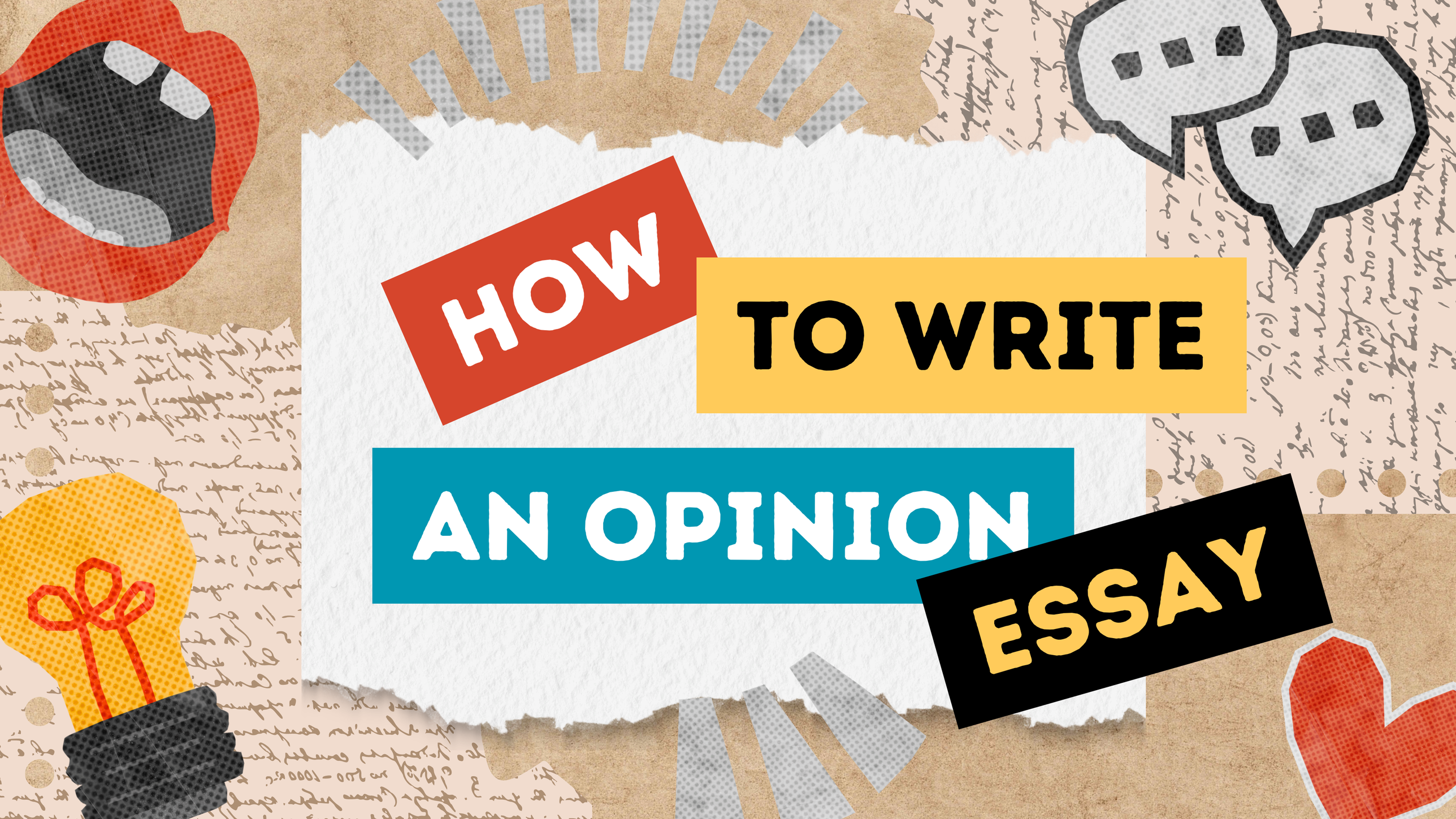

HOW
TO WRITE
AN OPINION
ESSAY

1. IDENTIFY THE TOPIC

En la mayoría de los casos, en exámenes oficiales, el tipo de ensayo está “escondido” en el enunciado de la pregunta. Es decir, normalmente no te van a especificar qué tipo de redacción tienes que hacer: parte de la pregunta es identificar el tipo de texto y, por lo tanto, seguir bien la estructura de ese tipo de texto.

Así pues, la primera tarea es identificar el tipo de texto que tienes delante y cuál es el tema del ensayo.

1. IDENTIFY THE TOPIC

EXAMPLES

1. WRITE A COMPOSITION ANSWERING THIS QUESTION: Is the future promising for women in our Western society?

Topic: gender equality

Task: give your opinion

1. IDENTIFY THE TOPIC

EXAMPLES

1. WRITE A COMPOSITION ANSWERING THIS QUESTION: Is the future promising for women in our western society?

2. Do you think there could be a connection between AI and unemployment in the future?

1. IDENTIFY THE TOPIC

EXAMPLES

3. Social Media: A Blessing or a Curse? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using social media platforms.

4. Keeping the air quality in city centres at healthy levels for their residents is a concern for many places. How can we solve the problem of pollution in city centres?

1. IDENTIFY THE TOPIC

EXAMPLES

5. More and more people are practising extreme sports. Some people think they are exciting, while others believe they are too dangerous. Do you think people should practise risky sports? Give your opinion and reasons.

6. Around the world, many wildlife species are in danger of extinction. How can we protect endangered animals?

2. REMEMBER THE STRUCTURE



Una vez has identificado el tema del writing y el tipo de texto, toca recordar la estructura. En este caso, Opinion essay:

- Paragraph 1: Introduction: menciona el tema del que vas a hablar y da tu opinión de manera clara.
- Paragraph 2: Justifica tu opinión claramente, dando ejemplos.
- Paragraph 3: Da otra razón por la cual opinas de ese modo.
- Paragraph 4: Conclusion: da tu opinión de nuevo, con otras palabras.

3. CREATE A DRAFT

Crea un breve esquema con lo que quieres decir en cada párrafo.

More and more people are practising **extreme sports**. Some people think they are exciting, while others believe they are too dangerous. Do you think people should practise risky sports? Give your opinion and reasons

Topic: Extreme sports
Task: Opinion essay

Introduction. No. Nowadays, in my view
Paragraph 2: Risk of injuries or death. To begin with...,
Paragraph 3: Far away from hospitals. Additionally...
Conclusion: too risky. conditional, to sum up / in conclusion

example of opinion

ESSAY

Nowadays, more and more people are practising extreme sports such as skydiving or bungee jumping, which are becoming very popular among young people. While some people think these activities are exciting, I believe they are too dangerous and should not be encouraged.

To begin with, extreme sports can cause serious injuries or even death. For example, accidents can happen even when people use safety equipment. Therefore, participants might get seriously hurt despite all precautions.

Additionally, these activities are often practised in remote areas, which are far away from hospitals. This means that if something goes wrong, injured people will not receive medical help in time, which can make the situation much worse.

In conclusion, I **do not think** people should practise risky sports because the dangers are too great and the risks are not worth it. If more people took safety more seriously, fewer accidents would happen.



REMEMBER

La estructura del párrafo imita la estructura del ensayo:

1. Opinión: thesis statement
2. Justificación de la opinión: párrafos 2 y 3.
3. Conclusión.

Párrafo: The sis statement.
Justificación (ejemplos).
Conclusión.

REMEMBER

Thesis statement

To begin with, extreme sports can cause serious injuries or even death. For example, accidents can happen even when people use safety equipment. Therefore, participants might get seriously hurt despite all precautions.

Justificación

Conclusión







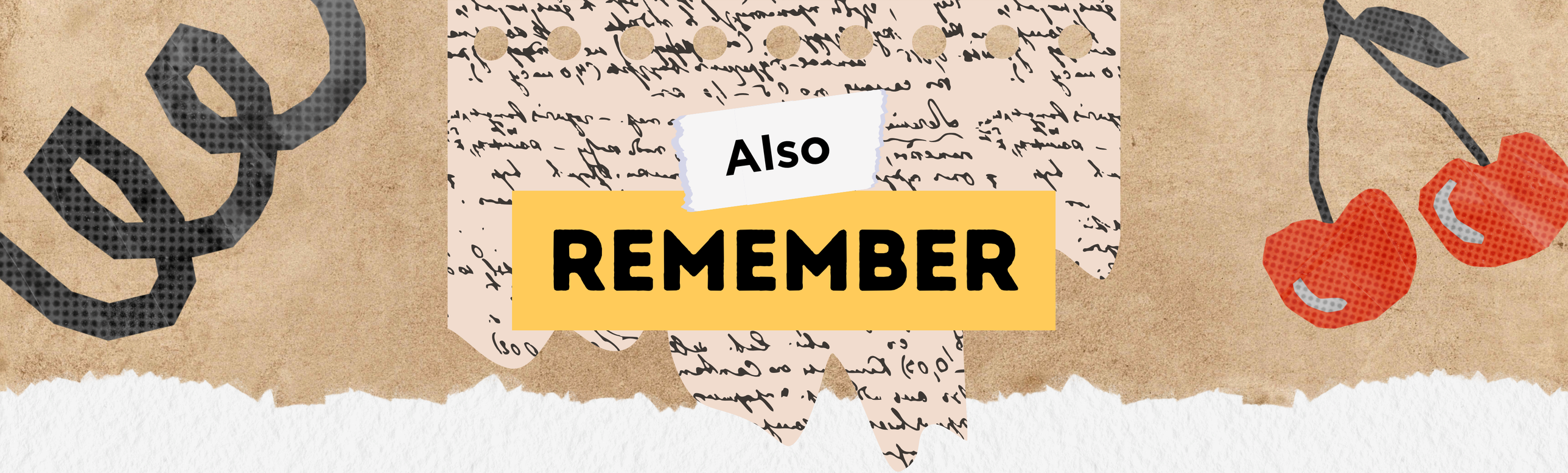
Can OPINIONS be based on FACTS?

Yes, but they are still **subjective** because they involve personal interpretation, judgment, or belief.

Opinions **cannot** be verified or proven to be true like a fact can; however, a person's opinion can be **supported** or **refuted**.

FACT - Exercise improves cardiovascular health. (Proven by research)

OPINION BASED ON FACT - Everyone should exercise daily to stay healthy. (A recommendation, not an absolute truth)



Facts can be **influenced** by opinion and bias, especially in the media and in (some) research projects (especially qualitative research).

A writer or speaker **selects** the facts they present in their work.

In doing so, they are exercising a **judgement** about which facts they think are important. The selected facts represent their **beliefs** and **values**.

activity

Discuss whether the following are statements of fact or expressions of opinion.

a) The Eiffel Tower is located in Paris, France.

b) Chocolate is the best flavour of ice cream.

c) Dogs are mammals that typically have four legs and a tail.

d) Video games make people lazy and unmotivated.

e) Albert Einstein developed the theory of relativity.

f) Studying every night is the only way to succeed in school.

answers

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activity

Let’s try some harder ones...

a) Many people believe that a healthy diet includes eating vegetables daily.

b) The economy has been performing worse this year compared to last year.

c) The new school policy is unfair to students who need more flexibility.

d) Studies suggest that reading before bed can improve sleep quality.

e) Scientists have discovered evidence that climate change is affecting global weather patterns.

answers

Let’s try some harder ones...

a) Many people believe that a healthy diet includes eating vegetables daily.

This is a verifiable statement about what many people believe, though the belief itself may not be universally true.

b) The economy has been performing worse this year compared to last year.

This statement is subjective because ‘worse; is open to interpretation. Some people may think the economy is struggling, while others may see improvements in certain areas.

c) The new school policy is unfair to students who need more flexibility.

The word ‘unfair’ is subjective, as different people may view fairness differently based on their own experiences.

answers

Let’s try some harder ones...

d) Studies suggest that reading before bed can improve sleep quality.

This is based on research findings, but the phrase ‘studies suggest’ indicates that it is not an absolute truth, just a supported claim.

e) Scientists have discovered evidence that climate change is affecting global weather patterns

This is based on scientific research and data, making it verifiable. However, interpretations of the evidence can vary, which can introduce bias in how it is presented.

EVIDENCE



What is EVIDENCE?



Evidence is the **information, facts** or **data** provided to **support** a statement, claim, expressions of opinion or argument. That is, it helps prove whether something is true or false or offers reasons as to why we should view the opinion as correct.

Evidence can be split into two types: '**hard**' or '**soft**'.

HARD EVIDENCE

Facts & Statistics

"According to the Borcelle Health Organisation, smoking causes over 8 million deaths per year."

Scientific Data

“A study published in Thynk Unlimited found that artificial intelligence can detect breast cancer with 94% accuracy."

Surveys

"A national survey found that 72% of Australians support action on climate change."

Carefully Controlled Observations

"Researchers observed that plants exposed to sunlight grew 30% taller than those kept in the dark."

Expert Opinion

"Scientists at Borcelle Institute predict that sea levels will rise by at least 30 cm by 2050 due to climate change."

Measurements

"The Great Wall of China is approximately 21,196 km long."

SOFT EVIDENCE

Anecdotes

(Personal Experiences)

E.g. "My grandfather smoked every day and lived to be 90 years old."

Word-of-mouth Information

(Something heard from another person)

E.g. "Audience members reported that the scuffle broke out just as the siren sounded."

Appeals to False Authority

(Quoting from sources that are not experts on the topic)

E.g. "Celebrity chef Neil Tran described how dangerous vaccines are."

activity

Read the following examples and decide:
1. if they are examples of **hard** or **soft** evidence, and
2. what **type of evidence** is used.

a) Dr. Emily Carter, a leading nutritionist, states that eating leafy greens improves brain function.

b) Surveys conducted by the Department of Health show that 60% of Australians struggle with stress management.

c) A well-known social media influencer claims that drinking alkaline water can cure fatigue.

d) Since I've been exercising at night, I've found it harder to get to sleep, proving that the morning is the best time to exercise.

answers

Read the following examples and decide:
1. if they are examples of **hard** or **soft** evidence, and
2. what **type of evidence** is used.

a) Dr. Emily Carter, a leading nutritionist, states that eating leafy greens improves brain function.

HARD - Expert opinion

b) Surveys conducted by the Department of Health show that 60% of Australians struggle with stress management.

HARD - Survey and statistic

c) A well-known social media influencer claims that drinking alkaline water can cure fatigue.

SOFT - Appeal to false authority

d) Since I've been exercising at night, I've found it harder to get to sleep, proving that the morning is the best time to exercise.

SOFT - Personal anecdote


BIAS

What is BIAS?

Bias is a **preference** or **inclination** toward a particular perspective, idea, or outcome, often in a way that is one-sided.

It can shape how information is presented, what details are **included** or **omitted**, and how **language** is used to influence an audience.

FOR EXAMPLE, A news article about a protest may describe the protesters as “passionate advocates” (positive bias) or “unruly rioters” (negative bias), shaping how the audience perceives the event.



EXAMPLES

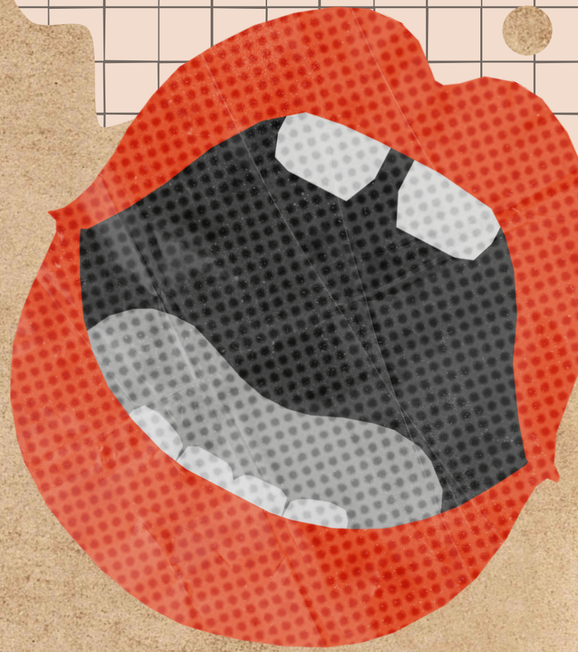
Bias can be present when a writer or speaker...

...is deliberately trying to **persuade** the audience.

...is **favourable** towards something.

...is **influenced** by their (past) experiences.

...has **incomplete** information on a topic.



BIAS

can be seen through...



Selective language choices (e.g. Calling someone a ‘hero’ vs. a ‘manipulator’)

Omission of **key facts** that might challenge the perspective.

Emotive language to sway the reader’s feelings.

Unbalanced use of **sources**, favouring one side of an argument.

Also REMEMBER

There is a common misconception that bias is a **bad thing**. This is **not true**.

Bias is **natural**—everyone has perspectives shaped by their experiences. It can be **helpful** or **necessary** in some cases

We may discuss bias as simply **identifying a strong held opinion** (without assuming it is necessarily a bad thing!)

When is BIAS good?



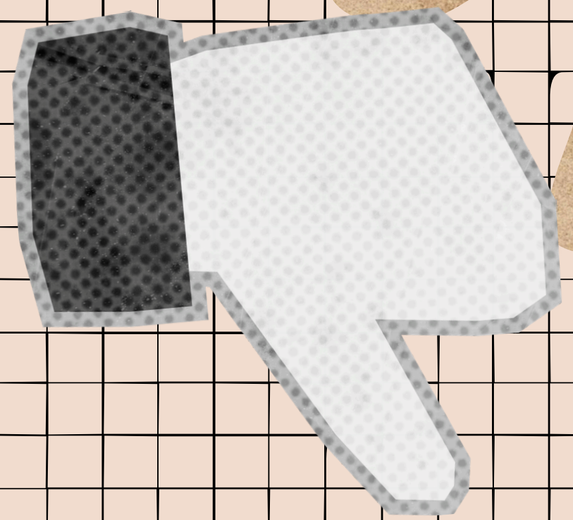
Bias is **natural**—everyone has perspectives shaped by their experiences. It can be **helpful** or **necessary** in some cases. For example:

Opinion pieces & editorials – These are meant to persuade, so a clear bias is expected.

Advocacy writing – Bias can be used to promote positive change, such as fighting for human rights.

Personal narratives – Memoirs and autobiographies reflect a subjective experience, which is inherently biased.

When is BIAS bad?



Bias can be **harmful** when it **misleads**, **distorts** facts, or **unfairly** influences opinions. For example:

In **news reporting** – If a journalist only presents one side of a political issue, it creates an unfair representation.

or

In **history texts** – If a book ignores the perspectives of marginalised groups, it leads to an incomplete understanding.

activity

Read the following examples and analyse them for bias, using the guided questions.

EXAMPLE 1: NEWS ARTICLE EXCERPT

“The government’s reckless budget cuts have once again hurt our most vulnerable citizens. Essential programs like public housing and disability support are being slashed, leaving thousands at risk. Despite widespread outrage, officials continue to prioritize corporate tax breaks over basic human needs.”

QUESTIONS:

- What words or phrases indicate a biased perspective?
- Does the article present facts or opinions? How do you know?
- How might this passage be rewritten to sound more neutral?

activity

Read the following examples and analyse them for bias, using the guided questions.

EXAMPLE 2: SOCIAL MEDIA POST

“The so-called ‘climate crisis’ is nothing more than a fear campaign pushed by scientists who make millions off fake research. Every year, they warn of ‘record-breaking temperatures’ but winters are still freezing! It’s all about control – they want to take away our cars, our jobs, and our freedom in the name of ‘saving the planet’.”

QUESTIONS:

- What rhetorical strategies are used to dismiss opposing viewpoints?
- How does the post rely on generalizations or logical fallacies?
- What type of evidence would strengthen or weaken this argument?

RECAP



Statements of fact are verifiable and objective truths about the nature of the physical world that can be proven to be true or false using evidence, observations or records.

Expressions of opinion are statements based on personal beliefs, feelings, or interpretations rather than objective facts. They involve value judgements.

Evidence is the information, facts or data provided to support a statement, claim, argument or expression of opinion.

Bias means ‘one-sidedness’ but we may discuss bias as simply identifying a strong held opinion (without assuming it is necessarily a bad thing).

Press these keys while on present mode!



B for blur

D for a drumroll

O for bubbles

U for unveil

C for confetti

M for micdrop

Q for quiet

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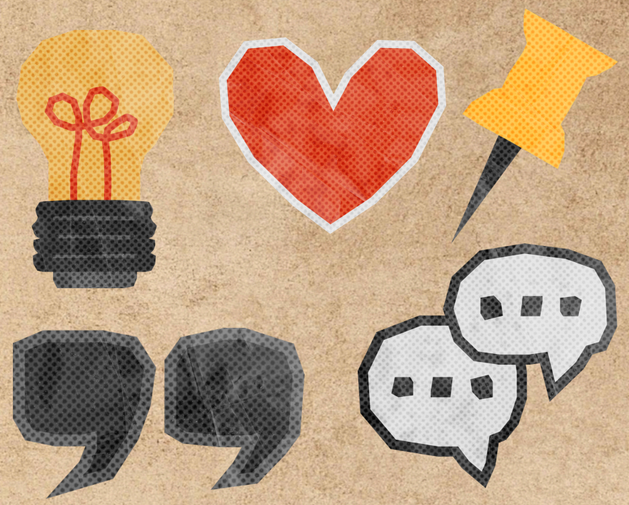

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