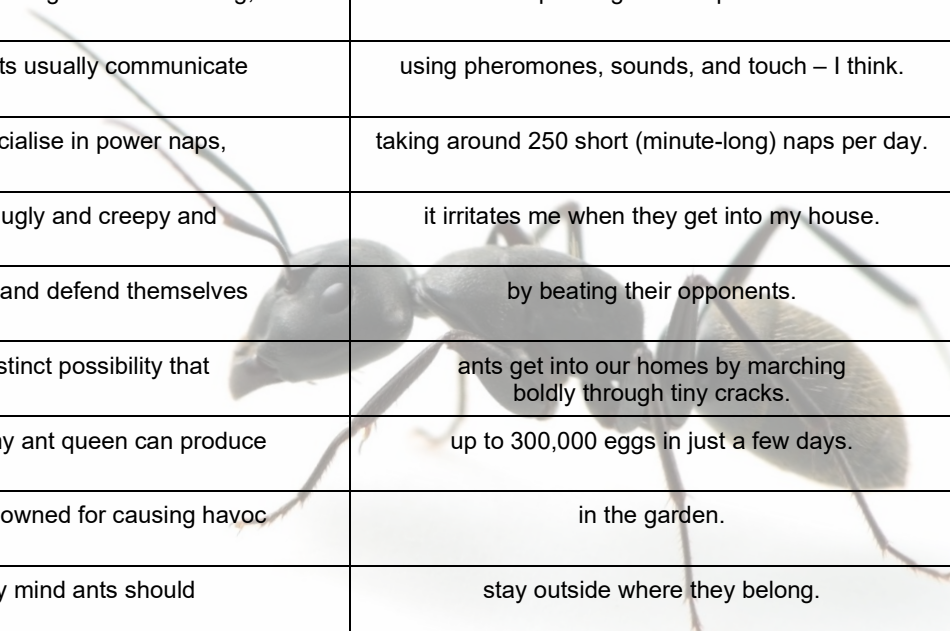


Research – Text Types

Recognising Facts – Consider the Ant 2

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. Ants are highly competitive and	find it difficult to cooperate.
2. Ants have two stomachs –	one to hold food for themselves and another to keep food for other ants.
3. It is always worth keeping	some ant powder in the cupboard.
4. A worker ant weighs around 1-5 mg,	depending on the species.
5. It seems ants usually communicate	using pheromones, sounds, and touch – I think.
6. Ants specialise in power naps,	taking around 250 short (minute-long) naps per day.
7. Ants are ugly and creepy and	it irritates me when they get into my house.
8. Ants attack and defend themselves	by beating their opponents.
9. It is a distinct possibility that	ants get into our homes by marching boldly through tiny cracks.
10. A single army ant queen can produce	up to 300,000 eggs in just a few days.
11. Ants are renowned for causing havoc	in the garden.
12. To my mind ants should	stay outside where they belong.
13. I'm not sure, but I'm reliably informed that the word 'ant' comes from West Germanic,	via Old English and Dutch, with the meaning 'the biter'.
14. Ants are unable to drink water	because they are allergic to moisture.
15. It looks like there are lots of English words that contain 'ant',	thanks to the prefix 'anti-' and the suffix '-ant'.
16. Ants are smug little creatures,	aren't they?
17. My feeling is that ants only like to enter dirty	homes where there is food on the floor.
18. Ants have eight legs,	just like spiders.
19. It is said that when you kill an ant it releases pheromones which	encourages other ants to investigate, meaning more ants appear.
20. Most ants cannot see very well,	and some are completely blind.

Research – Text Types

Recognising Facts – Consider the Ant 2

Answers:

a) True Facts: 2, 4, 6, 10, 20

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: 1, 8, 11, 14, 18

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:

- 1 Ants famously cooperate with each other very well, even embarking upon infrastructure projects like building a bridge over a gap in their path.
- 8 Ants bite their opponents.
- 11 Ants can be beneficial in the garden because they aerate and better the quality of the soil, improve drainage, and scatter seeds. They also prey on other creatures.
- 14 Ants drink water, for example a drop of dew on a leaf.
- 18 Ants have six legs, like other insects. Each leg has a claw at the end.

c) Suppositions: 5, 9, 13, 15, 19

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 'It looks like...' 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:

- 5 It seems... / I think
- 9 It is a distinct possibility that...
- 13 I'm not sure, but I'm reliably informed that...
- 15 It looks like...
- 19 It is said that...

d) Opinions: 3, 7, 12, 16, 17

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:

- 3 It is always worth (opinion / advice)
- 7 Ants are ugly and creepy / it irritates me when they get into my house
- 12 To my mind / should
- 16 Ants are smug... / aren't they? (question tag = asking for agreement)
- 17 My feeling is that... / ants only like...

Sources / Further Reading:

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