

## FACT AND OPINION

A fact is a statement that can be tested by experimentation, observation, or research and shown to be true or untrue.

An opinion is a person's belief, feeling, or judgment about something. It is a subjective or value judgment, and it cannot be proven.

A writer may use factual statements to support his or her opinions. Opinion statements may occur even in what seems to be strictly factual material. A reader should look for words that are clues to statements of opinion.

Words such as **perhaps**  
**sometimes**  
**probably**  
**often**            indicate the possibility of opinions.

Words such as **I feel**  
**I think**  
**I believe**        clearly point out that an opinion is being expressed.

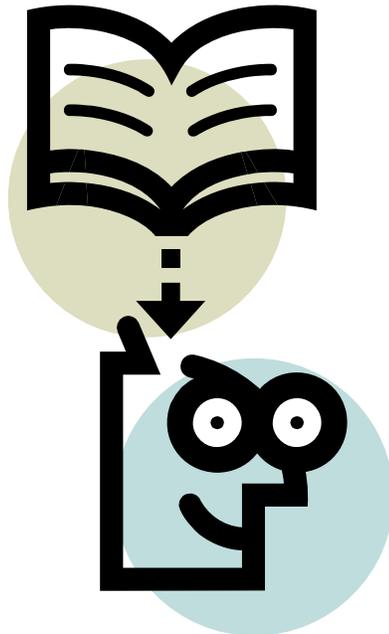
### EXERCISE 1:        Write *F* on the line in front of each factual statement.

- \_\_\_ 1. Harry S. Truman was a president of the United States.
- \_\_\_ 2. Truman was one of the best presidents the United States has had.
- \_\_\_ 3. Movies are generally more interesting than books.
- \_\_\_ 4. The unemployment rate in the U.S. today is higher than it was in 1935.
- \_\_\_ 5. Non-poisonous snakes make delightful pets.
- \_\_\_ 6. Business sets outrageously high prices on its products.
- \_\_\_ 7. *Time* is a better magazine than *Newsweek*.
- \_\_\_ 8. The junior college is a better place to attend school for the first two years than is a university or a 4-year college.
- \_\_\_ 9. In Arizona, smoking in public places is against the law.
- \_\_\_ 10. Nicotine in cigarette smoke makes the heart beat faster.
- \_\_\_ 11. Gold was discovered in California in 1848.
- \_\_\_ 12. Charles Dickens' fascinating novel *A Tale of Two Cities* was published in 1840.
- \_\_\_ 13. Israel and Egypt will never have a permanent peace settlement.
- \_\_\_ 14. There is currently a shortage of science teachers in the state of Florida.
- \_\_\_ 15. In 1970, over 30,000 children were enrolled in day-care programs in Miami-Dade County.

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**EXERCISE II:** Write *F* on the line in front of each factual statement; write *O* for each statement of opinion.

- \_\_\_ 1. Hawaii is in the Pacific Ocean.
- \_\_\_ 2. The Krakatoa volcanic eruption was heard 1900 miles away.
- \_\_\_ 3. Only law enforcement officers should carry guns.
- \_\_\_ 4. Many private schools today provide a superior education to boys and girls.
- \_\_\_ 5. A family physician can provide most of the medical services which a family requires.
- \_\_\_ 6. Medsker discovered that 4-year colleges draw about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of their freshmen from the upper 40% of the high school graduating classes.
- \_\_\_ 7. On the average, U.S. males can expect to live 7 years less than U.S. females.
- \_\_\_ 8. *Reader's Digest* is America's most popular magazine.
- \_\_\_ 9. Yosemite National Park is the oldest national park in the nation.
- \_\_\_ 10. Most TV commercials today are misleading and silly.
- \_\_\_ 11. The mayor was elected by an overwhelming majority.
- \_\_\_ 12. A majority of all restaurants employ male chefs.
- \_\_\_ 13. The earthquake was the largest ever recorded on the Richter Scale.
- \_\_\_ 14. More federal subsidies are needed for small businesses.



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## EXERCISE III:

Mark statements of fact with an F and statements of opinion with an O.

- \_\_\_ 1. In 1924, the Model T Ford could be purchased for \$290.
- \_\_\_ 2. The Model T was the most important invention of the first half of the century.
- \_\_\_ 3. By the end of this century, electric cars will be in common use.
- \_\_\_ 4. Couples should be acquainted for at least a year before getting married.
- \_\_\_ 5. Joining the Army is the best way to learn job skill.
- \_\_\_ 6. No symbol elicits fear as does the swastika.
- \_\_\_ 7. The core of a pencil is made of graphite and clay, not lead.
- \_\_\_ 8. It's better to plant masses of flowers all in one color than in two or three colors.
- \_\_\_ 9. The equator is 24,901.55 miles long.
- \_\_\_ 10. It's never too early to teach children how to behave.

## EXERCISE IV:

Some of the following sentences state facts, and some express opinions. Some of the sentences include both facts and opinions. Mark statements of fact with an F, statements of opinion with an O, and statements of fact and opinion with F + O.

- \_\_\_ 1. Nothing is better for a stomachache than red clover tea.
- \_\_\_ 2. Every cook needs to become familiar with basil, which is a member of the mint family.
- \_\_\_ 3. In laboratory experiments, peppermint extracts have counteracted some viruses in test tubes.
- \_\_\_ 4. Wearing neckties is a ridiculous habit since it serves no worthwhile purpose.
- \_\_\_ 5. My father bought a remnant of silk for a dollar and made it into a tie.
- \_\_\_ 6. Bowties can be bought permanently tied, but the untied type is classier.
- \_\_\_ 7. The first television commercial, for a Bulova watch, was broadcast in 1941.
- \_\_\_ 8. Children should not be allowed to watch more than an hour of television a day.
- \_\_\_ 9. Johnny Carson, the greatest talk show host of them all, became host of *The Tonight Show* in 1962.
- \_\_\_ 10. Watching sports events in person is better than watching them on TV.