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.
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.

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.)
“Our marriage has problems. He likes to spend money; I like to save it. He’s a night person; I’m a day person. He likes sports; I hate them.”

“IT’s time for me to break up with Kenny. He hasn’t spoken to me in weeks, he won’t return my calls, and I’ve heard he’s dating one of my friends.”