

## Fact and Opinion Absent Notes

A **fact** is information that can be proved true through objective evidence. This evidence may be physical proof or the spoken or written testimony of witnesses. Facts can be checked for accuracy.

### For Example:

The following facts can be checked for accuracy and thus proved true:

- **The Quad Tower is the tallest building in this city.**

(A researcher could go out, and through inspection, confirm that the building is the tallest.)

- **Albert Einstein willed his violin to his grandson.**

(This statement can be checked in historical publications or with Einstein's estate.)

An **opinion** is a belief, judgment, or conclusion that cannot be objectively proved true. As a result it is open to question.

**Value (Signal) words** are used to express a value judgment. Value or judgment words are signals that an opinion is being expressed. By their very nature, these words represent opinions, not facts.

### **Examples of Value Words:**

best	great	beautiful
worst	terrible	bad
better	lovely	good
worse	disgusting	wonderful

The following are examples of **opinions**:

- **The Quad Tower is the ugliest building in this city.**

(There is no way to prove this statement because two people can look at the same building and come to different conclusions about its beauty. *Ugly* is a value word we use to express a value judgment. Value words are a signal that an opinion is being expressed.)

- **Einstein should have willed his violin to a museum.**

(Who says? Not his grandson. This is an opinion.)

### Author's Purpose with Fact & Opinion

The amount of **fact** and **opinion** in a piece of writing varies, depending on the author's purpose. For example, news articles and scientific reports, which are written to inform readers, are supposed to be as **factual** as possible.

On the other hand, the main points of editorials, political speeches, and advertisements - materials written to persuade readers - are **opinions**.



***Practice?! We talkin' about practice?!***

**Directions:** Some statements below are facts and some are opinions; in addition, three include fact and opinion. Label the facts with an “**F**”, opinions with an “**O**”, and statements of fact **and** opinion with an “**FO**”.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. German shepherds are the scariest dogs alive.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. The dog that bites people the most often, according to one twenty-seven-year study, is the German shepherd.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. German Shepherds, which always make poor pets, are used in police work and as guide dogs for the blind.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Because many studies have concluded that smoking is a health hazard, cigarettes should be banned.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Scientists predict that one-third of people who begin smoking under the age of 18 will die prematurely because of their habit.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Smoking has been found to be one cause of lung cancer.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Executives of corporations that pollute the environment should be jailed.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. According to scientists, all the water on Earth has been recycled for millions of years, and we drink the same water as the dinosaurs did.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. Low-flow shower heads save water, so all homeowners should be required to buy and install them in their showers.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Homeowners ought to plant water-conserving ground covers such as periwinkle instead of grass.