



FACT & OPINION |

FACTS AND OPINIONS

A **fact** is a specific detail that can be proven as true based on objective evidence.

An **opinion** is a feeling, judgment, belief, or conclusion that cannot be proven true by objective evidence.

Objective proof can be one or more of the following: physical evidence, an eyewitness account, or the result of an accepted scientific method.

FACTS

Facts are statements that can be proven.

Facts may be true **or** false.

But facts can be **proven**.

Examples

1. Statistically, women live longer than men.
2. Most buses weigh more than most cars.
2. There are ten inches in a foot (false).

SEPARATING FACT FROM OPINION

Know the traits of facts and opinions.

Fact: Spinach is a source of iron.

Opinion: Spinach tastes awful.



Fact

Objective

States reality

Can be verified

**Presented with unbiased
words**

“Spinach is a form of iron.”

Opinion

Subjective

Interprets reality

Can NOT be verified

Presented with value words

“Spinach tastes awful.”

FACT OR OPINION?

A spinning class is a group exercise program of about 45 minutes riding on a stationary bike.

___A spinning class is a form of torture.



NOTE BIASED WORDS TO IDENTIFY OPINIONS

Look for biased words. They express opinions, value judgments and interpretations and are often loaded with emotion.

Note: A sentence can include both facts and opinions.

BIASED WORDS

awful

amazing

better

best

bad

beautiful

believe

disgusting

exciting

favorite

frightful

fun

horrible

miserable

never

probably

think

smart

EXAMPLE:

“In point of fact, computers make life miserable.”

Explanation: “Miserable” makes this a general opinion.

EXAMPLE:

“The great grasslands of the West should not have been plowed under for crops.”

Explanation: The grasslands were plowed under, but whether or not they “should not have been” is a matter of opinion.



NOTE QUALIFIERS TO IDENTIFY OPINIONS

Beware of false facts, or statements presented as facts that are actually untrue.

A qualifier may express an absolute, unwavering opinion using words like *always* or *never*.

EXAMPLE

“Exercise is the only sure way to lose weight.”

“Only” is a qualifier and makes this statement an opinion.

THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT SUPPOSED “FACTS”

Beware of opinions stated to sounds like facts.

Note: Phrases like “in truth,” “the truth of the matter,” or “in fact” are examples.

EXAMPLE:

“In truth, the earliest humans lived at the same time as dinosaurs.”


Explanation: Fossil records and scientific research have proved this to be a false fact.

EVALUATE THE CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE



1. Alexander the Great was one of the greatest military leaders in world history.
2. He was born in Pella, Macedonia.
3. The exact date of his birth was probably July 20 or 26, 356 B.C.
4. Shortly before his 33rd birthday, Alexander the Great died.
5. The cause of his death remains unknown.

Is each statement a fact, opinion, or fact/opinion both?

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1. F/O His name and title are factual, but the value word greatest is an opinion.
 2. F This statement can be verified in historical records.
 3. O The word probably makes this a statement of opinion.
 4. F This statement can be checked and verified as true.
 5. F This is a factual statement that something isn't known.

EVALUATE THE CONTEXT OF THE AUTHOR

An **informed opinion** is developed by gathering and analyzing evidence.

An **expert opinion** is developed through much training and extensive knowledge in a given field.

Informed opinion:

- Shopping around for a car
- Researching an essay for a college class

Expert opinion:

- Doctor's diagnosis of an illness
- Economics professor's lecture on the economy

PRACTICE

1. According to sales records, strawberry ice-cream is the worst selling of all flavors.
2. Therefore, we can conclude that strawberry is the least popular major ice-cream flavor.
3. This is because strawberry ice-cream does not taste as good as vanilla and chocolate.
4. Drinking orange juice right after brushing your teeth tastes bad.
5. Justin Bieber deserved to win the Grammy for best new artist.
6. Chicken that has not been properly prepared and cooked may cause salmonella.
7. The Xbox came out before the Wii.
8. Super Mario is one of the greatest video game characters of all time.
9. Chocolate milk tastes better than regular milk.
10. Charter school students are scheduled to attend school more often than students who attend neighborhood schools.

Toothpaste advert

This advert makes some claims about Shiny Teeth toothpaste. Some are facts and some are opinions.

The diagram shows a toothpaste advertisement with several text elements. Arrows point from yellow boxes labeled 'Opinion', 'Fact', and 'Opinion' to specific parts of the ad. The ad itself features a blue and pink header, a central image of toothbrushes and a tube of toothpaste, and a blue box with text. The background is a light blue and white tiled wall.

Opinion → **Shiny Teeth toothpaste gives you the whitest teeth**

Opinion → **Everyone loves Shiny Teeth toothpaste**

Fact → **Dentists recommend you brush your teeth every day**

Opinion → **Shiny Teeth toothpaste is the best you can buy**

Fact → **You can buy toothpaste in all good chemists and supermarkets**