Fact or Opinion? - Tutor Hints

A fact is a statement that can be verified. It can be proven to be true or false through objective evidence.

An opinion is a statement that expresses a feeling, an attitude, a value judgment, or a belief. It is a statement that is neither true nor false. Or it may feel true for some, but false for others.

A FACT:
- can be proven true or false through objective evidence.
- relies on denotative language.
- frequently uses measurable or verifiable numbers, statistics, dates and measurements.

AN OPINION:
- cannot be presently verified.
- relies on connotative language.
- can mean different things to different people.
- uses value judgment words and comparisons such as “best,” “most,” etc...

Practice: Fact or Opinion or Both?
1. I have a husband and two children.
2. Pit bulls are the most dangerous dogs alive.
3. Ostriches do not hide their head in the sand.
4. There is nothing like an ice-cold bottle of Coke to satisfy a thirst!
5. It is time for educators to assume more responsibility for schools’ unhealthy lunch menus.
6. The government should increase spending for preventing unwanted pregnancy; more than one million teenagers become pregnant every year.
7. Rob said that the book Angels and Demons is better than The Da Vinci Code.
8. New York City is not the capital of New York State.

Other tips on fact and opinion:

- Opinions may sometimes look like facts because of professional or technical-sounding words: State funded and accredited schools are far superior to private institutions.
- A false fact is still a fact: A majority of experts agree that smoking daily can improve your health.
- Predictions are opinions because they cannot be verified right now: By the year 2025, Americans will have socialized medicine.
- Value (or judgment) words often represent opinions: Antonio Banderas is the most handsome actor in the movie Interview with the Vampire.
- The word “should” usually signals an opinion: Government regulation of our private lives should be halted immediately.

Examples of Value Words (these words cannot be verified or measured):
best       great       beautiful       worst       terrible
bad        should      must         good         strangest
disgusting wonderful pretty         most       lovely
Fact and Opinion:

1. F
2. O
3. F
4. O
5. O
6. F&O
7. F
8. F