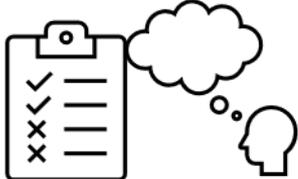# Activity 8: How do we know?

Activity aim:	Learners understand the difference between facts and opinions, and know how they could verify facts.
Time:	20 - 30 minutes
Delivery:	This activity starts with a pair activity which leads into group work. Below are the delivery steps:

1. Write the words ***fact*** and ***opinion*** on the board and ask the class to think for a minute quietly about what the difference is between a fact and an opinion (they can write or draw notes for themselves if that helps). After a minute, put them into pairs, and get them to tell their partner what they think. Do they agree? If you have time, put the pairs with other pairs to make 4s (or possibly a 6 if you have an extra pair) and see if they agree.

2. Ask one learner in each group to report what they think the difference is between a fact and an opinion. Guide the learners towards the idea that a fact is something that can be checked to see if it is correct, and an opinion is something that a person believes, based on their own experience. Try to represent this simply on the board.

3. Play the short soundtrack about dogs, and ask the learners to listen and note down three of the facts and two of the opinions (there are more than that). Let them check with their partners again to see if they have the same answers, and then put the pairs together, as before, to check again. Ask somebody in each group to give one fact or opinion from the talk.

4. List the facts and opinions on the board under their headings, and then elicit from the group how they could check these facts (e.g. searching the internet) and which sources they might trust (e.g. an encyclopaedia).

5. If possible, encourage them to check the facts immediately (as a group) and compare their answers with other groups. Are the facts correct? Otherwise, set that as homework. (NB – one of the 'facts' is not correct!)

6. Ask the learners to work in their groups to create their own short talk in which they include some facts and some opinions. Can the other groups spot which are which? How would they check the facts?

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Differentiation:
- Some learners might benefit from having the text of the soundtrack to follow as they listen.
- Some learners may want to hear the soundtrack several times.
- Learners working at a higher level could perhaps discuss more complex issues, e.g. What factors influence a person's opinion?
  Is it possible for people to disagree about facts?
  Can facts be different in different countries?

Soundtrack text:

In the UK there are around 9 million dogs, mostly living as pets with humans. Many people feel that there is a special bond between humans and dogs, and call them 'Man's Best Friend', because they are very loyal and loving companions.
Dogs and humans have lived together for millions of years, since we started using them to help us hunt. Now dogs help us with all sorts of things, such as rounding up sheep, guiding people who cannot see and sniffing out drugs.
Everybody loves dogs, and pet owners spend around £7 billion on their animals each year, paying for vets' bills and food as well as buying them treats, clothes and toys. A dog is not just a pet, but a valued family member who deserves the best of everything.

Facts
- There are around 9 million dogs in the UK.
- Most dogs in the UK are pets.
- Dogs are often called 'Man's Best Friend'.
- Dogs and humans have lived together for millions of years. *(NB – this is incorrect. Domestication of dogs began around 15,000 years ago.)*
- Dogs do help humans with many things (e.g. rounding up sheep, guiding people who cannot see and sniffing out drugs).
- Pet owners spend around £7 billion on their animals each year.

Opinions
- They are very loyal and loving companions.
- Everybody loves dogs.
- A dog is a valued family member who deserves the best of everything.

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