

Read this friendly letter. As you read, ask yourself, "Which statements can be proved? Which statements cannot be proved?" Then answer the questions.

1489 Park Street  
Any Town, VA 20000  
October 10, 2009

Dear Sela,

Let me tell you about my teacher this year. Her name is Ms. Lightfoot. She's the most extraordinary teacher in the world. Ms. Lightfoot is so kind, funny, and patient that it's impossible not to like her. I also think she must be the smartest person to have ever taught in my school. She knows how to make every subject interesting, even geography! But she doesn't only teach us academic things. She also teaches us the importance of honesty, loyalty, kindness, and respect. She constantly reminds us to be true to ourselves and fair to others. She is the greatest human being.

All the kids in my class think Ms. Lightfoot is cool. She dresses in the latest fashions, and she never has a bad hair day. She's always up-to-date on pop culture. Every morning before the bell rings, she asks us trivia questions about recent TV shows, new movies, and hit songs. I'm getting pretty good at the game.

I hope you like your new teacher as much as I like Ms. Lightfoot. Write back and let me know.

Your friend,  
Felicity

1. Which statement tells a *fact* about Ms. Lightfoot?
  - (A) She is the greatest human being.
  - (B) She is Felicity's teacher this year.
  - (C) She is the most extraordinary teacher in the world.
  - (D) It's impossible not to like her.
2. Which clue word in the letter signals an *opinion* about Ms. Lightfoot's intelligence?
  - (A) think
  - (B) seem
  - (C) best
  - (D) believe



### Work with a Partner

- Talk about your answers to the questions.
- Tell why you chose your answers.
- Then talk about what you have learned so far about distinguishing between fact and opinion.



## PART THREE: Check Your Understanding



### REVIEW

Facts can be proved. Opinions cannot be proved:

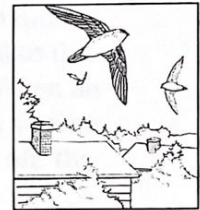
- To find out if a statement is a fact, ask yourself, “Can this statement be checked or proved?”
- To find out if a statement is an opinion, ask yourself, “Does this statement tell what someone thinks or feels?”
- Look for clue words that signal an opinion, such as *think, feel, believe, seem, always, never, all, none, most, least, greatest, best, and worst.*

**Read this article about an unusual bird. As you read, think about which statements are facts and which are opinions. Then answer the questions.**

### A Truly Swift Bird

The chimney swift has more energy than any other bird. Between the time it leaves its roost in the morning to the time it returns at night, this bird rarely lands. Instead, it tirelessly spends the day in flight. This sleek, gray-brown bird snatches insects in the air for food. It breaks twigs from trees for nests. It even takes a bath while flying. It glides down to water, smacks the surface with its chest, and bounces up, shaking the water off as it flies away.

Long ago, most chimney swifts nested in tall, hollow trees. After Europeans settled in North America, they cleared many of the trees to make room for farms and houses. But chimney swifts were able to adapt because they are the smartest species. They began nesting inside chimneys, which is how they earned their name. They attach their cup-shaped nests to a chimney's inner wall with their glue-like saliva.



Chimney swifts are the greatest acrobats. Unlike other birds, a chimney swift neither perches nor walks on the ground. They cling to vertical surfaces—like chimney walls—with the aid of hooked toes and stiff tail feathers.

Chimney swifts spend winter in South America. Every spring, they migrate 6,000 miles to North America. They often roost together in towns and cities. At dusk, you might spot a flock circling around a chimney's opening. The flock will abruptly spiral down into the chimney and disappear. The sight of a dark funnel of birds returning to their roost is amazing.

3. Which statement about the chimney swift can be proved?

- Ⓐ It has more energy than any other bird.
- Ⓑ It is the smartest species.
- Ⓒ It is the greatest acrobat.
- Ⓓ It migrates 6,000 miles in spring.

4. Which statement tells what the writer thinks or feels?

- Ⓐ The chimney swift spends its day in flight.
- Ⓑ Chimney swifts build nests in chimneys.
- Ⓒ The return of chimney swifts to their roost is an amazing sight.
- Ⓓ Chimney swifts do not walk.



Read this courtroom conversation. Then answer the questions.

**DOG:** Your Honor, I'm here to complain about Porcupine's behavior. I believe that he's a danger to society.

**PORCUPINE:** A danger? Why, I've never done anything wrong in my life!

**DOG:** Is that a fact? Then how do you explain these quills I'm wearing?

**JUDGE:** Yes, Porcupine, how did those quills get stuck in Dog's skin?

**PORCUPINE:** Your Honor, it seems to me that Dog was at fault for his injury. He's wearing my quills because he got too close to me.

**DOG:** You tell the biggest fibs! You know that you shot your quills at me.

**PORCUPINE:** You're always making ridiculous statements. Everyone knows that porcupines can't shoot their quills.

**JUDGE:** He's right, Dog. I think you owe Porcupine an apology.



**DOG:** But, Judge, Porcupine still caused me harm. When he spotted me in the woods last night, his quills stood straight up, like pins in a pincushion. Then he turned his back to me and shook his tail. The next thing I knew, his sharp quills were piercing my skin. Believe me, the pain is worse than anything anyone has ever felt.

**PORCUPINE:** Oh, stop whining, Dog. You're always complaining.

**JUDGE:** Porcupine, did you use your quills as weapons?

**PORCUPINE:** Not exactly, Your Honor. Dog didn't tell you why I bumped into him. I was afraid because he had threatened me. And when I'm frightened, my quills stand straight up and come loose easily.

**JUDGE:** So, Dog, what do you have to say for yourself?

*And for once, Dog had nothing to say.*

9. Which statement about Porcupine can be proved?
- (A) He's a danger to society.
  - (B) His quills stand up straight when he's frightened.
  - (C) He's never done anything wrong in his life.
  - (D) He tells the biggest fibs.
10. Which statement cannot be proved?
- (A) Porcupine's quills come loose easily when he is frightened.
  - (B) Dog didn't tell all the facts at first.
  - (C) Porcupine and Dog met in the woods.
  - (D) Dog's pain is worse than anything anyone has ever felt.
11. Which of these is an *opinion* from the passage?
- (A) Porcupine bumped into Dog because he was afraid.
  - (B) Dog admitted that he might have growled at Porcupine.
  - (C) Everyone knows that porcupines can't shoot their quills.
  - (D) Dog didn't touch Porcupine.
12. Which statement tells a *fact* about Dog?
- (A) He was hurt by Porcupine's quills.
  - (B) He has nothing to say.
  - (C) He is always complaining.
  - (D) He is always making ridiculous statements.



Read this book report. Then answer questions about the book report.  
Choose the best answer for Numbers 15 and 16.

I just read the most exciting book ever written. It has everything I like in a book—humor, adventure, romance, and magic. The book is a huge collection of ancient folktales from Arabia, India, and Persia. It's called *The Thousand and One Nights*.

The book begins with the story of a king who was betrayed by his queen. The king was so bitter that he vowed to marry a new maiden each night. The next morning, he would have her beheaded. One bride, named Scheherazade, however, was more clever than all the others. She delayed having her head chopped off by telling her new husband a story. The king was so delighted by his bride's tale that he allowed her to live another day to finish it. Scheherazade wove one tale after another for a thousand and one nights. In this way, she saved her life and won the king's love.

Three of the most popular tales from *The Thousand and One Nights* are "Aladdin," "Sinbad the Sailor," and "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves." I thought "Aladdin" was the best story. It is about a poor but idle boy named Aladdin. One day, he meets a cunning magician, who claims to be his uncle. The magician tricks Aladdin into entering an underground cave to recover an old lamp. When Aladdin returns to the mouth of the cave with the lamp, the magician demands that he hand it over immediately. But Aladdin refuses to give up the lamp until he is out of the cave safely. The magician flies into a rage and traps Aladdin in the dark cave. By accident, Aladdin discovers that when the lamp is rubbed, an enormous genie appears. The genie promises to obey Aladdin in all ways. With the genie's help, Aladdin eventually gains wealth and power. He also wins the hand of a sultan's beautiful daughter.

*The Thousand and One Nights* has about 200 stories and took me forever to read. I was sad, though, when the stories finally ended. No other book could provide more reading enjoyment.

15. Which of these is a *fact* about *The Thousand and One Nights*?
- Ⓐ It is the most exciting book ever written.
  - Ⓑ No other book could provide more reading enjoyment.
  - Ⓒ It took forever to read.
  - Ⓓ It is a collection of ancient folktales.

16. Which of these expresses an *opinion*?
- Ⓐ "Aladdin" is the best story in *The Thousand and One Nights*.
  - Ⓑ Scheherazade wove tales to save her life.
  - Ⓒ "Sinbad the Sailor" is one tale from *The Thousand and One Nights*.
  - Ⓓ *The Thousand and One Nights* has humor, adventure, and romance.



PART ONE: Read a Journal Entry

Read this journal entry from a member of a cruise ship. Then answer questions about the journal entry. Choose the best answer for Numbers 1 through 6.

Monday, December 5

The *Sea Rover* has just left the island of Bermuda. It is traveling south to Puerto Rico. On Friday, the ship will turn west and head back to Miami. This route takes us through the most dreaded area in the Atlantic Ocean—the Bermuda Triangle!

The Bermuda Triangle got its name after an event that occurred in 1945. On December 5, five United States Navy planes vanished while flying over the region. No one knows how or why this happened. After one of the largest searches in history, no wreckage was ever found—not until May 1991, that is. Finally, the five missing planes were found just 10 miles off the Florida coast.

Since 1945, more than one hundred ships and planes are believed to have vanished in the Bermuda Triangle. For this reason, the region is also known as the Devil's Triangle, Atlantic's Graveyard, and the Twilight Zone.

Books and TV shows have provided many reasons for the mysterious disappearances. Some people blame undersea earthquakes. They say that the earthquakes churned up gargantuan waves that swallowed up the vessels. Others believe that the missing boats and planes entered time warps and were sent into the past or the future. A few people claim that aliens were to blame for the missing vessels.

Accidents can happen at sea. Most disappearances were probably caused by bad weather, broken equipment, or human error. There are just as many losses in other parts of the ocean as in the Bermuda Triangle.

The ocean is vast and deep. It's not surprising some vessels are never found.



**Finding Word Meaning in Context**

1. In the first paragraph, the name *Sea Rover* probably means
- Ⓐ “a sea dog or sailor.”
  - Ⓑ “a ship that roams the sea.”
  - Ⓒ “a boat that is propelled by oars.”
  - Ⓓ “a ship that is lost at sea.”

**Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences**

4. From the journal entry, you can figure out that the cruise-ship member
- Ⓐ doesn't believe that the disappearances were ordinary accidents.
  - Ⓑ likes to solve mysteries.
  - Ⓒ is trying to understand the mystery of the Bermuda Triangle.
  - Ⓓ is thrilled to be traveling through the Bermuda Triangle.

**Finding Word Meaning in Context**

2. In paragraph 4, the best meaning of *gargantuan* is
- Ⓐ “tiny.”
  - Ⓑ “huge.”
  - Ⓒ “smooth.”
  - Ⓓ “graceful.”

**Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion**

5. Which of these is an *opinion* from the journal entry?
- Ⓐ Books provide many reasons for the disappearances.
  - Ⓑ Accidents can happen at sea.
  - Ⓒ In 1945, five navy planes were lost in the Bermuda Triangle.
  - Ⓓ The Bermuda Triangle is the most dreaded area in the Atlantic Ocean.

**Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences**

3. There is enough information in the journal entry to show that
- Ⓐ most disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle can be explained.
  - Ⓑ there is no such thing as the Bermuda Triangle.
  - Ⓒ most pilots and ship captains avoid the Bermuda Triangle.
  - Ⓓ crossing the ocean by ship or boat is perfectly safe.

**Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion**

6. Which of these is a *fact*?
- Ⓐ More should be done to understand the Bermuda Triangle.
  - Ⓑ Undersea earthquakes are amazing events.
  - Ⓒ The Bermuda Triangle is also called Atlantic's Graveyard.
  - Ⓓ Only foolish people believe in time warps.





**Read this short biography of a famous president. Then answer questions about the biography. Choose the best answer for Numbers 7 through 12.**

Did you know that the popular teddy bear was named for President Theodore (“Teddy”) Roosevelt? He was the 26th president of the United States. It is said that, while hunting in Mississippi, a small bear cub was brought to President Roosevelt to shoot. But he refused. He believed that the animal did not have a chance to defend itself. The story of his tender deed quickly spread, and soon the country was flooded with stuffed bear cubs, or teddy bears.

Roosevelt was born in 1858 to a wealthy family from New York City. As a child, he was often sick. As he grew, he made himself stronger by exercising. In time, Roosevelt became quite a sportsman. He was a good boxer, horseman, rower, tennis player, and hunter.

Roosevelt had many careers. He was a writer, a rancher, and a lawyer. In politics, he served as a police commissioner, a governor, a vice president, and, of course, president. He was also a national war hero. In 1898, Roosevelt served as a colonel in the Spanish-American War. The United States fought in this war to help Cuba win its freedom from Spain. Roosevelt formed a regiment of horsemen known as the Rough Riders. His bravery during battle led to his rise in politics. In 1898, he was elected governor of New York. In March 1901, he became vice president to President William McKinley. When McKinley was killed six months later, Roosevelt became president. He was the youngest man ever to become president. He was only 42.

President Roosevelt never rested. He helped to pass important laws. He forced companies to give workers higher wages and improve working conditions. He took steps to protect our country’s wilderness. He set aside tracts of land as national parks and forests. He supported the building of the Panama Canal to make it easier for ships to travel between the Atlantic and the Pacific. In 1906, he won the Nobel Peace Prize for helping to end a war between Russia and Japan. He was the first American president to win a Nobel Prize. He was also the first president to ride in a car, fly in an airplane, and travel in a submarine.

Despite his busy schedule, Roosevelt always made time for his six children. He told them stories and played games. Together, they wrestled, played hide-and-seek, and had wild pillow fights.

Theodore Roosevelt died in 1919 at age 60. But every American still remembers the man with the big heart. A likeness of his face is carved at Mount Rushmore, in South Dakota.





**Finding Word Meaning in Context**

7. In paragraph 3, *regiment* means
- (A) “a daily diet.”
  - (B) “a special routine.”
  - (C) “a military unit.”
  - (D) “to put in order.”

**Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences**

10. From the biography, you can tell that Roosevelt
- (A) loved the West.
  - (B) had a great sense of humor.
  - (C) owned many teddy bears.
  - (D) had a lot of energy.

**Finding Word Meaning in Context**

8. In paragraph 4, you can tell that the word *tracts* means
- (A) “paths or trails.”
  - (B) “where trains run.”
  - (C) “small spaces.”
  - (D) “large areas.”

**Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion**

11. Which of these is an *opinion* from the biography?
- (A) Roosevelt was the first president to win a Nobel Prize.
  - (B) Roosevelt had many careers.
  - (C) Roosevelt never rested.
  - (D) Roosevelt was the youngest person to become president.

**Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences**

9. There is enough information in the biography to show that Roosevelt
- (A) was an adventurous man.
  - (B) was a stern colonel.
  - (C) was known to behave foolishly.
  - (D) was a devoted husband.

**Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion**

12. Which of these is a *fact*?
- (A) Everyone has heard of teddy bears.
  - (B) The teddy bear was named for “Teddy” Roosevelt.
  - (C) Roosevelt was the most wonderful and caring of fathers.
  - (D) All Americans admired Roosevelt.