

## Research – Text Types

### Recognising Facts – Consider the Ant 1

*Cut out the cards, mix them up, then match together the sentence halves. Put each sentence into one of four categories: a) True Facts, b) False Facts, c) Suppositions, d) Opinions. Say how you know this in each case. Finally, after learning so much about ants, discuss whether your view of them has changed in any way.*

1. It appears that ants usually communicate	using pheromones, sounds, and touch.
2. In my view ants are one of the most	annoying kinds of insect in the world!
3. Ants cannot survive	for very long in water.
4. It is probably fair to say that an ant colony	can contain millions of ants.
5. Experts agree that there are	more than 12,000 different species of ant around the world.
6. As far as I'm concerned, ants have	no redeeming features whatsoever.
7. <i>Antz</i> is the title of a 1998 computer-animated film	by Pixar, starring Woody Allen as an anxious ant called Z.
8. The fact that some ants are cannibals	does not really make me warm to them.
9. I believe that ants are considered pests	by many people, especially gardeners.
10. Some ants can live for up to 30 years,	making them one of the longest-living insects.
11. Ants have an aversion to	sweet sugary food.
12. I heard on the radio that there are about	one million ants for every human in the world.
13. Personally I need to find a good ant powder	that will get rid of them permanently.
14. Ants are incredibly strong for their size	and are able to lift up to fifty times their body weight.
15. There are more species of ant	in Europe than in Asia.
16. If I'm not mistaken, there are lots of jokes about ants, including:	'What is the biggest ant in the world? A <u>giant</u> . Or is it, an <u>elephant</u> ?'
17. There are ants native to every continent on earth,	apart from, ironically, <u>Antarctica</u> .
18. If you ask me, ants are not really	beneficial to humankind in any way.
19. Ants do not have ears but are able to 'hear'	by feeling vibrations through their feet.
20. Most ants have	eight lungs.

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Answers:

a) True Facts: 5, 10, 14, 17, 19

Facts are pieces of information which are objectively true and backed up by respected sources. They have been proved and experts generally agree on them.

b) False Facts: 3, 7, 11, 15, 20

False facts are sentences which are presented as facts, written in the style of facts, but which contain untrue information. Their purpose is to mislead.

These sentences are false because:

- 3        Ants can survive for a long time in water, including underwater.
- 7        The film *Antz* was produced by DreamWorks Animation, not Pixar.
- 11       Ants have a varied diet, eating lots of different kinds of food, including seeds, plants (corn, grass, leaves, etc.), and meat (other insects, including ants). They do like to eat sweet sugary food such as nectar
- 15       There are hundreds more species of ant in Asia than in Europe.
- 20       Ants do not have lungs. They breathe through tiny holes in their sides called spiracles.

c) Suppositions: 1, 4, 9, 12, 16

A supposition is a sentence that you try to present as fact, but because you lack faith in the verity of the information, you undermine it by using a 'covering' phrase such as 'If I'm not mistaken...' This kind of phrase 'covers your back' so you don't look bad if you are subsequently proved wrong. A more confident speaker might present these sentences as facts, without the covering phrases, despite not being 100% sure they are true.

The covering phrases in these sentences are:

- 1        It appears that...
- 4        It is probably fair to say that...
- 9        I believe that...
- 12       I heard on the radio that...
- 16       If I'm not mistaken...

d) Opinions: 2, 6, 8, 13, 18

An opinion is not a fact but an expression of how you feel about something. Opinions will typically focus on the speaker themselves, featuring words like 'I', 'me', 'my' and discuss how the topic affects them personally. They are likely to contain sweeping statements, often with superlative forms ('the best', 'the most...'), as well as (often strong) adjectives to describe what they are talking about. They may also express emotion, for example by the use of emphasis or an exclamation mark, which might be out of place in a fact. Opinions can be given in the form of advice, e.g. 'I think you should...' / 'In my opinion, you ought to...'

The opinion words and phrases in these sentences are:

- 2        In my view... / one of the most... in the world / annoying / exclamation mark (!) indicates emotion
- 6        As far as I'm concerned... / no... whatsoever
- 8        me
- 13       Personally... / I / permanently
- 18       If you ask me... / in any way

Sources / Further Reading:

<https://www.raid.ca/en-ca/expert-help/how-do-i-get-rid-of-ants>  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ant>  
<https://www.smarnora.com/blogs/nora-blogs/do-ants-sleep>  
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