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Introduction

Reading comprehension involves numerous thinking skills. The ability to differentiate between fact and opinion is one such skill. A reader who can identify these two types of statements is better able to analyze and assess a text. While distinguishing fact from opinion is one step in reading, it is important that students go further. They should also be able to sort facts and opinions to help determine the writer's point of view. Exercises 1–18 provide practice in learning to distinguish between statements of fact and opinion. Exercises 19–35 focus on determining point of view. Use pages 8 and 9 after you introduce the skills to give students help in understanding them.

Using This Book

Pages 8–9

After introducing fact and opinion and point of view to students (see pages 6 and 7), duplicate and pass out pages 8 and 9. Use page 8 to help students review what they have learned about identifying fact and opinion. By explaining their thinking, students are using metacognition to analyze how they recognized and utilized these clues. Page 9 helps students review what they have learned about point of view.

Pages 10–27

These pages offer practice in distinguishing **fact** from **opinion**. Students should read the paragraph, then identify the selected sentences in item 1 as fact or opinion. Items 2 and 3 call for students to write another fact or opinion from the paragraph. Tell students that the sentences they write should not be any of those used in item 1.

Pages 28–44

These pages provide exercises in determining **point of view**. Students should read the paragraph, then describe the writer's opinion about the topic. Item 2 requires students to identify a key word in the paragraph. Item 3 calls for students to recognize the writer's point of view, and item 4 asks students to identify another possible viewpoint.

Pages 45–46

After they have completed the practice pages, use these pages to assess students' progress.

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 to improving skills 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 8 and 9 with them to refer to when they complete the exercises.

Teacher Tip

Students can learn a lot if you review the finished exercises with them on a regular basis. Encourage students to explain their thinking for each correct answer. Ask them to share the clues that helped them decide if a sentence was fact or opinion or what the point of view was.

Mini-Lesson

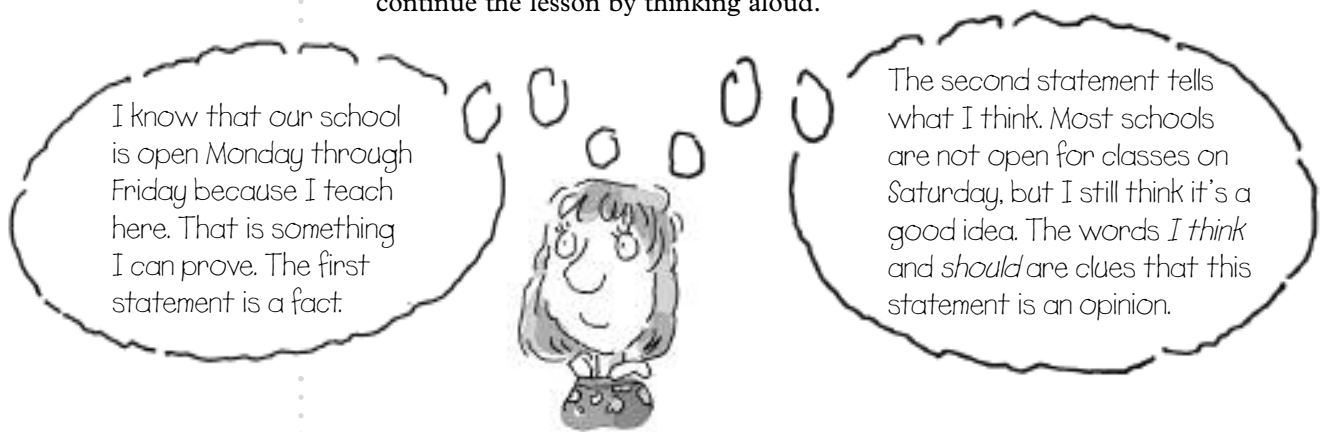
Teaching About Fact and Opinion

1. Introduce the concept: Write these statements on the chalkboard.

**Our school is in session Monday through Friday.
I think there should be classes on Saturday.**

Ask students which statement can be proved. Which statement is what someone believes?

2. Model thinking: After students have correctly recognized that the first statement can be proved and the second statement is what you believe, continue the lesson by thinking aloud.



3. Define the skill: Tell students that a fact can be proved to be true. Sometimes you can see the proof easily; sometimes you can check a fact in a reference book. Facts answer these questions: *Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?*

Remind students that references such as encyclopedias, almanacs, textbooks, biographies, and other nonfiction books all contain facts. So do newspapers, magazines, and Internet sites. (You may wish to caution students that not all information on the Internet is reliable.)

Explain that an **opinion** may or may not be true. An opinion is what someone believes; it is a kind of judgment. There may be many opinions about a subject. Opinions can be based on facts or on feelings. Some opinions contain clue words such as *I believe, I feel, I think, in my judgment, most, best, should, must, better than, worst.*

Caution students that not all opinions have clue words. An opinion can be stated like this:

Saturday classes are a great idea.

Explain that opinions are found in advertisements, feature stories, editorials, and many other types of writing.

Mini-Lesson

Teaching About Point of View

1. Introduce the concept: Read these three descriptions to students.

Mel's dog Rags is digging a hole in the neighbor's garden.

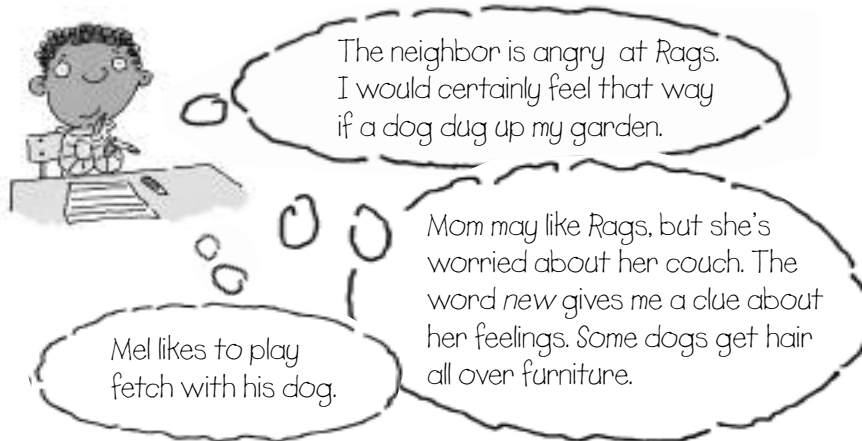
Stop that, Rags!

Rags is sleeping on Mom's new couch. You're not allowed there, Rags!

Rags is playing fetch with Mel. Good boy!

Ask students to tell how the neighbor, Mom, and Mel might think about Rags.

2. Model thinking: After students have correctly described different points of view about Rags, help them review the process they used by thinking aloud.



3. Define the skill: Explain that people express different points of view in their writing. Often, these points of view are based on facts and opinions. In many cases, feelings are involved, too. It is important to try to identify a writer's point of view and then compare it with what you yourself think. Mention that the point of view of an expert, based on knowledge and experience, is usually valuable and worth reading. A viewpoint based on firsthand experience or from an eyewitness often offers new insights into a situation. Considering other points of view doesn't mean you have to agree, but it can help broaden a reader's understanding of a subject. Good readers consult several sources on subjects of interest to them.

Learning Page

What Is a Fact? What Is an Opinion?

When you read a nonfiction passage, you are usually reading facts. However, the passage may also contain opinions. How does a reader sort facts from opinions? A reader might think:



When you answer the first question, you identify the **facts**. These are statements that can be proved or observed. When you answer the second question, you determine **opinions**. An opinion is a judgment that reflects a person's beliefs or feelings. It is not necessarily true.

Read the paragraph. Answer the questions.

One of the most wonderful dogs is the Saint Bernard. This large, strong animal has a thick coat and a good sense of direction. In the Alps of Switzerland, Saint Bernards have been used as guides to help travelers through mountain passes. As the dogs pass through thick snow, their deep chests form tracks that people can follow. Saint Bernards are sometimes used to help rescue skiers who get lost on snowy slopes.

What facts are given in this paragraph?

1 Who or what is the paragraph about? _____

2 What traits do these animals have? _____

3 How are these animals helpful to people? _____

What opinion is given?

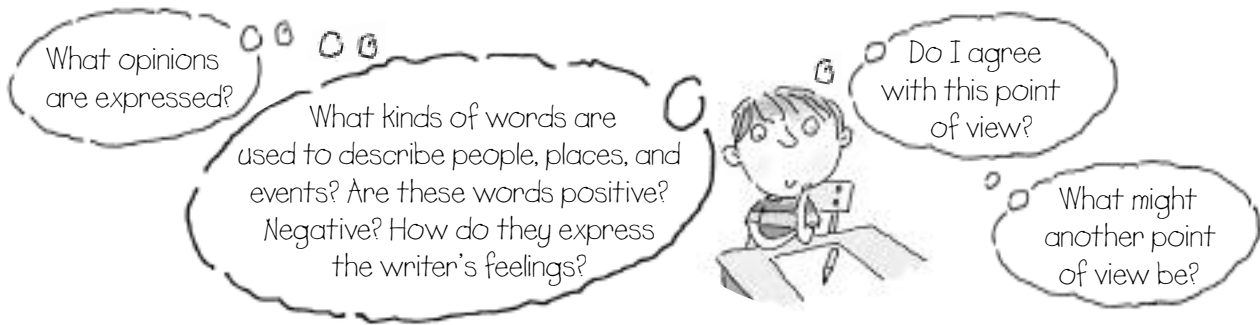
4 What judgment does the writer make about the subject? _____

5 How could you prove that the facts are true? _____

What Is a Point of View?

Learning Page

When you read a selection, you find both facts and opinions. Many accounts also reflect the writer's point of view or how the writer feels about the subject. A good reader tries to determine what the writer's point of view is. A reader might think:



When you answer the first question, you recognize that an opinion is being given. The second question helps you look more closely at the point of view of the writer. When you answer the last two questions, you are thinking about how the writer's point of view affects the information given.

Read the paragraph. Answer the questions.

Do you like amusing sights? If so, you should have seen the tree growing from a chimney at Tyler House. This building is a dorm on a college campus in Massachusetts. The tree, a type of aspen, apparently seeded itself with the help of the wind. Aspens grow best in sunny spots, and the chimney offered plenty of sunshine. Unfortunately, the tree's roots were growing into the bricks and mortar, so the enterprising tree had to be removed.

1 What does the writer think is an "amusing sight"? _____

2 Which word tells how the writer feels about the tree?

(A) sunny (B) enterprising (C) unsafe

3 Why do you agree or disagree with the writer's point of view? _____

4 What point of view might someone from the local fire department have?

EXERCISE

1

Fact and Opinion

Read the paragraph. Follow the directions.

In Britain, judges and lawyers have traditionally worn wigs and gowns in court. Depending on their role, some also wear lace neck trimmings, sashes, hoods, fur mantles, and buckled shoes. From time to time, this judicial finery has been mocked. After all, it is ridiculous.



The curly wigs are made in four shades of off-white, ranging from light gray to beige. The more important the official, the fancier the wig. A senior judge wears a headpiece of curls that reaches to the shoulders. What a silly, fusty, dusty custom!

1 Write *fact* or *opinion* next to each sentence.

In Britain, judges and lawyers have traditionally worn wigs and gowns in court.

From time to time, this judicial finery has been mocked. _____

What a silly, fusty, dusty custom! _____

2 Write another fact from the paragraph. _____

3 Write another opinion from the paragraph. _____

EXERCISE

2

Fact and Opinion

Read the paragraph. Follow the directions.

Isaac Asimov was the finest American author. He was born in Russia in 1920 but came to the United States with his family when he was three. Asimov became a professor of biochemistry and a writer. Most of his books were about science fiction. *Fantastic Voyage* was definitely his best book. Many of Asimov's stories featured robots and, with another writer, he created the Three Laws of Robotics. These govern how robots behave in science fiction.



1 Write *fact* or *opinion* next to each sentence.

Isaac Asimov was the finest American author. _____

Asimov became a professor of biochemistry and a writer. _____

Most of his books were about science fiction. _____

2 Write another fact from the paragraph. _____

3 Write another opinion from the paragraph. _____
