

Phase ① Fact or opinion?

Learning outcome

Children can identify bias when considering a controversial issue.

Success criteria

- I can identify a persuasive argument.
- I can tell the difference between fact and opinion.

Setting the context

Have a brief discussion on the ongoing debate about whether children watch too much television. Explain to the children that they are going to read or listen to an article about the issue and underline statements which are either fact or opinion. Discuss briefly the difference between fact and opinion/bias. Put the children working at levels 2–3 into a group with adult support as a reader and a recorder of the children's responses using the text extract from the photocopiable page 'Children watch too much television'. Children at levels 4–5 will work independently on 'Fact or opinion?' Give out the photocopiable pages along with two colouring pencils to all the children. Tell them which colour is to be used for fact and which colour is to be used for opinion.

Assessment opportunity

The children at levels 2–3 listen to each statement being read out by an adult and underline the statement on their copy to show whether they think it is a fact or opinion. Once it has been read out, go back through the article as a group and discuss each of the children's choices. Note down their reasons. Ask the children at levels 4–5 to read through the article to identify fact and opinion and then record them under the two headings 'Fact' or 'Opinion'. Once the children have finished, encourage them to discuss their findings with a partner. Listen to the discussions and record the children's comments. Ask: *Is the article biased? Who do you think the article is aimed at?*

Assessment evidence

At levels 2–3, children should be able to recognise the difference between clear facts and obvious opinions. At levels 4–5, children should be able to analyse the statements in greater depth. Use the photocopiable pages and the notes of the children's responses as evidence against Reading AF3.

Next steps

Support: For children, who may find it hard to decide whether a statement is fact or opinion, encourage them to look for clues within a statement, such as 'It's a fact...' or 'A recent survey...'; 'We must stop...'; 'Everyone knows...'

Extension: Ask children to imagine they are putting the writer of the article in the hot seat. Encourage them to work in pairs to think of questions they would like to ask about the article.

Key aspects of learning

Enquiry: Children will identify the particular information, ideas and opinions offered in different texts, asking questions such as: 'What does this particular writer think, and why?' 'Do others think the same?'

Evaluation: Children will examine a variety of arguments and discussions, weighing up evidence and evaluating both effectiveness and appropriateness for context. The same elements will then be explored in terms of their own speaking and writing.

