



connect

Chapter Eight:

Distinguishing

Between Fact and

Opinion



Your Job . . .

Take notes on how to tell the difference
between

FACT and **OPINION**

- Break into groups of three.
- Brainstorm on what makes a statement a fact, and what makes a statement an opinion.
- Determine if the headlines on the next slide are facts or opinions.

Activating Prior Knowledge

1. Man arrested in alleged Fed terror plot
2. Multivitamins may block cancer in men
3. Microsoft will lose a war with Apple; so will Google
4. Power naps boost creativity
5. Picking on the wealthy ignores real problems
6. Mother who glued toddler's hands to wall should have gotten shorter sentence
7. Romney clearly won the debate – again



Facts

- **Are objective.** Objective means not influenced by personal judgments or feelings.
- **Exist externally.** They are physical, observable things independent of you. They live outside of you.
- Can be *verified* -- proven to true or false.



Opinions

- **Are subjective.** Subjective means influenced by personal feelings or tastes.
- **Exist internally.** They exist inside you (me, anyone) and depend on the person holding the opinion.
- **Cannot be verified.**



Stem Statements That Introduce Opinions

- The defendant *claims* . . .
- The author *argues* that . . .
- My *point of view* is . . .
- Police *suspect* . . .
- Many *believe* . . .



REMEMBER

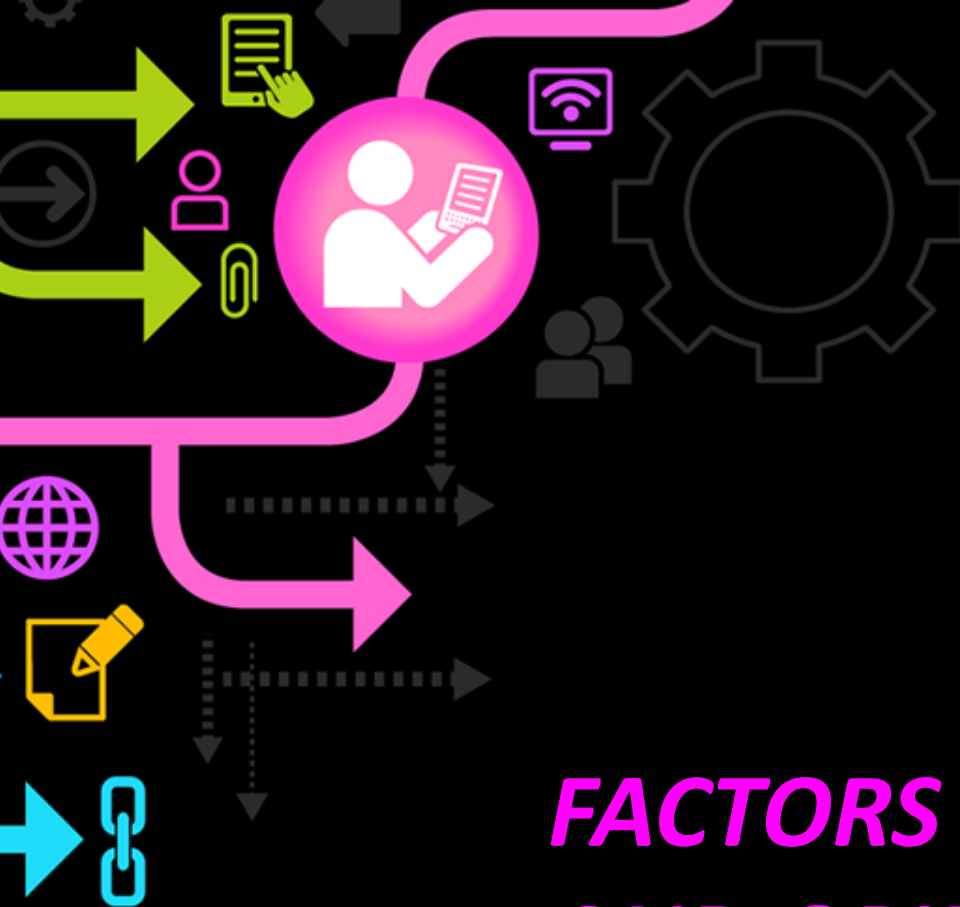
FACT = object, as in objective.

OPINION = subject, as in subjective.

1. Now that you have formal definitions of fact and opinion, revisit the headlines.
2. Do you need to change any of your answers?

1. Man arrested in alleged Fed terror plot
2. Multivitamins may block cancer in men
3. Microsoft will lose a war with Apple; so will Google
4. Power naps boost creativity
5. Picking on the wealthy ignores real problems
6. Mother who glued toddler's hands to wall should have gotten shorter sentence
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- Choose a partner
- Create one statement of **fact** and one statement of **opinion** for each of the following topics:
 - Food
 - Children
 - Money



FACTORS THAT AFFECT FACT AND OPINION



Factors That Affect Fact and Opinion

- Adjectives
- Connotation and Denotation
- Qualifiers
- Superlative and Comparative
- Values

Words That Can Express Opinions

Adjectives

- Adjectives are words that describe nouns.
 - Big
 - Rich
 - Ugly
- Sometimes adjectives express an opinion.
 - The movie was horrible.
- Sometimes adjectives express facts.
 - Large objects fall faster than small objects.

When you see adjectives, think carefully about whether they point to fact or opinion.

1. Find a partner.
2. Write two statement of opinion that contains adjectives.

Words That Can Express Opinions

Qualifiers

- A qualifier is a word or phrase that limits the statement.
- Qualifiers include
 - May
 - Might
 - Sometimes
 - A few
 - Frequently

Words That Can Express Opinions

The Role of Qualifiers

- Qualifiers limit a statement, often making it more likely that the statement is true.
 - He is *usually* late.
 - It *typically* rains in March.

Words That Can Express Opinions

Absolute Qualifiers

- Words that indicate a statement is always true, 100% of the time.
- Absolute qualifiers are often exaggerations.
 - *She's always* late.
 - He *never* helps others.
- Statements using absolute qualifiers are often not true.

- Choose a new partner.
- Quickly write a statement of **fact** that includes qualifiers.
- Quickly write an **incorrect** statement of **fact** that includes absolute qualifiers.

Words That Can Express Opinions

Comparatives

- Typically used to compare two items.
- End in *-er*, or have *more* before a word.
- Examples
 - Better
 - Weaker
 - Stronger
 - More beautiful
 - More helpful

Words That Can Express Opinions

Superlatives

- Compares one thing to all the other things of the same kind
- end with *-est* or have *most* before a word, as in *most intelligent*.
- Examples
 - Best
 - Strongest
 - Weakest
 - Most beautiful

Words That Can Express Opinions

Evaluating Superlatives and Comparatives

Sometimes superlatives and comparatives are opinions.

- My Dad is better than your Dad.

Other times they are facts (or are just plain wrong).

- My Dad is stronger than your Dad.

Always ask: Can I verify this statement?

- Quickly choose a new partner.
- Write a statement that uses a superlative. Is the statement a **fact** or an **opinion**?
- Write a statement that uses a comparative. Is the statement a **fact** or an **opinion**?



Sources of Information

- Information can come from many sources.
- Some sources are more trustworthy than others.
- There are three types of sources:
 - Experts
 - People with Informed Opinions
 - People on the Street



Sources: Experts

- Have extensive knowledge on a specific subject.
- May not have knowledge on other subjects.
- It's like Dancing with the Stars – a famous football player or expert TV chef might not be so great with the tango.



Sources: Informed Opinion

- People who are informed get their information directly from experts, from the media, and/or from personal experience.
- Usually not as trustworthy as an expert.



Sources: Person on the Street

- Everyday people lacking extensive knowledge
- Might not know anything, but eager to voice an opinion anyway.

- Quickly choose a new partner.
- The next three slides contain a subject and three people. Determine which person is an expert, which is informed, and which is a man on the street.

SUBJECT: Common causes of house fires

SOURCES:

- Woman working in bookstore
- Fire Marshall
- Person who lost house to fire

SUBJECT: Computer viruses

SOURCES:

- Chief Security Officer for Microsoft
- Computer repairman
- Your aunt, who is great with her PC

SUBJECT: Underwater basket-weaving

SOURCES:

- Professional basket-weaver
- Woman who scuba-dived on vacation
- Man who has a collection of hundreds of baskets



Tips for Better Reading

DO listen to what the author is saying to you.

- They are sharing their values and beliefs, which may be different than yours.

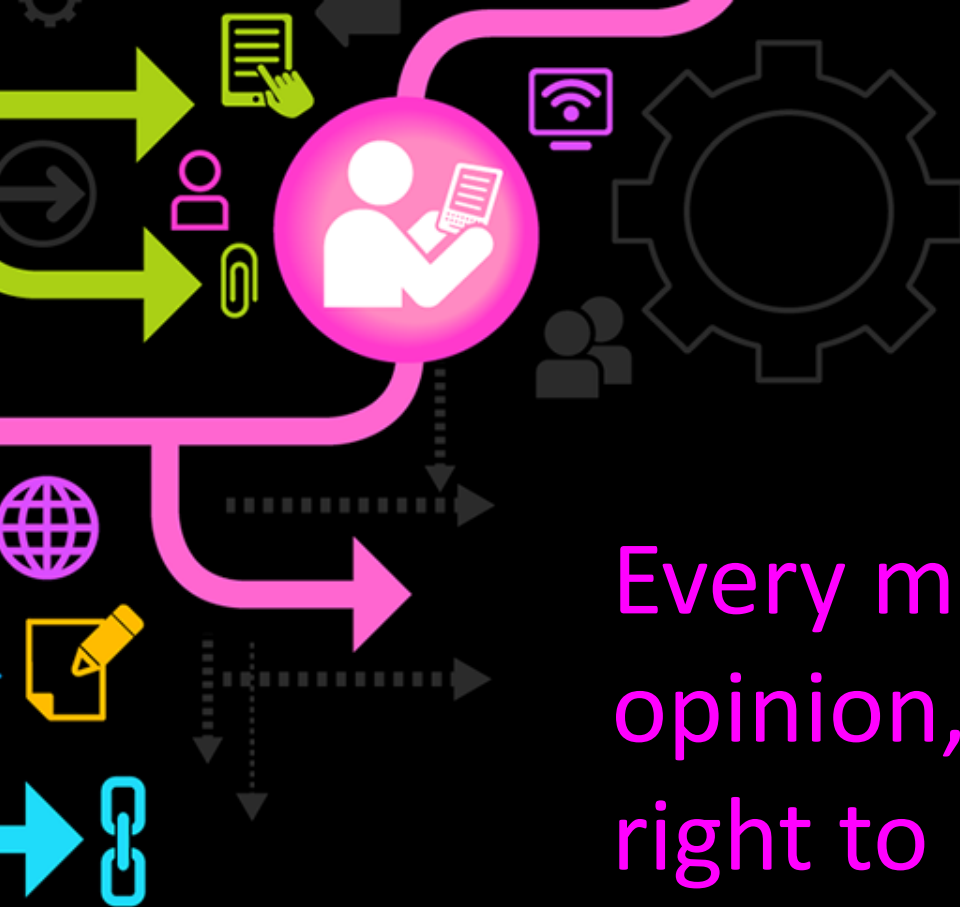
DO NOT insert your thoughts over the author's.

- It is OK to process what the author is saying through your filter. It is **not** OK to change what the author is saying to fit what you want or think.



Stay Objective!!

- The author did not take your values or beliefs into consideration when they were writing.
- It's nothing personal.
- Your thoughts about a reading are secondary to your comprehension of what you read.



Every man has a right to his opinion, but no man has a right to be wrong in his facts.

- Bernard Baruch