

# 1 An Introduction to Point and Support

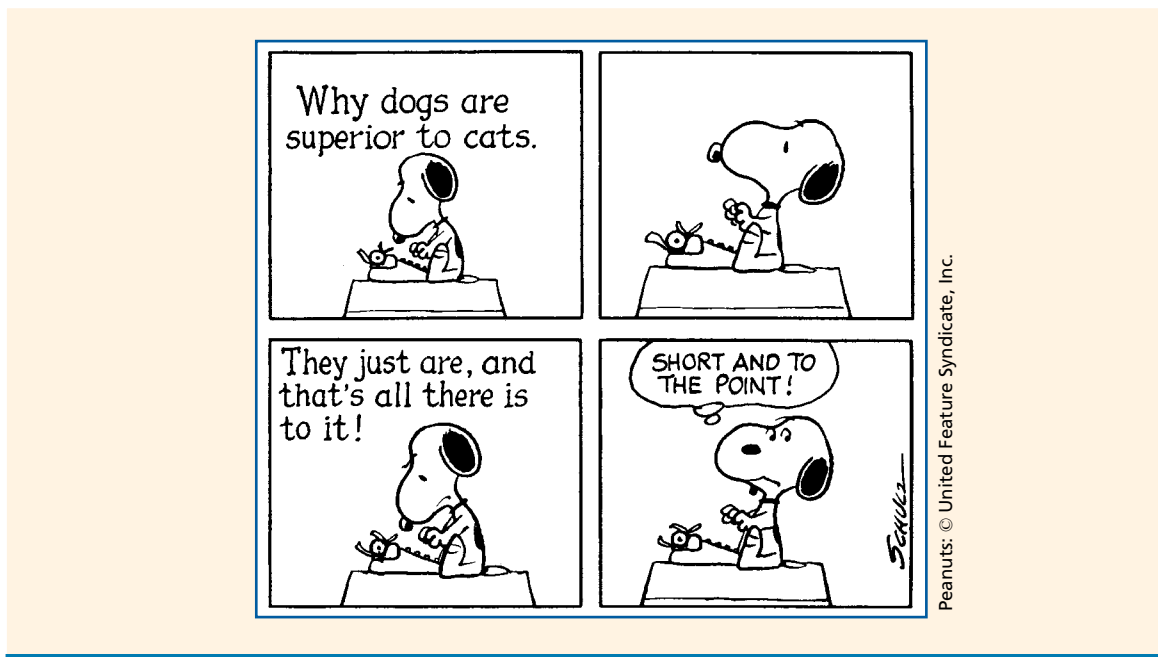
To think and write clearly, you must understand the difference between **point** and **support**. A **point** is an *idea* or an *opinion*. It is usually stated in one sentence. **Support** is the *evidence* that backs up this opinion—the specific examples, reasons, facts, or other details that *prove* the point.

Here are three activities that involve cartoons. Working through each activity will give you a good sense of the difference between point and support. You will be on your way to clear thinking and writing.



## ACTIVITY 1

Look at the following cartoon:



See if you can answer the following questions:

- What is Snoopy's **point** in his paper?

Your answer: His point is that \_\_\_\_\_

- What is his **support** for his point?

Your answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Explanation**

Snoopy's point, of course, is that dogs are superior to cats. But he offers no support whatsoever to back up his point! There are two jokes here. First, he is a dog and so is naturally going to believe that dogs are superior. The other joke is that his evidence ("They just are, and that's all there is to it!") is a lot of empty words. His somewhat guilty look in the last panel suggests that he knows he has not proved his point. To think and write effectively, you must provide **real support** for your points and opinions.



## ACTIVITY 2

Here is another cartoon. Answer the questions below it, and then read the explanation.



What is the point of the cartoon? (It's fairly obvious.) \_\_\_\_\_

What is the support for the point? \_\_\_\_\_

The point is that "School was not going well." The support for the point is the specific list of low grades on the student's grade report.



## ACTIVITY 3

Here are three more cartoons. What is the point of each cartoon, and what is the support?



**Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

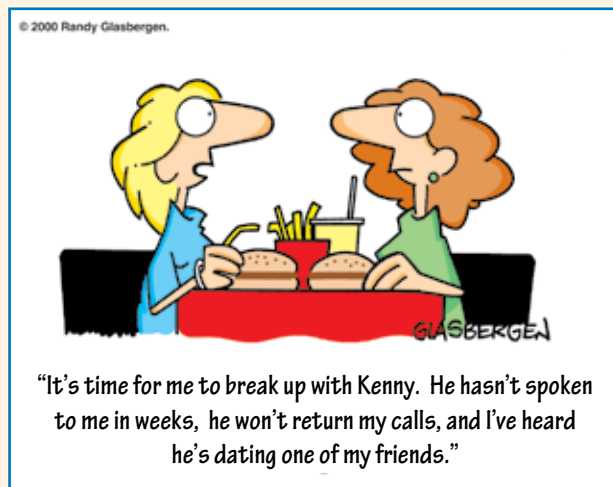
**Support:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Of course, the joke in this cartoon is that the dog's reasons don't seem important enough to cause stress . . . to a human, that is.)



**Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Support:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Support:** \_\_\_\_\_