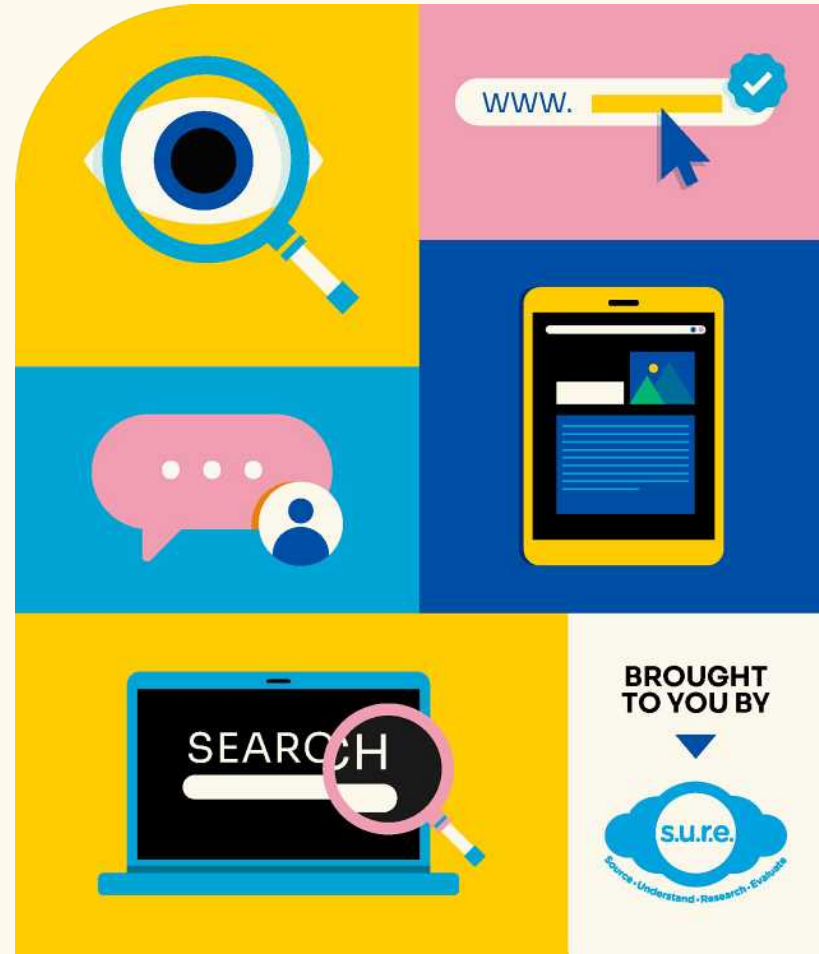


# Understand

In this topic, you will:

- Explore the differences between **fact** and **opinion**
- Identify some of the criteria that we can use to differentiate between the two





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**GOT IT!**



**Is this a fact  
or an  
opinion?**



**Determining  
fact and  
opinion in  
a source**



**Applying  
critical  
judgement**



To better understand a source and comprehend its meaning, we will first need to identify if the information it presents is a **fact** or an **opinion**.

---

Learning how to use fact and opinion will help us better understand a topic for research purposes.

# Definition



## Fact

Information that is true

### Features

- They are based on observation or research, and thus represent the objective reality.
- They are universal in nature.
- They cannot be disputed against.



## Opinion

A feeling or judgement about something, which cannot be proven true or false

### Features

- They are based on someone's assumptions or personal viewpoints, and are thus subjective statements.
- They differ depending on who you are speaking to.
- They are debatable.

Image: [BTS Official](#)

Let's take a look at the following statement:

**“BTS is one of the best-selling artists in 2021.”**

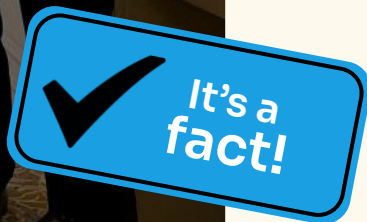
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Is this a fact or an opinion?

Let's take a look at the following statement:

**“BTS is one of the best-selling artists in 2021.”**

Is this a fact or an opinion?





**“BTS is one of the best-selling artists in 2021.”**

✓ **Facts are based on observation or research, and thus represent the objective reality.**

According to [IFPI](#), an organisation which represents the global recording industry, the South Korean pop group had the highest sales across both digital and physical music formats in 2021.

✓ **Facts are universal in nature.**

This statement does not change no matter where you are or who you are speaking to.

✓ **Facts cannot be disputed against.**

The fact that BTS' sales are one of the highest in the world can be proven by statistics, and is thus undebatable.





Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Now, let's take a look at the following statement:

**“BTS is one of the greatest boy bands in the world.”**

---

Is this a fact or an opinion?



Now, let's take a look at the following statement:

**“BTS is one of the greatest boy bands in the world.”**

Is this a fact or an opinion?



**It's an opinion!**



It's an  
opinion!

**“BTS is one of the greatest boy bands in the world.”**

**♥ Opinions are based on someone's assumptions or personal viewpoints, and are thus subjective statements.**

There is no evidence or research that can be used to prove this.

**♥ Opinions differ depending on who you are speaking to.**

While a BTS fan might feel that they are one of the greatest boy bands in the world, others might not necessarily agree or feel the same way.

**♥ Opinions are debatable.**

People can have differing opinions on the performance ability of BTS, which makes it a debatable statement.



## It's your turn!

Take a look at this [Instagram post](#).  
Is the information in this post a  
fact or an opinion?

FACT

OPINION

What criteria did  
you use to identify  
if this is a fact or an  
opinion?



**Is this a fact  
or an  
opinion?**



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Interestingly, both fact and opinion can **co-exist in the coverage of a particular issue or event.**

---

Learning to differentiate between the two can help us get a fuller picture of what has happened, so that we can form our own perspectives.



# Case study:

## DIGITAL PRIVACY

# Let's take a look at the issue of digital privacy, for example.

- The rise of tech giants, such as Facebook, Google and Amazon, has brought the issue of digital privacy to the forefront.
- People are increasingly questioning how tech companies are using the data they collect from their users.





Image: [C-SPAN](#)



Capitol Hill  
Hart Senate Office Building

OPENING STATEMENTS FROM SENATORS THUNE, FEINSTEIN & M

- News coverage on digital privacy can help us better understand the issue.
- News reports provide us with a factual understanding of the major events that have occurred in the realm of digital privacy. They keep us updated on what tech companies are doing with user data, and how governments are responding to such developments.

Image: [Unsplash](#)



- Different groups of people have differing opinions on the issue as well. Privacy advocates have called for stronger regulation from governments, while experts argue that the issue is more about giving users the agency to choose how their data is being collected and used.
- Such opinions offer us insights into the real-life perspectives of the stakeholders involved, beyond a factual recount.



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judgement**

What we have just seen is that opinions can offer greater value to readers and viewers in certain cases, and help them better understand an issue.

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**Applying critical judgement** is thus essential in allowing us to gain critical and deeper knowledge about a topic.

## How then do we apply critical judgement in our day-to-day lives?

- When we encounter an opinion, we should always consider the motivations and context in which the perspective is made.
- This will help us to ascertain how to use the insights from a particular opinion for our own purposes.



Read [this article](#) to find out why opinions are sometimes more important than facts.





## Let's give this a try! ✕

Documentary videos gather opinions from experts and different groups of people to provide critical analysis and paint a more nuanced picture of what happened.



Watch [this video](#) about fake news and misinformation in Singapore.



What are some of the opinions expressed in the video?

How do they help you better understand how people feel about this issue?



# There's more!

Move on to the next topic  
**RESEARCH** to find out how you  
can search for the information  
you need more efficiently.

