

Introduction

- A. Background
- B. Rationale
- C. Evaluating information
- D. Distinguishing fact from opinion, assumption, generalization
- E. Promoting facts in writing
- F. Conclusion

Evaluating Information

Examine materials by Stanford History Education Group's study in online reasoning.

Expository Writing for ESL Reading and Writing Courses

A. Distinguishing Fact from Opinion and Specific Details:

Read each sentence and label it O (opinion), F-NP (fact that needs proof), or SSD (specific supporting detail).

1. _____ People who steal identities do a lot of damage before their victims become aware of it.
2. _____ Punishment for identity thieves is not severe enough.
3. _____ As of 2010, credit card fraud accounted for 17 percent of reported identity theft.
4. _____ Identity theft is more serious than any other type of theft.
5. _____ Identity theft is increasing at a rapid rate.
6. _____ In 2000, 31,000 cases of identity theft were reported to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC); in 2009, the number was 278,000.
7. _____ Many people do not report identity theft to the police.
8. _____ In 2009, 28 percent of identity theft victims did not notify the police, according to the FTC.
9. _____ Identity theft happens to ordinary people, not just to the wealthy.
10. _____ The police should do more to protect citizens from identity theft.

(from *Longman Academic Writing 4* by Oshima and Hogue, Pearson: 5th ed. 2017.)

B. Recognizing Truth Twisting: *Write T if the statements uses only truthful methods; write S if the statement is slanted by bias, prejudice, or propaganda.*

11. _____ Tom Hanks arrived at the awards dinner wearing a handsome, double-breasted suite designed by Giorgio Armani.
12. _____ Oh, she's your typical feminist—she complains and causes trouble.
13. _____ I'm considering all points of view before I decide.
14. _____ There's nothing wrong with eating. All of my relatives are overweight, and they've lived to a ripe old age.

(from *All of Us* by Wiener and Bazerman, Houghton Mifflin, 1999.)

Fostering fact-based writing in the classroom and the workplace

CATESOL 2017

Marsha Chan and Julaine Rosner, Mission College

Fact-based writing at work

Explicit directions in writing using facts.

Use short models and side-by-side comparisons. Vocabulary is the key.

Describing a person using facts

Work with a partner. Put a check \checkmark next to the sentences that are factual. Put an X next to sentences that are not factual.

1. _____ Clara looks so cute when she smiles.
2. _____ Clara crawls over to the basket and the toys.
3. _____ Clara, a toddler, can stand with support.
4. _____ Clara loves the basket with colored balls.
5. _____ Those balls are interesting toys for boys and girls.
6. _____ Clara puts the ball into the box.
7. _____ She played with the ball and the box for about 10 minutes.
8. _____ Clara is a happy baby with an easy temperament.
9. _____ (your own fact) _____.
10. _____ (your own opinion) _____.

(*English for Child Development*, by Brems, Chan, & Rosner, Sunburst Media, 2017)

Describing an environment objectively

Model 1:

room / well-lit

A: Is the room well-lit ?

B: Yes, it is. It's well-lit. It's not poorly-lit.

Model 2:

chairs / adult-sized

A: Are the chairs adult-sized ?

B: No, they aren't. They're child-sized.

or

room / chilly

A: Is the room chilly?

B: I'm not sure. I can't tell from the picture.

It seems warm and sunny.

1. furniture / new?
2. environment / spacious?
3. classroom / poorly-lit?
4. room / crowded?
5. environment/ noisy?
6. walls / painted?
7. furniture / adult-sized?
8. chairs / in good condition?
9. room / warm
10. classroom / poorly maintained



Summary and Conclusion