

Teacher Notes-“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 move into the questions that will really help them think hard about why people (including *all* of us) believe silly things.

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- maybe there are some urban legends unique to your area.
2. Allow time for students to decide whether they think each statement is Fact or Opinion. If you like to tease, you can tell them as they start to wind down that 5 are Fact, and 12 are not.
3. Go over the answers for all 17 statements. Using the PowerPoint (see last page) will make this simple. As you near the end, ask if anyone is noticing any 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.

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

PowerPoint- lead your students through the lesson click-by-click

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Student Handout

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