

What's Your Opinion? Identifying Reasons and Supporting Evidence

GRADE 5

TIME

45 minutes

AGENDA

- **Introducing the Skill** (5 Min)
- **Guessing Game** (10 Min)
- **Identifying Evidence: Email From Colleague** (15 Min)
- **Identifying Evidence: Email From Community Member** (10 Min)
- **Exit Ticket** (5 Min)

MATERIALS

- **Resource 1:** Guessing Game
- **Resource 2:** Email From Colleague
- **Resource 3:** Email From Community Member
- **Lined paper**

LESSON STANDARD(S)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.8

Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).

STUDENT OBJECTIVE(S)

I can identify evidence and reasons used to support an opinion.

Model **INTRODUCING THE SKILL** (10 min)

- **Introduce** the skill and its purpose. **Say:** *The way an author presents information can reveal his or her opinion on the topic. When we read a text, we need to distinguish fact from opinion to get at the truth. When you read, ask yourself what evidence does the author use? What evidence does the author leave out? What does this reveal about what the author wants me to believe?*
- **Partner** students up to define fact and opinion. **Say:** *Let's begin by sharing our ideas about what distinguishes fact from opinion. Turn to your elbow partner to share.*
- **Display** a sentence frame to structure partner interaction (e.g., *A fact is _____, while an opinion is _____*). Circulate the room to gauge understanding of terms.
- **Define** the terms with students' input. **Say:** *A fact is a statement that you can prove is true. An opinion is a statement of what a person thinks or believes—its truth is debatable.*

GUESSING GAME (10 min)

- **Display and instruct students** to turn to **Resource 1: Guessing Game**. Explain the partner activity. **Say:** *Let's do a partner activity to better understand these concepts. Think of one food—one you absolutely love*

or absolutely hate. With that food in mind, you are going to write three factual statements to describe it for your partner so that he or she might guess what it is.

- **Model** the process. **Say:** *I have a food in mind. Now I need to think of how I would describe the food so my partner can guess what it is. First, I will describe its appearance. It is green on the outside, red on the inside, and juicy. Next, I will describe the taste. It is crunchy, sweet, and refreshing. Lastly, I will say that it is a food people often eat in the summer. What food am I describing?*
- **Ask** students to offer guesses. Confirm the food (e.g., [watermelon](#)). Explain that partners will take turns sharing their descriptions.
- **Check** for understanding. Provide 1 minute for students to record their descriptions. Provide 2 minutes for partners to take turns describing the food.
- **Point** to the Reflection section at the bottom of the page. Read aloud the first question and provide time for students to respond. **Say:** *What food was your partner describing? Record your best guess.*
- **Read** aloud the next question. Ask students to reflect on the model first. **Say:** *Let's think back to my description of the watermelon. Based on what I said, do you think I like watermelon or don't like watermelon?*
- **Poll** students, and then ask for them to explain their reasoning. ([I came to this conclusion because my teacher used positive words like sweet, juicy, and refreshing.](#)) Then have students record their responses based on their partners' descriptions.
- **Ask** students to share their observations. **Say:** *How many of you believe you can tell whether your partner loved or hated the food? How did you know? ([The descriptions/language used was positive/negative.](#))*
- **Connect** the activity to the goal of this lesson. **Say:** *In this activity, your goal was to describe a food so that your partner could guess what it was. However, our feelings about the food—whether we like it or don't like it—came through in the descriptions we provided. Our opinion of the food influenced the type of information we presented. Similarly, an author's opinion about a topic influences the way he or she presents the information. Keeping a critical eye and thinking carefully about how information is presented can help you answer the question: What does the author believe? What does the author want me to believe?*

EXTEND Provide sentence frames for partners to use to build on each other's ideas (e.g., *I had a similar view; I had a different perspective.*)

SUPPORT Provide examples to illustrate the difference between *fact* and *opinion* (e.g., *fact*: broccoli has vitamin C; *opinion*: broccoli is the healthiest vegetable).

SUPPORT Read aloud the sentence frames. Point out that the first sentence has a choice. Explain that students need to circle one: *does/does not*.

IDENTIFYING EVIDENCE: EMAIL FROM COLLEAGUE (15 min)

Guided Practice

- **Display** and **instruct** students to turn to **Resource 2: Email From a Colleague**. Explain that students will now read two emails on the same topic. **Say:** *We are going to read emails from two people writing to the*

director of a community organization that recently received a sizable donation. Each writer is attempting to influence the way the Director spends the donation money. As we read, we will look at the information each author presents. This will help us determine what the author wants the director to believe. What is each author's opinion about what to do with the money?

SUPPORT Point out and explain features of an email, including TO, FROM, CC, BCC, the SUBJECT line, and the letter format.

- **Read** aloud the text, including the email's subject line, as students follow along.
- **Think** aloud as you model how to annotate the text in the first paragraph to identify details. **Say:** *First, let's identify the information that Alexandria provides the director. Underline some details with me. The first sentence states the topic—the donation to the organization—so I won't underline this. The next sentence provides information, so I will underline it. I will underline the next two sentences, too, since they detail how the organization has grown.*
- **Think** aloud as you model how to distinguish opinion from evidence/reasons. **Say:** *Now let's reflect on what we have underlined. Is there a statement that reveals the author's point of view? Which statements answer the question, what does the author believe? What does Alexandria want to do with the donation money? (With this money, we can move forward with opening a new office on Main Street.)* **Say:** *Let's double underline this sentence. This is her opinion, her main point. The other statements provide support for her point.*
- **Direct** students to work with a partner to underline details in the second paragraph. Circulate and provide support as needed.
- **Have** students share which sentences they underlined. (Since our mission is to help the community, relocating to a larger building near the center of town makes the most sense; We project that the cost of relocating would be \$500,000.)
- **Guide** students to identify the sentence that answers the questions: What does Alexandria believe? What does she want to do with the money? Then have them double underline the sentence. (Since our mission is to help the community, relocating to a larger building near the center of town makes the most sense.)
- **Point** out the reflection questions at the bottom of the page. Read aloud the first question and sentence frame. Guide students to complete the sentence frame with their conclusion.
- **Have** students share their completed sentences with their partners. Circulate the room to gauge understanding. Preselect 2-3 students to share their sentences to the class.
- **Read** aloud the second question and sentence frame. Remind students to look back at the sentences they underlined once. Explain that these

SUPPORT Point out that students need to add a verb phrase to complete the first sentence frame accurately.

sentences include the supporting evidence and reasons the author uses to make her point.

- **Have** students share their completed sentences with their partners. Circulate the room to gauge understanding. Preselect 2-3 students to share their sentences to the class.

SUPPORT Point out that students need to add a noun phrase to complete the second sentence frame accurately

IDENTIFYING EVIDENCE:

EMAIL FROM COMMUNITY MEMBER (10 min)

Independent Practice

- **Display** and **instruct students** to turn to **Resource 3: Email From a Community Member**. Explain that students will work independently to identify the author's opinion and supporting evidence. **Say:** *Now you are going to read a second email. This time, a community member writes to the director. We will read the email together, then you will underline the details. Then reflect on the sentence that best states what the author wants the director to believe. What is this author's opinion about what to do with the donation money? You will double underline the opinion.*
- **Read** aloud the text, including the email's subject line, as students follow along.
- **Have** students reread the first paragraph and underline the sentences that provide details. (*I understand the mission of the organization is to serve the community and promote literacy; After learning of the recent donation, I knew it would be possible to save the Avalon Public Library; Your organization works year-round offering free tutoring services.*)
- **Guide** students to review what they underlined, decide which sentence best reflects the author's opinion, and double underline it. (*After learning of the recent donation, I knew it would be possible to save the Avalon Public Library.*)
- **Have** students repeat the process for the second paragraph. Circulate the room, providing support as needed.
- **Direct** students to complete the Reflection questions at the bottom of the page. Have students share their responses with their elbow partners. Call on volunteers to share out with the class.

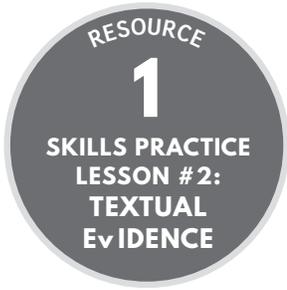
SUPPORT Write the directions on the board: 1. Underline the details. 2. Double-underline the opinion.

EXIT TICKET (5 min)

Closing and Assessment

- **Ask** students to consider: *Was one opinion more convincing than the other? Why?*
- **Have** students write their responses on **lined paper**.

SUPPORT Provide a model response (e.g., I believe that Alexandria Montegro offered a more convincing opinion. One reason is that Alexandria cited specific details about the company's expansion in the last year.)



GUESSING GAME

What's Your Opinion? Identifying Reasons and Supporting Evidence

My food: _____

Share 3 facts to describe this food.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

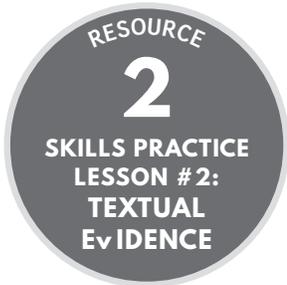
REFLECTION

What food is your partner describing?

I think my partner is describing

Based on the descriptions, does your partner like this food? Explain your reasoning.

My partner does/does not like this food. I came to this conclusion because s/he:



EMAIL FROM COLLEAGUE

What's Your Opinion? Identifying Reasons and Supporting Evidence

FROM Colleague@communityservice.site
TO Director@communityservice.site
CC
BCC
SUBJECT Funding Our Downtown Office

Hello, Director,
Recently, I learned our organization has received a sizable donation. With this money, we can move forward with opening a new office on Main Street. As you know, our organization is expanding. We have doubled the number of employees and tripled the number of volunteers in the last year alone. Since our mission is to help the community, relocating to a larger building near the center of town makes the most sense. We project that the cost of relocating would be \$500,000. With our current budget and the recent donation, we now have the funds to make this happen. This is an exciting opportunity and I am on board to help in whatever way I can!

With regards,
Alex

Alexandria Montegro
Community Outreach Coordinator | Avalon Helping Hands
cell: (123) 555-0100 fax: (123) 555-0101

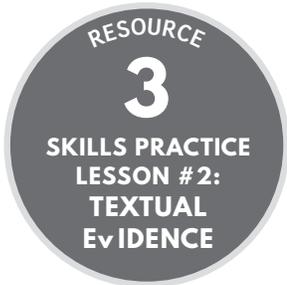
REFLECTION

- 1. **What conclusion can you draw about Alexandria Montegro's opinion on what to do with the donation money?**

I concluded that Alexandria Montegro believes the donation money should be used to _____.

- 2. **What evidence does Alexandria Montegro provide to support this opinion?**

The evidence Alexandria Montegro provides to support this opinion includes



EMAIL FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS

What’s Your Opinion? Identifying Reasons and Supporting Evidence

FROM Neighbor@community.site
TO Director@communityservice.site
CC
BCC
SUBJECT Save Our Library

Hello, Director,

I have long been an admirer of your organization and have volunteered regularly. I understand the mission of the organization is to serve the community and promote literacy. After learning of the recent donation, I knew it would be possible to save the Avalon Public Library. As you know, your organization works year-round offering free tutoring services to help children and adults learn to read. I have volunteered with your organization as a tutor and donated books. I have also brought my family to Family Fun Day at the library and the free story time events Avalon Helping Hands has sponsored.

Recent talks of closing the library to make room for a shopping mall have certainly caused as much concern for you as they have for me. The library is a place where people of all ages can have access to free books. It is an important fixture in our community. With your help, we can raise funds to sustain the library and fulfill your organization’s mission to promote literacy and serve the community. I know you will do the right thing!

Sincerely,
Pat Larkin

REFLECTION

1. **What conclusion can you draw about Pat Larkin’s opinion on what to do with the donation money?**

I concluded that Pat Larkin believes the donation money should be used to

2. **What is one strong piece of evidence Pat Larkin provides to support this opinion?**

The evidence Pat Larkin provides to support this opinion includes
