

Fact/Opinion Checklist

Want to help students better recognize true from sensational information? Have students classify the 17 statements below as either "Fact" or "Opinion". After that, go over the answers with them and they'll be ready to talk about, and take notes on, how to recognize sensational information.

Procedure:

1. Go through the 17 statements below. You can go through them aloud or put them on the board for students to copy. Some of the statements are proven facts, and others are opinion. Feel free to add any of your own.
2. Allow time for students to decide whether they think each statement is Fact or Opinion.
3. Go over the answers for all 17 statements. If you want, use the PowerPoint (see next page for details). As you near the end, ask if anyone is noticing patterns to those items that are fact and those that are opinions (that will lead us into the notes).
4. With student help and leading, fill in the 2 questions that follow.

		Name: _____
Fact	Opinion	
x	x	1. The Great Wall of China is visible from space.
x	x	2. A 1901 light bulb is still burning today.
x	x	3. Toilets flush opposite directions between the northern and southern hemisphere.
x	x	4. The average person swallows eight spiders per year.
x	x	5. Earth's tides are caused by the moon's gravity pulling on earth.
x	x	6. Sylvia Browne is a proven psychic.
x	x	7. A giant asteroid collision is going to kill us all in 2017.
x	x	8. The Apollo moon landing was a hoax.
x	x	9. Numerous videos prove there are UFO's.
x	x	10. The sky is blue because of the reflection off the ocean.
x	x	11. The seasons occur because we get closer and further from the sun.
x	x	12. The moon rotates at the same rate it revolves (its day is as long as its year).
x	x	13. Eggs can be balanced on end on the equinox.
x	x	14. On May 3, 2000, 5 planets lined up perfectly.
x	x	15. Such alignments can cause earthquakes, floods and in some cases split the planet in two.
x	x	16. My horoscope is accurate enough that I should live my life by it.
x	x	17. Three of the first five presidents of the United States died on July 4 th .

1. Compare the Fact statements with the Opinion statements. How do they sound different?
 a. **Opinion-sensational, extreme**
 b. **Fact-provable, more calm, etc.**

2. Why do we believe in things that cannot possibly be true?
 a. **To account for variations in observation**
 b. **Entertainment (boredom)**
 c. **To sound intelligent**
 d. **To be "in the inside"**
 e. **To express distrust in those in authority**

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- a.
- b.

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- a.
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Student Handout

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