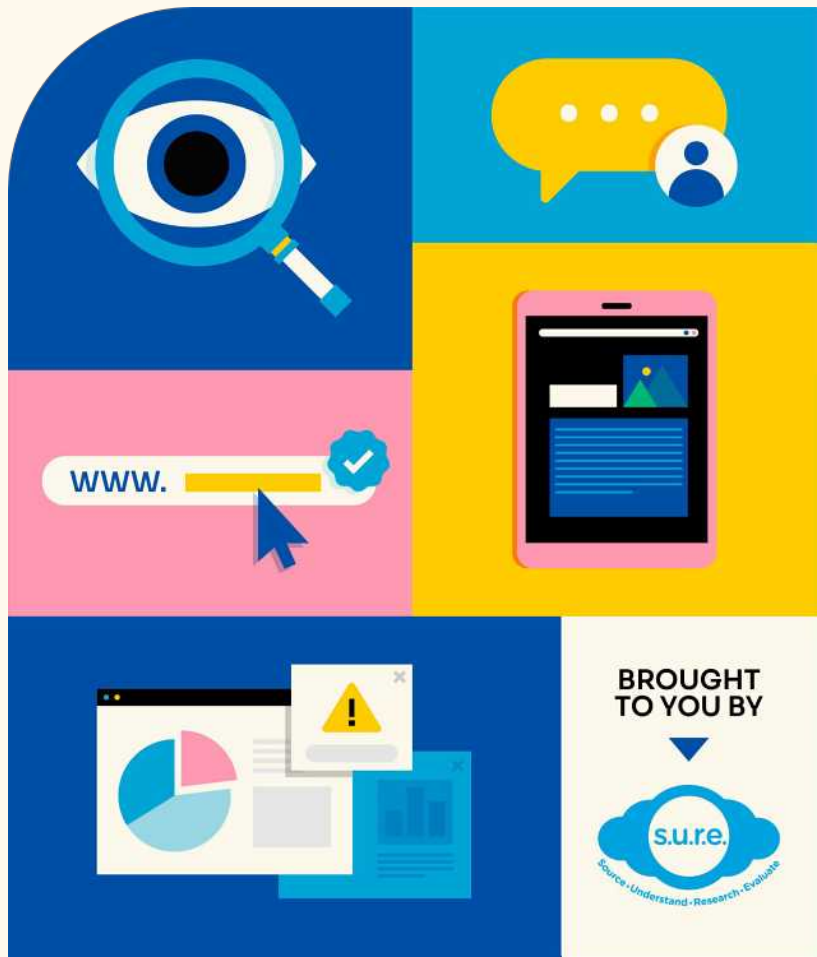


# Understand

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**



**Opinions  
from experts**



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**.

---

Distinguishing between the two will help us decide how to use a particular source for research.

# 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: Unsplash

Take a look at the following statement:

**“Pokémon is the most successful media franchise in the world.”**

---

Is this a fact or an opinion?

Take a look at the following statement:

**“Pokémon is the most successful media franchise in the world.”**

---

Is this a fact or an opinion?

✓ It's a fact!



**“Pokémon is the most successful media franchise in the world.”**

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

According to [Statista](#), an online data platform, Pokémon has an estimated all-time sales of US\$100 billion, making it the most profitable media franchise in the world.

✓ **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 Pokémon ranks higher than other media franchises is backed by statistics and is thus undebatable.





Now, let's take a look at this statement:

**“Out of all the Pokémon, Pikachu is the cutest.”**

---

Is this a fact or an opinion?

Now, let's take a look at this statement:

**“Out of all the Pokémon, Pikachu is the cutest.”**

---

Is this a fact or an opinion?



**It's an  
opinion!**



It's an  
opinion!

**“Out of all the Pokémon,  
Pikachu is the cutest.”**

**♥ 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 you might feel that Pikachu is the cutest Pokémon, your friend might think otherwise — for example, they might feel that Eevee is cuter.

**♥ Opinions are debatable.**

People can have differing opinions on which Pokémon is the cutest, which makes it a debatable statement.



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



**Determining  
fact and  
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**Opinions  
from experts**





Sources can contain  
both **fact** and **opinion**.

---

Using the features that we have identified above,  
we can then determine if a statement in a source is  
a fact or an opinion.

# Case study:

## NEWS PLATFORMS



Image: [Unsplash](#)

# Let's take a look at how news platforms can contain both fact and opinion.

- News platforms are often considered factual sources.
- As official news outlets, they report facts that have been corroborated by eyewitness accounts or background research.



Image: [Pexels](#)



- To ensure the accuracy of the information they are reporting, the news outlet often conducts fact-checks before a story is published.
- Statements are verified to prevent any inaccurate information from going out to the public.



Watch [this video](#) to learn more about how journalists do fact-checking in the newsroom.



Image: [Flickr](#)



- However, news platforms can also contain opinions. Most newspapers have an Opinion section which invites submissions from the public.
- These pieces often reflect the viewpoint of the author and are published to showcase a diverse range of perspectives.
- How do we tell then if an article contains an opinion?

## Letter to Editor: Businesses need to take the lead in being sustainable

Sustainability seems to be the new buzzword of the day, with companies jumping on the bandwagon to uplift their brand and expand their customer base. However, we cannot forget that this mindless consumption is also killing the planet.

I am **deeply saddened** by the fact that there seems to be a complete disregard from companies about being environmentally-friendly. The wastage we witness from big cosmetics and beauty brands, in terms of unnecessary packaging, is **disappointing** to say the least, and comes at a time when climate change is rearing its head across the globe.

For there to be systemic change, companies need to implement tangible solutions that can be expanded upon in scale and impact to generate positive returns for the environment. **I wish** to see more companies taking responsibility for their actions. This will, in turn, put us in a better position to address the sustainability issue.

Kylie Chen

- Opinions use words that connote a sense of judgement which cannot be objectively measured.
- For example, the letter on the left, which was sent to the editor of a newspaper, contains words like “saddened” and “disappointing” which conveys the author’s emotions towards the issue. The author also uses the phrase, “I wish” to highlight that this is her own perspective.



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



**Determining  
fact and  
opinion in  
a source**



**Opinions  
from experts**

Image: Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of [National Archives of Singapore](#)

# Opinions can also come from experts.

- News platforms often have a section that publishes opinion-led pieces from experts in different fields.
- These pieces are seen to be more credible as they are derived from specialists with the knowledge or expertise to back up their perspectives.



Image: [Unsplash](#)



- However, it is important to note that educational qualifications and professional titles are not always reliable indicators of a statement's objectivity.
- Experts can use their expertise as well to persuade others to support their opinion. We should thus exercise personal judgement when deciding if an expert's opinion can be trusted or not.



## It's your turn!

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

FACT

OPINION

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

# There's more!

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

