. In total, owning a cat will only cost about \$300 a year, a much better price than what you can expect from a dog. **[You use transitions, such as “finally” and “in total” effectively to guide the reader through your essay.]**

Cats love to be petted. They also will make their own toys, such as a piece of fluff, ball of string, or a scrap of fluff. Mostly, they just want to snuggle close to their owners. They do not bark and demand attention, dogs are always pestering owners to play. **[<You have two complete sentences connected by only a comma, making a comma splice. To fix this, you can turn the comma into a period and create two separate sentences, or you could add a conjunction (and, or, but) after the comma to make a compound sentence.]** Dogs will jump on their owners, lick their faces, and even paw at them. Just the opposite, cats sit quietly and contentedly, happy to amuse themselves.

Finally, cats are less time-consuming pets to have. **[That is a good topic sentence with a transition (“Finally”). It clearly introduces the paragraph’s last point of comparison. Good!]** Unlike dogs, they do not need to be walked, rarely require brushing, and, as mentioned before, will not demand important hours out of your day for a ridiculous game of catch. When owners of dogs go out of town, they must arrange for kennels and walks and feeding and grooming. Yet, when cat owners go out of town, its extra food and water and “See you when I get back!” **[<The word “its” is a singular possessive. Example: The dog ate its food. The word “it’s” is a contraction of “it is.” Example: It’s a**

beautiful day! Do you use the correct word in this sentence?] Clearly, owning a cat gives a person much more personal freedom.

In summation, cats are cuddly, soft, and affectionate animals. They are also independent, inexpensive, and hassle-free. Do you want a pet that will burden your life, cost you a chunk of your hard-earned salary, and never leave you alone? If so, then you need a dog. If you want your own life, your own money, and your own time, then I recommend you get a cat. Any color will do! **[You give the paper a clear sense of closure. Good!]**

Hi Could B. You! Welcome to Austin Writing Lab! I made embedded comments in your paper above, and I explained below three ways for you to improve your essay even more.

THREE STEPS for IMPROVEMENT:

Thesis:

A good thesis for a comparison paper will identify the two subjects being compared, name the points they will be compared on, and express what main idea this comparison will illustrate.

Example:

“The Empire Strikes Back has better acting, visual effects, and dialogue than Return of the Jedi, making it a better movie. “

Can you express your two subjects (cats and dogs), the points your body paragraphs compare them on (e.g. expenses, need for attention, and level of maintenance), and the main idea your essay claims with this comparison? Try to write a single thesis sentence at the end of your introduction.

NOTE: When listing your points of comparison, do so in the same order that they appear in your essay as body paragraphs. This will give the reader a good preview of your essay’s structure.

Introduction:

You can develop your introduction a little more by explaining your experience with cats and dogs. Try to establish your credibility by saying whether you have owned cats and/or dogs, how long you have owned them, and so on. In other words, let the reader know that you understand what you are talking about here.

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Also, you can put your thesis sentence at the end of the introduction.

Paragraph Development:

I have two suggestions here. A good body paragraph will begin with a topic sentence that introduces the paragraph's point. Then, you should compare both subjects on that point. Finally, you should conclude with a sentence that explains what that comparison proves.

First, I suggest that you check for missing topic sentences. Do you see how the first and third body paragraphs begin with sentences that introduce each paragraph's point, but the second body paragraph begins with a supporting detail? Can you add a topic sentence to that second body paragraph?

Second, check to make sure that each body paragraph discusses both CATS and DOGS. For example, the first body paragraph gives a detailed account of how much cats cost, but does not discuss the costs for a dog. For each body paragraph, make sure that you explain both subjects on the point of comparison.

Thanks for using the Austin Writing Lab. I look forward to reading your work in the future!