



How to Tell the Difference

Facts, Opinion and Reasoned Judgment

EHS Reading Aspire

EARLY HIGH SCHOOL READING / ACT ASPIRE / 11 OF 15

SOCIAL SCIENCE: “The Antikythera Discovery” is an original work of nonfiction.

It was a stormy day as Captain Dimitrios Kondos sailed home to Greece from a sponge-diving expedition in North Africa in October 1900. So, he decided to wait out the weather near the tiny island of Antikythera, northwest of Crete. Seizing the opportunity to harvest more sponges, the captain sent his crew down to the sea floor to search. That is when diver Elias Stadiatos made an astonishing discovery: the remnants of a Roman ship that had sunk at least 2,000 years earlier, still containing statues, coins, jewelry, and other items stolen from the Greeks.

For the next year, aided by the Greek Navy, divers wearing unwieldy metal suits brought up a variety of furniture, weapons, and other artifacts from the wreck. The trove included an oddly shaped lump about the size of a shoebox that sat in a museum in Athens for months before anyone examined it. That lump turned out to be the most significant treasure of all. Now called the Antikythera Mechanism, it is a bronze clocklike device with an intricate system of gears and dials as well as astronomical inscriptions on its case. What was it used for? No one at the time could say. Over the next century, as technology became more advanced, researchers concluded that the mechanism was a complicated early “computer” designed to track the cycles of the solar

Based on the passage, drag the details into the correct box depending on whether they represent a statement of fact, a statement of opinion, or a reasoned judgment.

The oddly shaped lump was the most exciting object discovered aboard the ship.

The water was too deep for divers with Cousteau to stay at the site of the ship for more than a few minutes.

The Antikythera Mechanism was a complicated device that could be compared to an early “computer.”

Fact

Opinion

Reasoned judgment

Facts

Facts are statements that can be proven true.

- Facts may be true **or** false.
- But facts can be **proven**.
- Example:

TJHSST offers about 15 senior research labs for rising 12th graders to choose from.

Opinions

Opinions are statements the author's feelings or point of view.

- Opinions can be argued.
- Opinions may be supported with facts.
- Example:

TJHSST is the best high school in the United States.

Reasoned Judgments

They are statements of the author's point of view that are supported by reason and evidence.

Example:

TJHSST is one of the best high schools in the USA because it offers its students different STEM courses and high tech labs that are unavailable to some other private and public high schools in the country. Students can get a well-rounded education when....

Let's take a look at it closely.



Protecting the Clouded Leopard

Scientists have speculated that the wild population of the clouded leopard is getting smaller. The cat is often hunted for its teeth, bones, and fur. But the main cause for the shrinking population is the continued loss of the cats' habitat in Asia. There are fewer and fewer safe places for the clouded leopard to live. With the destruction of its habitat, the destruction of the species cannot be far behind.

The Clouded Leopard Project works to conserve and protect the population of this endangered cat. The project teaches about clouded leopards, analyzing their habits in captivity by watching their behaviors and interactions. The project realizes it is vital to the cats' survival to breed the animals in zoos. If more clouded leopards aren't born soon, the population will be propelled quickly into extinction. Zoos aren't really good places for animals to be. But if that's the only way to save the leopard, it seems necessary.

The project has had some great successes in the last few years. Two cubs were born in the United States, and two were born in its special program in Thailand. Efforts are made not only to help breed the animals, but also to preserve their habitats.

Members of the Clouded Leopard Project hope the urge to protect such species will become embedded in people. They sponsor several education programs at zoos. These programs are very entertaining and very fun. Members also sponsor programs to directly help the cats. Through their work, they ultimately will increase the populations of this species.

Examples of Facts

The Clouded Leopard Project works to conserve and protect the population of this endangered cat. The project teaches about clouded leopards, analyzing their habits in captivity by watching their behaviors and interactions. The project realizes it is vital to the cats' survival to breed the animals in zoos. If more clouded leopards aren't born soon, the population will be propelled quickly into extinction. Zoos aren't really good places for animals to be. But if that's the only way to save the leopard, it seems necessary.

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Rationale:

The highlighted statements are facts. That means they can be proved.

- *The project teaches about clouded leopards, analyzing their habits in captivity by watching their behaviors and interactions:* This statement can be proved by researching what the project does.
- *Two cubs were born in the United States, and two were born in its special program in Thailand:* This is also a provable statement. The zoos would have birth records for its animals.

Examples of Opinions

survival to breed the animals in zoos. If more clouded leopards aren't born, the population will be propelled quickly into extinction. **Zoos aren't really good places for animals to be.** But if that's the only way to save the leopard, it seems necessary.

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Members of the Clouded Leopard Project hope the urge to protect such species will become embedded in people. They sponsor several education programs at zoos. **These programs are very entertaining and very fun.** Members also sponsor programs to directly help the cats. Through their work, they ultimately will increase the populations of this species.

Rationale

The highlighted statements are opinions. They reflect the author's feelings or views, and cannot be proved.

- *Zoos aren't really good places for animals to be:* The author may really believe this, but it is not something that can be proven beyond a doubt. This statement could be turned into a reasoned judgment if the author argued the point and provided reasons and evidence to support it.
- *These programs are very entertaining and very fun:* This also expresses the author's feelings. He or she may really enjoy the programs, but that does not make this statement a fact. And without dedicated supporting evidence, this is not a reasoned judgment.

Reasoned Judgments

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Reasoned Judgments

Members of the Clouded Leopard Project hope the urge to protect such species will become embedded in people. They sponsor several education programs at zoos. These programs are very entertaining and very fun. Members also sponsor programs to directly help the cats. Through their work, they ultimately will increase the populations of this species.

Rationale

The highlighted statements are reasoned judgments. They reflect the author's perspective and are supported by evidence.

- *With the destruction of its habitat, the destruction of the species cannot be far behind:* The author has drawn the conclusion that without a home, the threat to the clouded leopard increases. This is supported by the evidence of the destruction of the cats' habitat and the shrinking numbers of the cats' population.
- *Through their work, they ultimately will increase the populations of this species:* The author believes the Clouded Leopard Project will be successful. This is supported by evidence of the cats that were born at the zoos and the efforts to protect the cats' habitat, thus giving them a safer place to live and breed.

It's your turn!

