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Introduction

Reading comprehension involves numerous thinking skills. Identifying fact and opinion is one such skill. A reader who can differentiate between these two kinds of statements is better able to analyze and assess a text. This book will help you help students learn to identify statements of fact and opinion. Use the pages that follow to teach this skill to students and to give them practice in employing it.

Using This Book

Pages 5–7

After introducing fact and opinion to students (see page 4), duplicate and pass out pages 5–7. Use page 5 to help students review and practice what they have just learned about identifying fact and opinion. By explaining their thinking, students are using metacognition to analyze how they recognized and utilized these clues. Pages 6–7 give students a model of the practice pages to come. They also provide a model of the thinking students might use in distinguishing between facts and opinions.

Page 8

Use this page as a pre-assessment to find out how students think when they identify fact and opinion. When going over these pages with students, discuss how different clues help them decide what kind of statement they read.

Pages 9–43

These pages offer practice in identifying fact and opinion. Students should first read the paragraph, then identify as fact or opinion the selected sentences for the first exercise on the page. The second exercise calls for students to write another fact or opinion from the paragraph. Be sure students understand that the sentence they write should not be one used in the first exercise.

Pages 44–46

After they have completed the practice pages, use these pages to assess the way students think when they identify fact and opinion.

Page 47

You may wish to keep a record of students' progress as they complete the practice pages. Sample comments that will help you guide students toward improving their passages might include:

- reads carelessly
- misunderstands text
- fails to recognize clues
- doesn't apply prior knowledge

Teacher Tip

For students who need extra help, you might suggest that they keep pages 5–7 with them to use as examples when they complete the practice pages.
What Is a Fact? What Is an Opinion?

You read a paragraph. It gives you a lot of information. But you aren’t sure it’s all true. And you don’t agree with everything you have read. What can you do? A good reader sorts out the information. A reader might think:

When you answer the first question, you identify the facts. The facts are statements that can be proved true. When you answer the second question, you identify opinions. An opinion is what someone thinks or believes.

Read the paragraph below, and then answer the questions.

Dogs Around the World

Most dogs are pets. But there are still wild dogs in different parts of the world. I think the jackal—found in Africa, Asia, and Europe—is the most dangerous. In Australia, the dingo is a native wild dog. Another wild dog is the coyote in North America.

What facts are given in this paragraph?

1. Who or what is the paragraph about?

2. What are some examples of these animals?

3. Where are some of these animals found?

What opinion is given?

4. What judgment does the writer make about jackals?

5. How could you prove that the facts are true?
Identifying Facts & Opinions

Study these two pages. They show how a student identified facts and opinions.

Read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

Outdoor Movies

The best way to see a movie is at a drive-in theater. These outdoor theaters had their beginnings in 1933 in Riverton, New Jersey. Richard Hollingshead, Jr., set up a movie screen in front of his garage. Later that year he opened a real drive-in theater in the town of Camden. This theater had room for 400 cars. What a clever idea!

1. Write fact or opinion next to each sentence.

   fact   A. This movie theater had room for 400 cars.

   This statement can be checked so it must be a fact.
Thinking Model & Practice

Identifying Facts & Opinions
(Continued)

opinion B. The best way
to see a movie is
at a drive-in
theater.

This sentence tells
what the writer thinks. You can’t
prove it is true. I don’t even agree
with it. It is an opinion.

fact C. These outdoor
theaters had their
beginnings in 1933
in Riverton, New
Jersey.

This statement tells
when and where. It can be
proved. It is a fact.

2. Write another opinion from the paragraph.

The third and fourth sentences
are facts. They can be proved. But
the last sentence gives a judgment.
It is an opinion. I will write that
sentence: What a clever idea!
Sorting Information

Study the picture. Read each sentence. Write F if the sentence is a fact. Write O if the sentence is an opinion.

1. There are two pandas.
2. The pandas are cuter than the brown bears.
3. Two plus two equals four.
4. There are two bears.
5. The artist should have drawn polar bears.

6. Write another fact about the picture.

7. Write another opinion about the picture.