

Case Study #2: Katrina

Katrina seems to spend hours and hours studying every night. She does well on her daily homework, but can't seem to earn a grade above a C- on any test she takes. Katrina and her parents are sure that she's smarter than this. It's not unusual for her mom or dad to walk into her bedroom after midnight and find Katrina under the covers with a flashlight reading anything from *Anna Karenina* to *Lord of the Rings*. She has no trouble remembering the intricacies of plots and characters and loves to talk about them at the dinner table. Katrina's analysis of the problem is, "I know I answered the questions on the test correctly. When the teacher went over them in class, my answers were the same as hers. She just used different words. It's like I'm speaking a foreign language!" Katrina doesn't see that her teacher wants more details that support the main ideas she has correctly chosen. She knows the answers; she just doesn't know how to communicate them.

Katrina's writing skills are weak. She needs to learn how to take all those marvelous ideas she has no trouble *talking* about and turning them into *writing*. An educational therapist would teach her how to create a standard five-sentence paragraph made up of a main idea, three details and a concluding sentence. She also needs to learn how to compose a five paragraph composition. To communicate effectively on paper, Katrina will have to learn how to write a friendly letter, be persuasive and create fiction. She needs to be able to compare and contrast, express an opinion, and outline a character sketch. Katrina has to be able to relate a personal incident, explain how she solved a problem, and compose a research report. She's capable of all of it.