

Support Identification

It's time to begin the process of understanding how to support your opinions with reasons and evidence. When writing a persuasive or opinionated essay, your opinions must be supported. The act of writing an opinion is not enough to make your opinion strong. It is very important to recognize supported statements versus unsupported statements, and to develop a sense of why the former works better in persuasive writing.

Here is a list of statements, half of which are opinions without support and the other half of which are opinions with support. Students are asked to identify each.

Some samples of **unsupported** opinions:

Cats are better than dogs. My cat Snowball chases flies in our kitchen. She looks so cute when she jumps from the table to the window sill.

Some samples of **supported** opinions:

Cats are better than dogs. They can leave the house by themselves and get exercise by jumping up on the roof and running around the neighborhood. They don't bark or make a lot of noise, so everyone gets enough sleep.

Now you try: Which opinion has supporting sentences and which opinion is unsupported? Write *supported* or *unsupported* for each example.



1. *Playing basketball is good exercise.* I am best at shooting the ball so my friends can't block it. My dribbling skills need to improve, and that's why I practice every day.

2. *Playing basketball is good exercise.* You have to run a lot, and that's good for your heart and lungs. Shooting the ball builds hand-eye coordination, and jumping builds the leg muscles.