

Handout

Facts, Opinions and Bias: Intermediate

Directions: Read the following text and then discuss the connection questions that follow.

Version One

In 2019, a fatberg weighing 40 tonnes was found in London sewers. It was the size of a double-decker bus, and was made from disposable wet wipes flushed down toilets, and oil and grease poured down drains.

Version Two

In 2019, a miraculous sight was discovered in the sewers of London: an enormous fatberg that weighed 40 tonnes and was the size of a double-decker bus. Imagine the vast quantities of wet wipes and grease contained within that giant mass! It is quite amazing to think what waste can merge into.

Version Three

In 2019, a huge, disgusting fatberg was found beneath the streets of London clogging the drains with its sickening form. This 40-tonne hideous structure, which was the same size as a double-decker bus, came into being because of people's laziness and inability to dispose of their waste properly. What kind of fools pour oil and grease down sinks, and flush disposable wet wipes down toilets?

Connection Questions

1. What are the facts of the story that are presented in all of the text versions?
2. How is the situation presented in version one?
 - How might the story impact the readers' thoughts/feelings?
3. How is the situation presented in version two?
 - How does the author view the fatberg? What is their bias?
 - How do you know?
 - Which words/phrases used are emotive, i.e. they might trigger an emotional response?
 - How might the story impact the readers' thoughts/feelings?
4. How is the situation presented in version three?
 - What biases does the author hold?
 - How do you know?
 - Which words/phrases used are emotive, i.e. they might trigger an emotional response?
 - How might the story impact the readers' thoughts/feelings?
5. What does comparing each of these versions teach you about the power of language?

Facts, Opinions and Bias: Advanced

Directions: Read the following text and then discuss the connection questions that follow.

There is no denying the popularity of action films. They are watched and loved by people all over the world, and they are a serious player in the film industry. In 2023, in the US and Canada alone, action films accounted for 43% of the box office revenue. That is more than any other genre of film. Not only that, the revenue share of the next most popular genre, adventure, trailed behind action films by 20%. It's safe to say that action is the best film genre. You only have to look at the top three grossing films ever to know that this is true. *Avatar*, *Avengers: End Game*, and *Avatar: The Way of Water* are all action films.¹

People watch films to be entertained, to be taken to other worlds and action films do exactly that. They are not like the boring arthouse films that show shots of trees blowing in the wind for ten minutes (which, let's be honest, is like watching paint dry). Or like the barbaric horror films in which people are massacred for fun – what kind of sick people find human suffering entertaining?! No, action films are for creative and intelligent minds, for people who like epic scenes from other worlds.

Connection Questions

1. Can you identify any facts within the text?
2. What opinions are contained in the text?
 - What claims is the author making?
3. What is the view of the person writing the piece?
 - What biases do they hold? How do you know?
 - What do they want you to think/feel?
4. How, if at all, does the content of the text trigger your emotions?
 - Which words/phrases do this?

¹ ['Top Lifetime Grosses'](#), Box Office Mojo by IMDbPro (accessed 3 November 2023).