

Boost Free Lessons - Year 9 English

Lesson 10: Fact, Opinion and Authority

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Worked Example 1

Which statement is fact, and which is opinion?

A. The Murray is Australia's longest river.

B. The Murray is Australia's most beautiful river.

1. A **fact** can be checked and proved true or false.
2. A river's length can be measured, so A can be verified.
3. An **opinion** states a belief or judgement that cannot be proved.
4. Beauty depends on personal taste, so no measurement could settle B.

A is a fact, B is an opinion.

Worked Example 2

What gives the statement below its authority?

A 2023 study by the Bureau of Meteorology found that the fire season now begins an average of three weeks earlier than in 1990.

1. **Authority** comes from evidence a reader can check.
2. The source is named, so the claim can be traced.
3. The date is given, so a reader knows how current it is.
4. The measurement is specific rather than vague, and specific claims are easier to verify.

It names its source, gives a date, and states a specific, checkable measurement.

Remember: A **fact** can be checked. An **opinion** cannot. **Authority** comes from naming the source, giving the date, and stating something specific enough to verify.



Question 1: Write whether each statement is a **fact** or an **opinion**.

1. Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius at sea level.

2. Summer is the best season.

3. Around 26 million people live in Australia.

4. This is clearly the worst decision the council has made.

5. The report was published in March 2024.

6. Everyone knows the system is broken.

7. Sharks have existed for over 400 million years.

8. Studies show that this approach works.



Question 2: Read the passage below, then answer the questions.

Enrolments at Riverton High rose by 8 per cent between 2021 and 2024, according to the department's published figures. Most parents agree the change is due to the new principal. It is obviously the best school in the district.

1. Find one fact in the passage.

2. Find one opinion presented as though it were fact.

3. Which claim has the strongest authority? Explain.

4. Which claim is weakest? Explain.

5. What information would make the survey claim more reliable?



Question 3: Answer the following questions.

1. Write a fact about your school.

2. Write an opinion about the same subject.

3. Explain three things that give a claim authority.

4. Why is *studies show* a warning sign rather than evidence?





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Answers: Fact, Opinion and Authority

Question 1

1. Fact
2. Opinion
3. Fact
4. Opinion
5. Fact
6. Opinion
7. Fact
8. Opinion presented as fact, since no study is named

Question 2

1. Model: *enrolments rose by 8 per cent between 2021 and 2024.*
2. Model: *obviously the best school in the district.*
3. The enrolment figure, because it is specific, dated and could be checked against records.
4. *Most parents agree*, because no survey, number or source is given.
5. The number of parents surveyed, when, how they were chosen, and who ran the survey.

Question 3

1. Model response: Our school has around 900 students enrolled across Years 7 to 12.
2. Model response: Our school has the best atmosphere of any school in the area.
3. A named source, a date, and a specific measurement that a reader could check independently.
4. It sounds like evidence but names nothing, so there is no study to check. A real claim names the study, its date and its findings.

