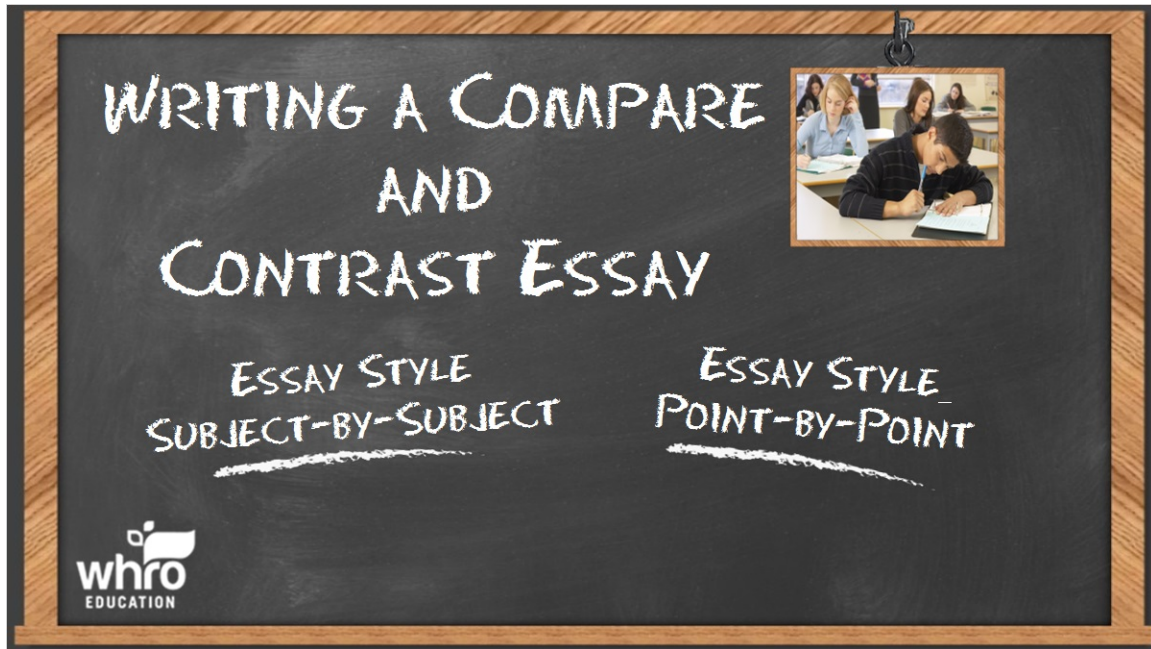


# Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

## Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

### Introduction

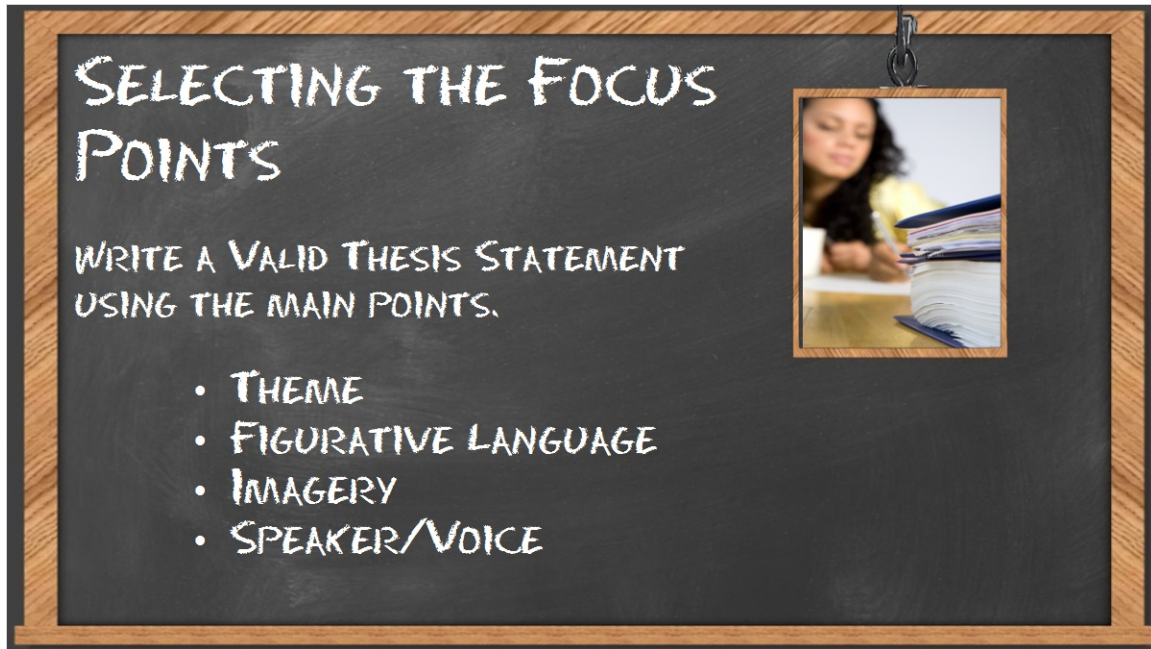


There are two different essay styles you may select when comparing and contrasting two pieces of literature. No matter what style you choose, the very first step is to carefully select the points you want to discuss in your essay. As you select your points, think of what you want to get across to the reader. What ideas do you want to highlight and deem important? When you select your points, make sure that you focus and discuss the same points for each piece of literature. This presentation will show you how to organize your essay, comparing and contrasting the poems “Pride” by Dahlia Ravikovitch and “Tell all the Truth but tell it slant,” by Emily Dickinson.

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Selecting the Focus Points

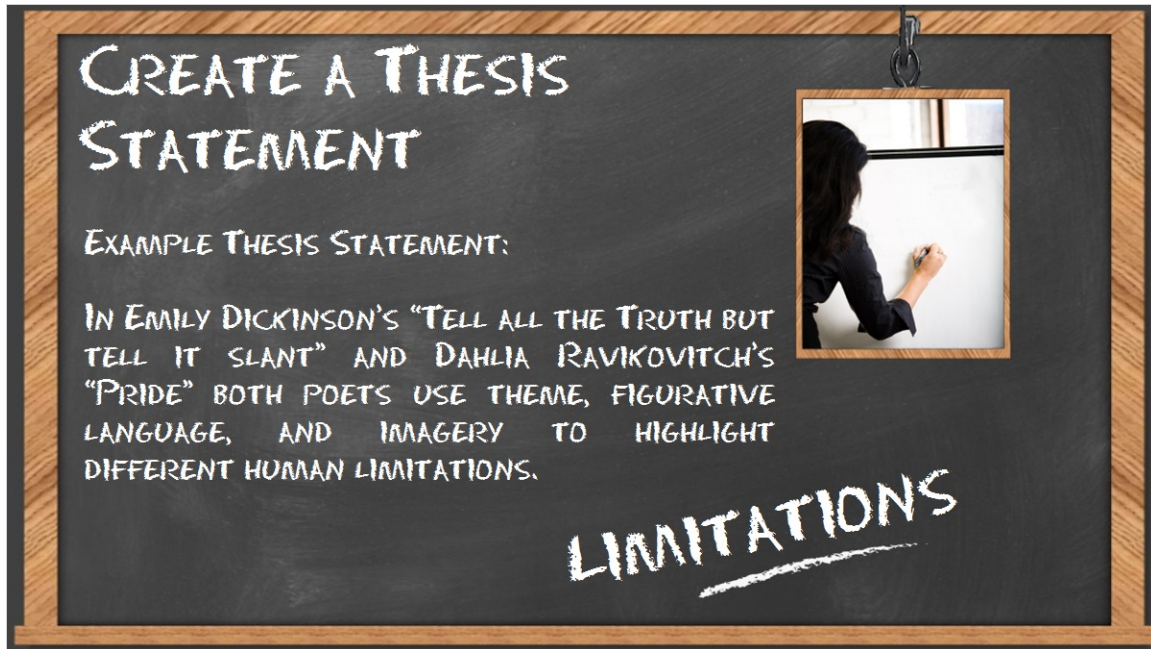


To select the focus points, you must read and analyze the two literary works. You want to make sure that you select valid focus points so that you can write an effective thesis statement. As an example, you have just read the two poems “Pride” by Dahlia Ravikovitch and “Tell all the Truth but tell it slant,” by Emily Dickinson. While both of these poems have differences, they both discuss the limitations of humans. When writing your essay, you will want to choose two pieces of literature and discuss their similarities, differences, or both. When you read the poems “Tell all the Truth but tell it slant,” and “Pride,” did you notice their similarities and differences? Focus on the main points such as the theme, the figurative language, the use of imagery, or the speaker or voice to help you construct a valid thesis statement.

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Creating a Thesis Statement



After you have carefully chosen and analyzed your points of discussion, you are to create your thesis statement. Your thesis statement is your central idea for your essay. As you formulate your thesis statement, structure it so that the reader knows if you are focusing on similarities, differences, or both.

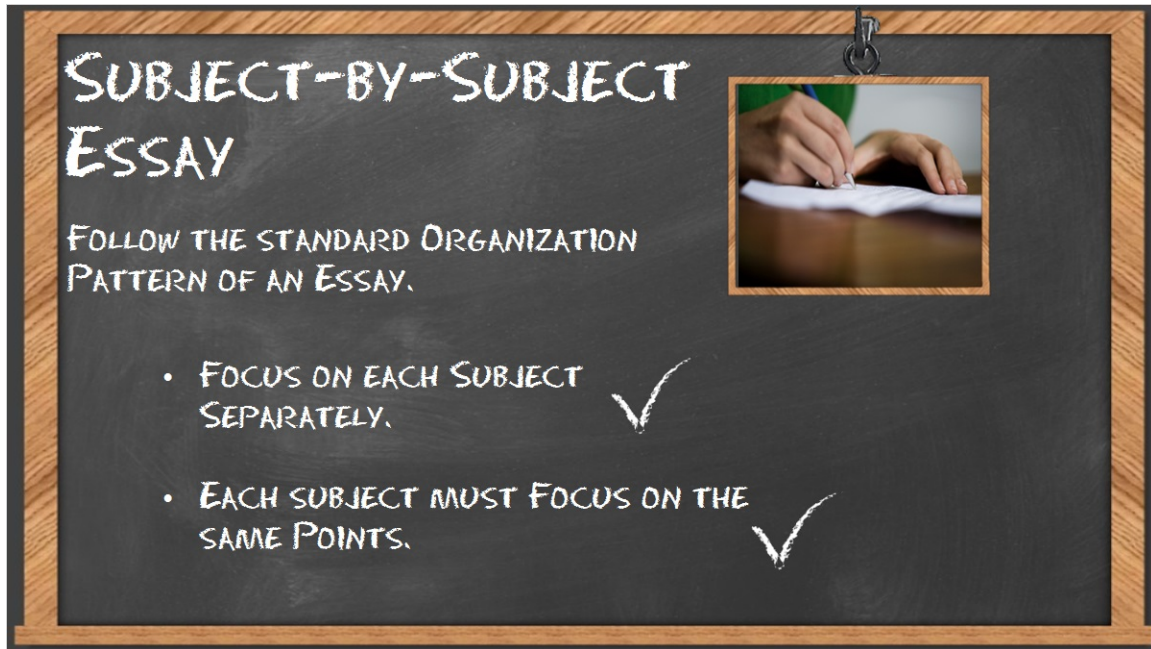
Here is an example of a thesis statement that could be used between the two poems “Pride” and “Tell all Truth but tell it slant”: “In Emily Dickinson’s “Tell all the Truth but tell it slant” and Dahlia Ravikovitch’s “Pride” both poets use theme, figurative language, and imagery to highlight different human limitations.

In this thesis statement, the main points of an essay will focus on the human limitations that both authors discuss in their poems. In this example, you will want to keep your essay focused on the limitations, using evidence from each poem as your examples.

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Subject-By-Subject Essay



One style of essay you may choose is the subject-by-subject essay. In this essay, you should follow the standard organizational pattern of an essay: Introduction with thesis statement, body, and conclusion. As you move into your body paragraphs, you must decide on how you are going to organize your ideas.

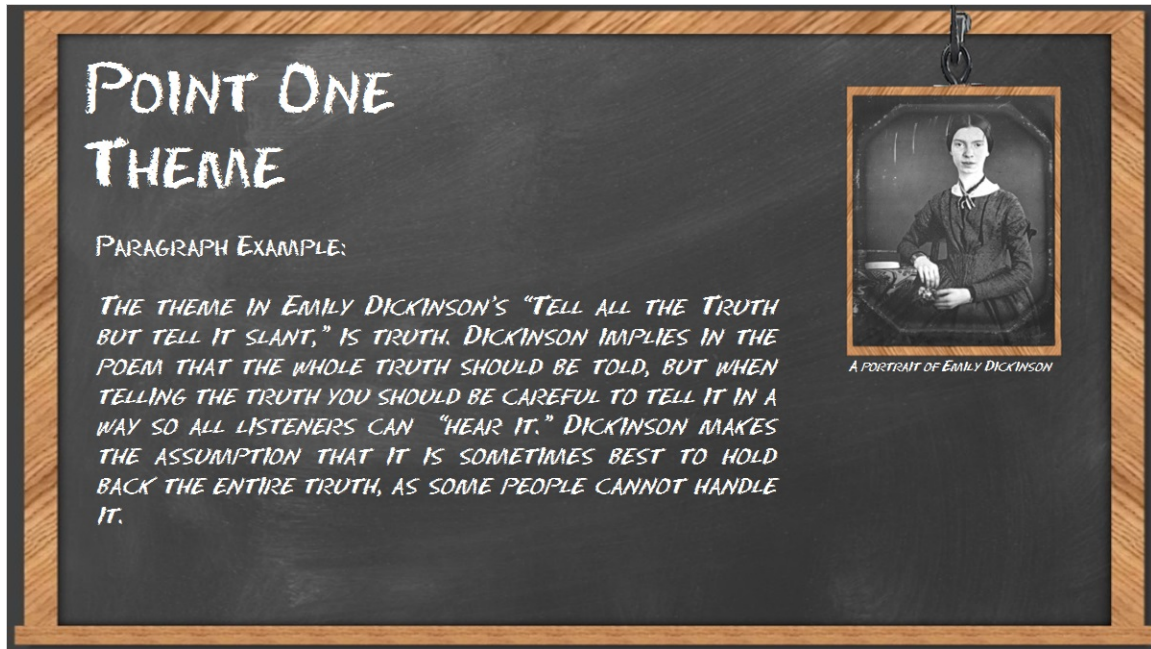
When you do a subject-by-subject comparison, you focus on each subject separately. It is as if you are writing a separate paper on each subject. Each subject must focus on the same points. You organize it based on order of importance or significance.

Begin this essay with the introductory paragraph with your thesis statement. Again, the thesis statement in the example is *In Emily Dickinson's "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant" and Dahlia Ravikovitch's "Pride," both poets use theme, figurative language, and imagery to highlight different human limitations.*

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Point One Theme



**POINT ONE  
THEME**

PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE:

THE THEME IN EMILY DICKINSON'S "TELL ALL THE TRUTH BUT TELL IT SLANT," IS TRUTH. DICKINSON IMPLIES IN THE POEM THAT THE WHOLE TRUTH SHOULD BE TOLD, BUT WHEN TELLING THE TRUTH YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL TO TELL IT IN A WAY SO ALL LISTENERS CAN "HEAR IT." DICKINSON MAKES THE ASSUMPTION THAT IT IS SOMETIMES BEST TO HOLD BACK THE ENTIRE TRUTH, AS SOME PEOPLE CANNOT HANDLE IT.

A PORTRAIT OF EMILY DICKINSON

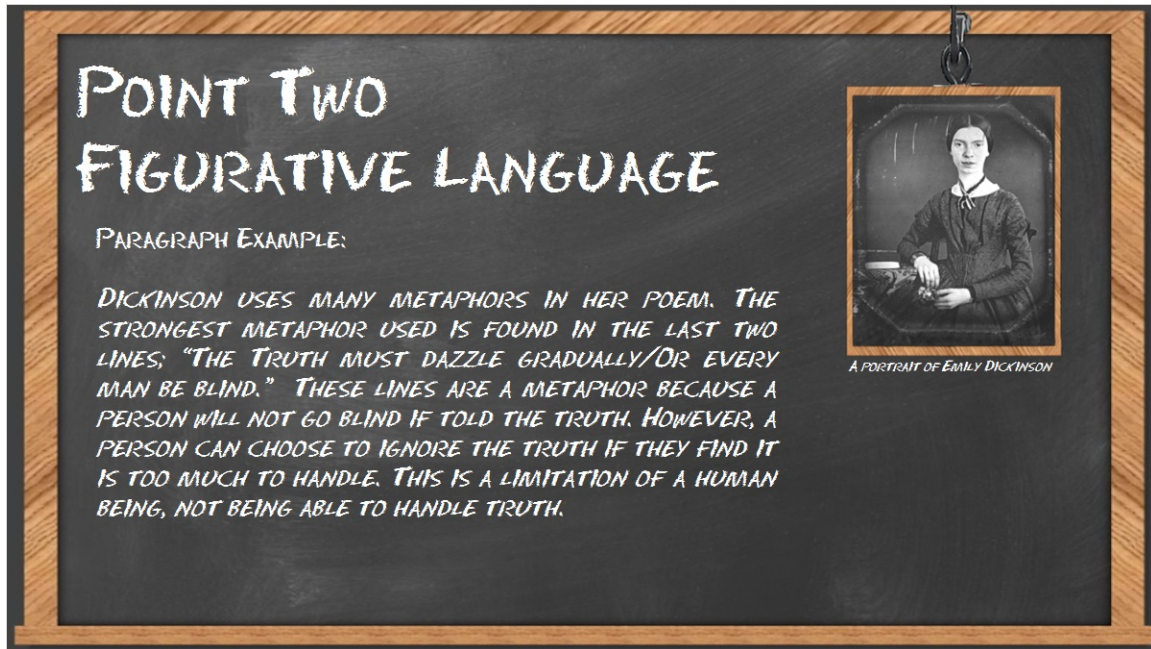
After your introduction and thesis statement, point one of the essay will discuss Emily Dickinson's "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant." The first point in the thesis statement that should be addressed is theme. How did Dickinson use theme to highlight human limitations? If you do not know the answer, this is an excellent time to go back and re-read the poem. If you were writing the essay, you would discuss the theme of the poem. You might write something similar to the following paragraph:

*The theme in Emily Dickinson's "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant" is truth. Dickinson implies in the poem that the whole truth should be told, but when telling the truth, you should be careful to tell it in a way so that all listeners can "hear it." Dickinson makes the assumption that it is sometimes best to hold back the entire truth, as some people cannot handle it.*

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Point Two Figurative Language



**POINT TWO  
FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**

PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE:

DICKINSON USES MANY METAPHORS IN HER POEM. THE STRONGEST METAPHOR USED IS FOUND IN THE LAST TWO LINES; "THE TRUTH MUST DAZZLE GRADUALLY/OR EVERY MAN BE BLIND." THESE LINES ARE A METAPHOR BECAUSE A PERSON WILL NOT GO BLIND IF TOLD THE TRUTH. HOWEVER, A PERSON CAN CHOOSE TO IGNORE THE TRUTH IF THEY FIND IT IS TOO MUCH TO HANDLE. THIS IS A LIMITATION OF A HUMAN BEING, NOT BEING ABLE TO HANDLE TRUTH.

A PORTRAIT OF EMILY DICKINSON

After you have made your first point, continue to your second point in a separate paragraph. In point two, you will discuss how Dickinson uses figurative language to highlight the human limitation of telling “the whole truth.” When writing this portion of the essay, you want to cite specific examples from the poem with proper citations. If you were writing the essay, you would discuss the figurative language of the poem. You might write something similar to the following paragraph:

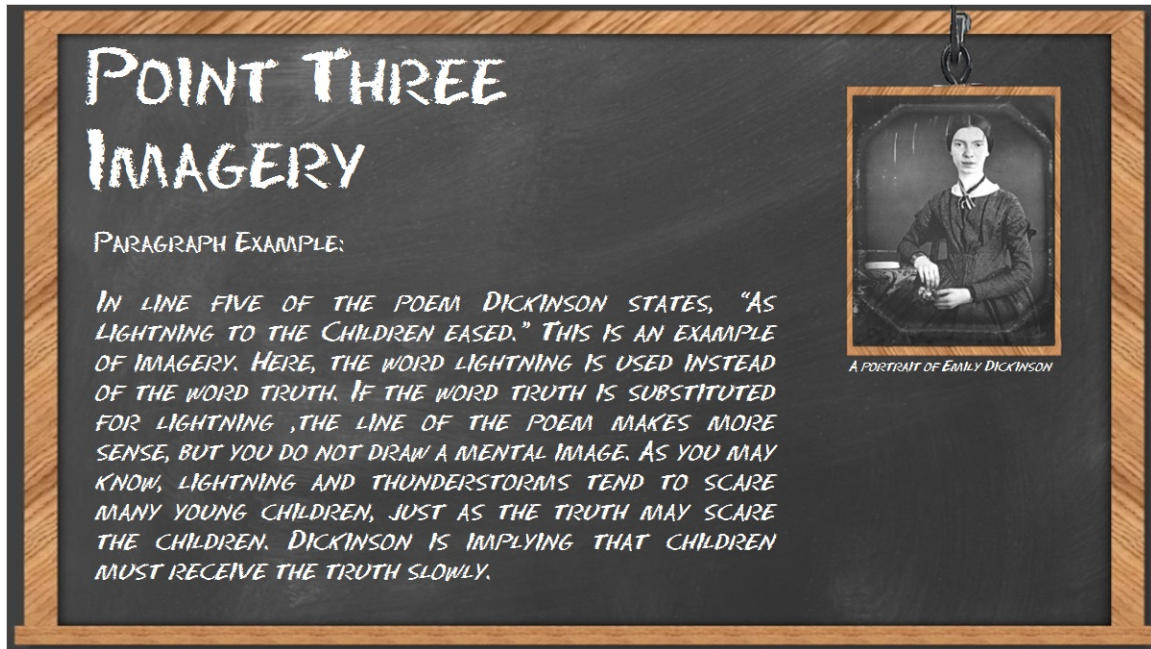
*Dickinson uses many metaphors in her poem. The strongest metaphor used is found in the last two lines; “The Truth must dazzle gradually/Or every man be blind.” These lines are a metaphor because a person will not go blind if told the truth. However, a person can choose to ignore the truth if he or she finds it is too much to handle. This is a limitation of a human being, not being able to handle truth.*

There are other elements of figurative language in the poem that could also be used to strengthen your essay. You would continue to use them before moving on to the next point.

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Point Three Imagery



**POINT THREE  
IMAGERY**

PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE:

IN LINE FIVE OF THE POEM DICKINSON STATES, "AS LIGHTNING TO THE CHILDREN EASED." THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF IMAGERY. HERE, THE WORD LIGHTNING IS USED INSTEAD OF THE WORD TRUTH. IF THE WORD TRUTH IS SUBSTITUTED FOR LIGHTNING, THE LINE OF THE POEM MAKES MORE SENSE, BUT YOU DO NOT DRAW A MENTAL IMAGE. AS YOU MAY KNOW, LIGHTNING AND THUNDERSTORMS TEND TO SCARE MANY YOUNG CHILDREN, JUST AS THE TRUTH MAY SCARE THE CHILDREN. DICKINSON IS IMPLYING THAT CHILDREN MUST RECEIVE THE TRUTH SLOWLY.

A PORTRAIT OF EMILY DICKINSON

The next portion, point three, of the essay, will discuss how Dickinson uses imagery to highlight the human limitation of telling "the whole truth." Again, you will cite specific examples from the poem with proper citations. If you were writing the essay, you would discuss the use of imagery in the poem. You might write something similar to the following paragraph:

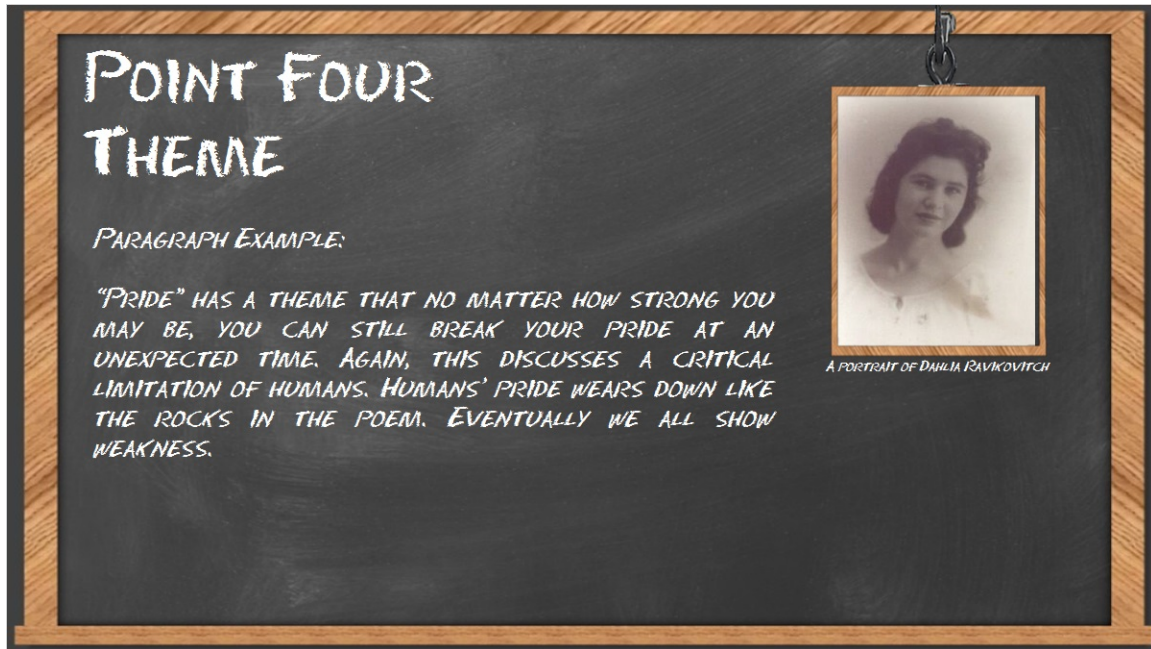
*In line five of the poem Dickinson states, "As Lightning to the Children eased." This is an example of imagery. Here, the word lightning is used instead of the word truth. If the word truth is substituted for lightning, the line of the poem makes more sense, but you do not draw a mental image. As you may know, lightning and thunderstorms tend to scare many young children, just as the truth may scare the children. Dickinson is implying that children must receive the truth slowly.*

You now see how using specific examples will make your essay much stronger. But, you also must show how Dahlia Ravikovitch's poem, "Pride" showed limitations in this style of essay.

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Point Four Theme



Now, you must discuss the same three portions for the poem, "Pride" that you discussed for "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant." You will keep the same order in this portion of the essay: theme, figurative language, and imagery. This is an excellent time to go back and re-read the poem "Pride." If you were writing the essay, you would discuss the theme of the poem. You might write something similar to the following paragraph:

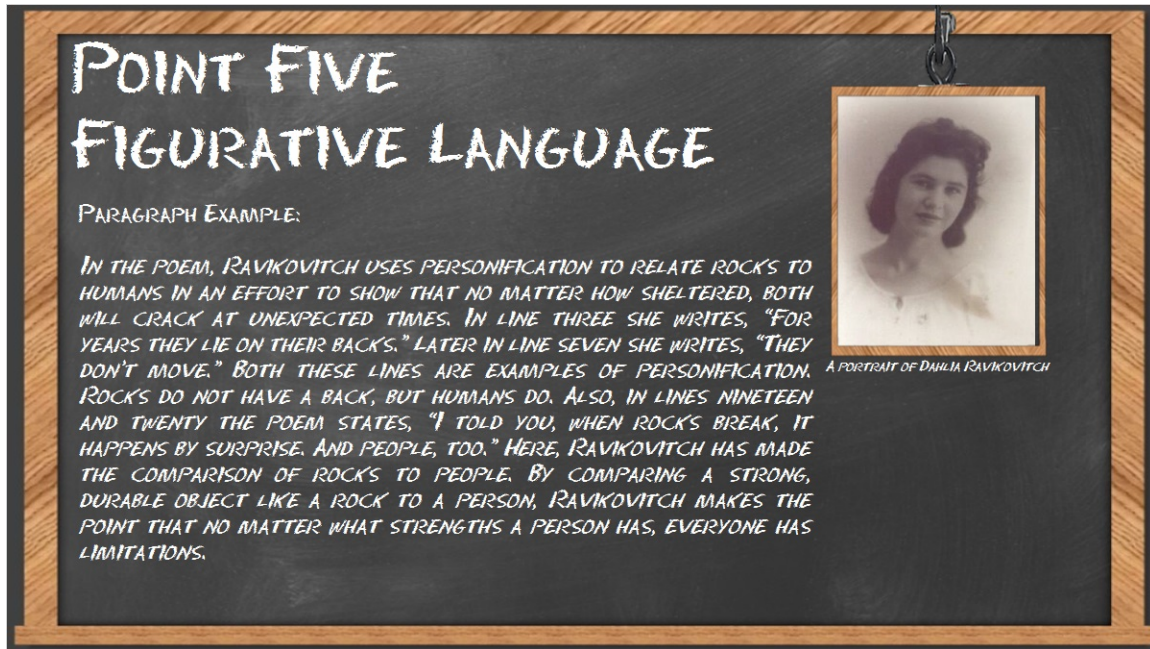
*"Pride" has a theme that no matter how strong you may be, you can still break your pride at an unexpected time. Again, this discusses a critical limitation of humans. Humans' pride wears down like the rocks in the poem. Eventually we all show weakness.*



## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Point Five Figurative Language



**POINT FIVE  
FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**

PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE:

*IN THE POEM, RAVIKOVITCH USES PERSONIFICATION TO RELATE ROCKS TO HUMANS IN AN EFFORT TO SHOW THAT NO MATTER HOW SHELTERED, BOTH WILL CRACK AT UNEXPECTED TIMES. IN LINE THREE SHE WRITES, "FOR YEARS THEY LIE ON THEIR BACKS." LATER IN LINE SEVEN SHE WRITES, "THEY DON'T MOVE." BOTH THESE LINES ARE EXAMPLES OF PERSONIFICATION. ROCKS DO NOT HAVE A BACK, BUT HUMANS DO. ALSO, IN LINES NINETEEN AND TWENTY THE POEM STATES, "I TOLD YOU, WHEN ROCKS BREAK, IT HAPPENS BY SURPRISE. AND PEOPLE, TOO." HERE, RAVIKOVITCH HAS MADE THE COMPARISON OF ROCKS TO PEOPLE. BY COMPARING A STRONG, DURABLE OBJECT LIKE A ROCK TO A PERSON, RAVIKOVITCH MAKES THE POINT THAT NO MATTER WHAT STRENGTHS A PERSON HAS, EVERYONE HAS LIMITATIONS.*

A PORTRAIT OF DAHLIA RAVIKOVITCH

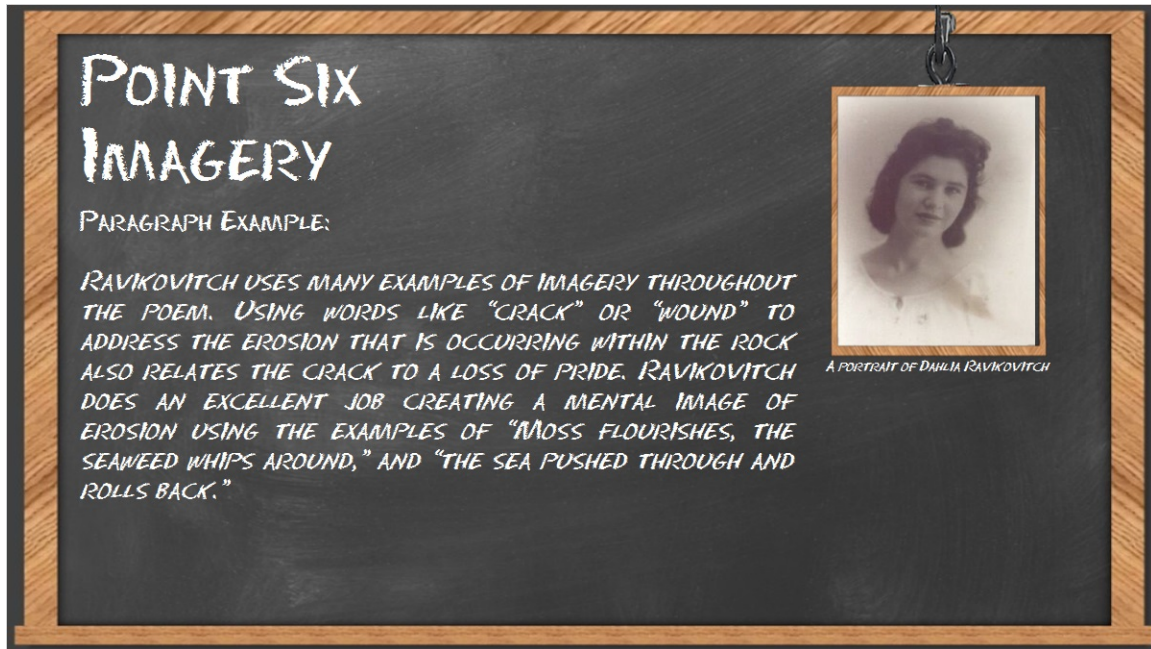
The next part of your essay discusses how Ravikovitch uses figurative language to highlight the human limitation of “loss of pride.” When writing this portion of the essay, you want to cite specific examples from the poem with proper citations. If you were writing the essay, you would discuss the figurative language of the poem. You might write something similar to the following paragraph:

*In the poem, Ravikovitch uses personification to relate rocks to humans in an effort to show that no matter how sheltered, both will crack at unexpected times. In line three she writes, “For years they lie on their backs.” Later in line seven she writes, “They don’t move.” Both of these lines are examples of personification. Rocks do not have a back, but humans do. Also, in lines nineteen and twenty the poem states, “I told you, when rocks break, it happens by surprise. And people, too.” Here, Ravikovitch has made the comparison of rocks to people. By comparing a strong, durable object like a rock to a person, Ravikovitch makes the point that no matter what strengths a person has, everyone has limitations.*

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Point Six Imagery



**POINT SIX  
IMAGERY**

PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE:

RAVIKOVITCH USES MANY EXAMPLES OF IMAGERY THROUGHOUT THE POEM. USING WORDS LIKE "CRACK" OR "WOUND" TO ADDRESS THE EROSION THAT IS OCCURRING WITHIN THE ROCK ALSO RELATES THE CRACK TO A LOSS OF PRIDE. RAVIKOVITCH DOES AN EXCELLENT JOB CREATING A MENTAL IMAGE OF EROSION USING THE EXAMPLES OF "MOSS FLOURISHES, THE SEAWEED WHIPS AROUND," AND "THE SEA PUSHED THROUGH AND ROLLS BACK."

A PORTRAIT OF DAHLIA RAVIKOVITCH

The next part of your essay discusses how Ravikovitch uses imagery to highlight the human limitation of "loss of pride." When writing this portion of the essay, you want to cite specific examples from the poem with proper citations. If you were writing the essay, you would discuss the use of imagery in this poem. You might write something similar to the following paragraph:

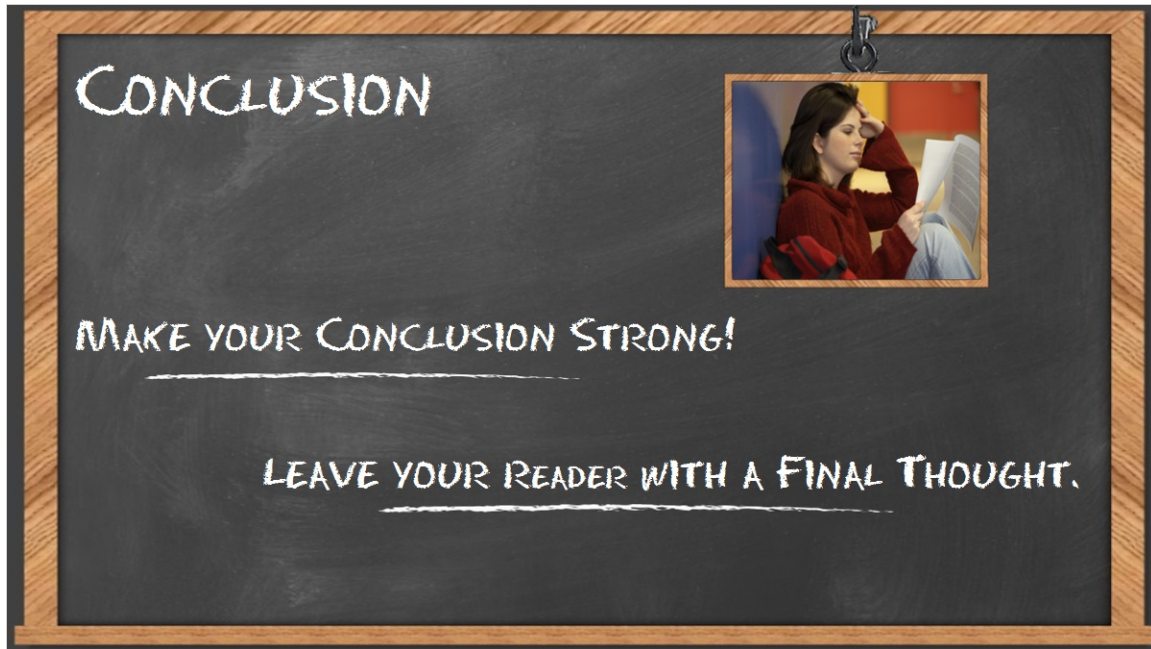
*Ravikovitch uses many examples of imagery throughout the poem. Using words like "crack" or "wound" to address the erosion that is occurring within the rock also relates the crack to a loss of pride. Ravikovitch does an excellent job creating a mental image of erosion using the examples of "Moss flourishes, the seaweed whips around," and "the sea pushed through and rolls back."*

Again, you can see how using direct examples from the poem strengthens your essay.

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Conclusion

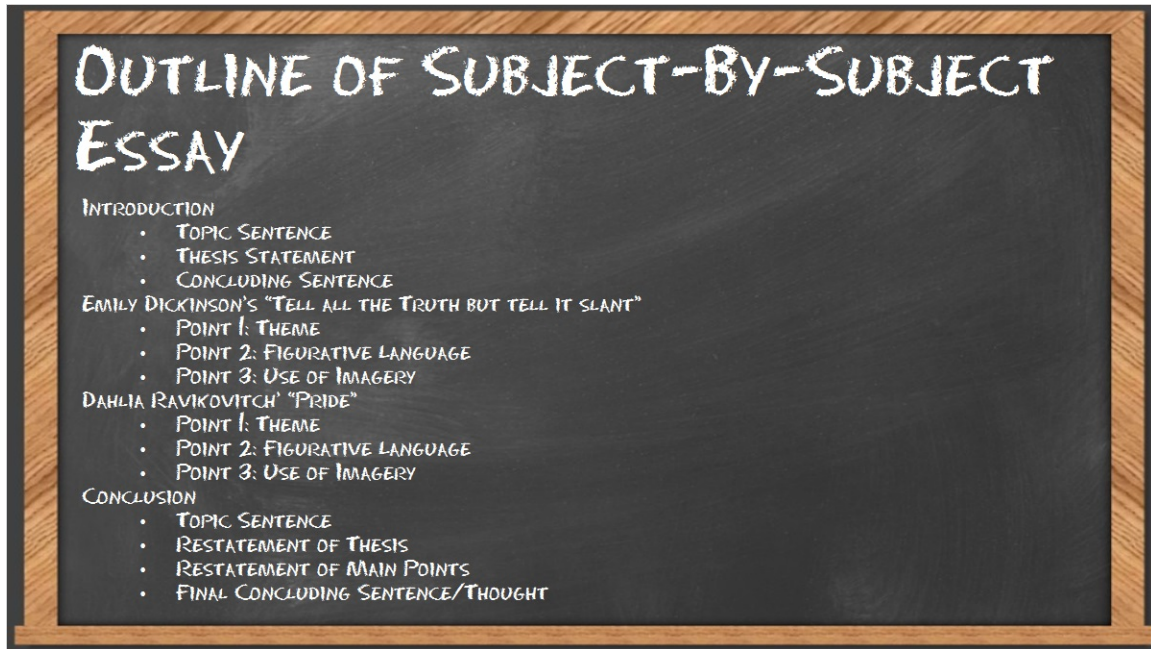


The final portion of your essay is the conclusion. In your conclusion, you will write a topic sentence, restate your thesis, and highlight the points of your essay. Your conclusion is always a strong part of your essay. The last sentence of your conclusion should leave your reader with something to think about, like a final thought.

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Outline of Subject-By-Subject Essay



Shown here is an outline of how a subject-by-subject comparison essay is organized.

#### Introduction

- Topic Sentence
- Thesis Statement
- Concluding Sentence

#### Emily Dickinson's "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant"

- Point 1: Theme
- Point 2: Figurative Language
- Point 3: Use of Imagery

#### Dahlia Ravikovitch' "Pride"

- Point 1: Theme
- Point 2: Figurative Language
- Point 3: Use of Imagery

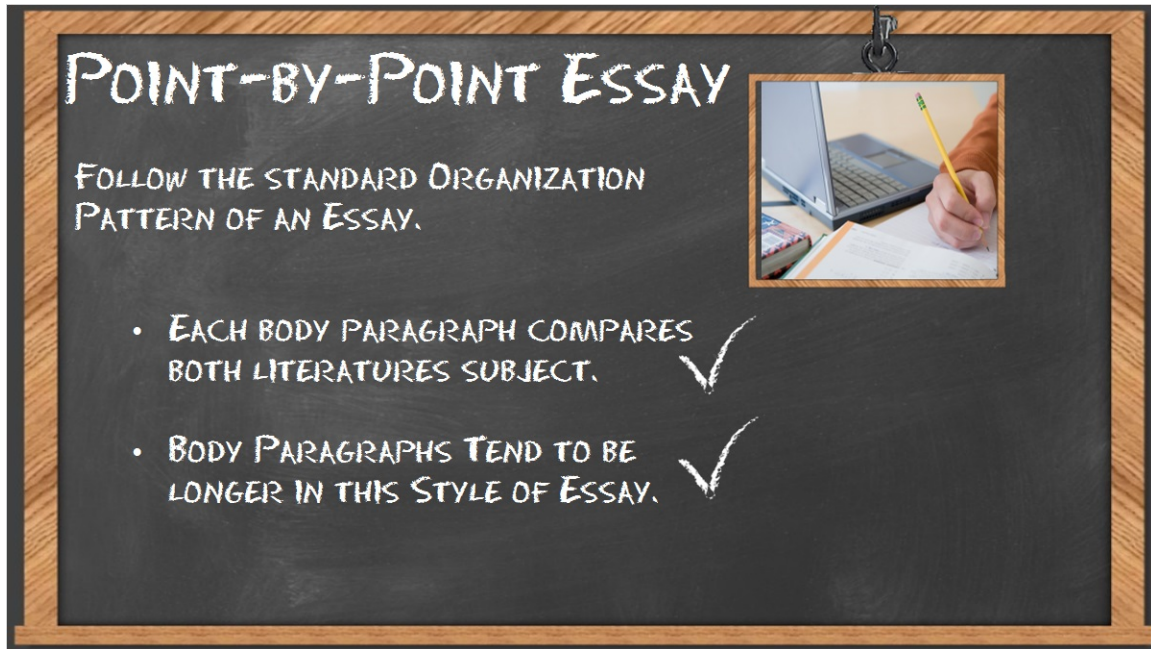
#### Conclusion

- Topic Sentence
- Restatement of Thesis
- Restatement of Main Points
- Final Concluding Sentence/Thought

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Point-By-Point Essay

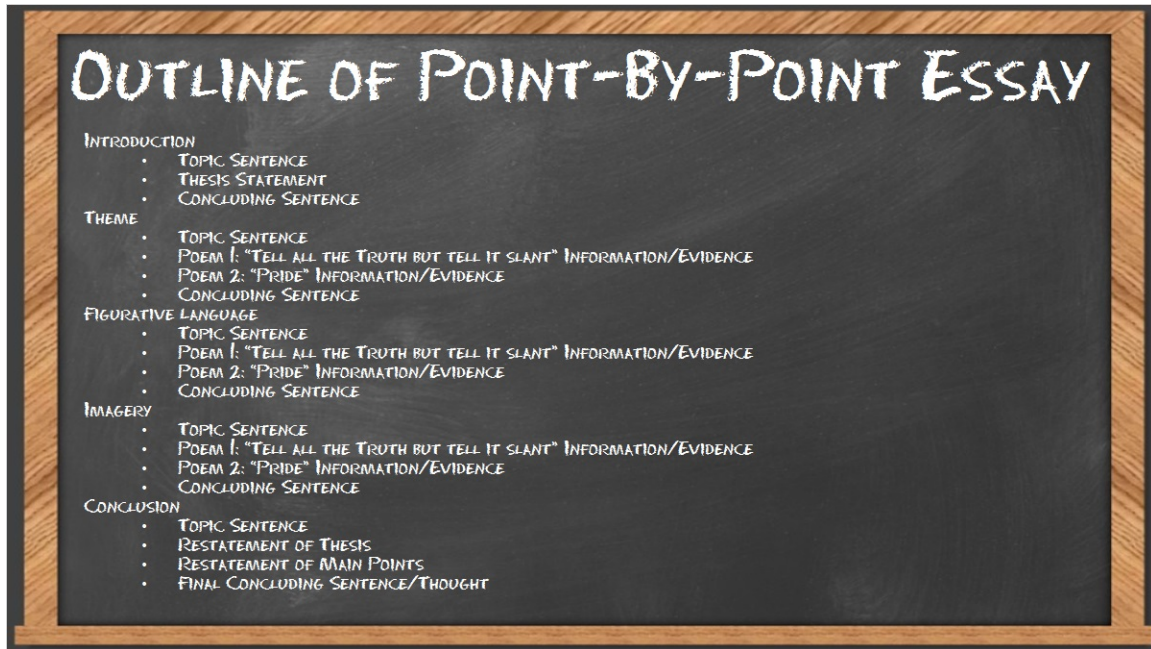


Another style of essay is the point-by-point essay. This essay follows the standard organizational pattern of an essay. When you write a point-by-point comparison, you move from point-to-point within each subject. You continue to alternate until you discuss all points. Writers tend to use point-by-point comparison when they are writing a paper a little longer in length. To start this paper, you would go through the same introduction with a thesis statement. The only part of the essay that changes is the structure of the body paragraphs. Each body paragraph compares the subjects of both pieces of literature. You would follow these body paragraphs with a conclusion. Similar points about the literature can be made that were made in the subject-by-subject comparison; you are really only changing the structure of the essay.

# Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

## Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

### Outline of Point-By-Point Essay



Shown here is an outline of how a point-by-point comparison essay is organized.

#### Introduction

- Topic Sentence
- Thesis Statement
- Concluding Sentence

#### Theme

- Topic Sentence
- Poem 1: "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant" Information/Evidence
- Poem 2: "Pride" Information/Evidence
- Concluding Sentence

#### Figurative Language

- Topic Sentence
- Poem 1: "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant" Information/Evidence
- Poem 2: "Pride" Information/Evidence
- Concluding Sentence

#### Imagery

- Topic Sentence
- Poem 1: "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant" Information/Evidence
- Poem 2: "Pride" Information/Evidence
- Concluding Sentence

#### Conclusion

- Topic Sentence
- Restatement of Thesis
- Restatement of Main Points
- Final Concluding Sentence/Thought

## Module 4: Self-Discovery Through Facing Life's Obstacles

### Topic 4 Content: Writing a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Using Transitions In Your Writing



No matter what type of essay you write, you always need to use transitions. As you move from one point to the next, transitions are used to keep your essay flowing smoothly. When you fail to use transitions, the reader becomes lost in your thoughts; therefore, when you transition, you can use some of the following examples. When comparing, use the following transitions: in comparison, in the same way, just as, so, like, likewise, and similarly. When contrasting, use the following transitions: conversely, despite, even though, however, in contrast, instead, nevertheless, nonetheless, on the contrary, still, unlike, whereas, yet.