

# 6 White Lies

In this unit, you will ...

- identify opinions and examples in supporting sentences.
- use discussion to brainstorm.
- write a paragraph about your opinions.

## 1 What is a *white lie*?

- A mistake about colours, e.g. 'Tom's new car is red' when it is actually purple.
  - A small or unimportant lie you tell not to hurt someone's feelings, e.g. 'I think your new car looks cool' when you actually think the new car looks ugly.
  - A type of lie politicians tell to be popular, e.g. 'When I am President, everyone will be able to buy a new car' when the politician knows people will not have more money.
- Tell a partner about the last time you told a white lie to a friend, a family member or a teacher.
  - Tell your partner if you think it is OK to tell white lies.

## 2 Now read this paragraph to find out if the writer agrees with you about telling white lies.

### White Lies

<sup>1</sup> White lies are not always bad. <sup>2</sup> If you tell your girlfriend that her new haircut looks great when it is horrible, she will know you are lying. <sup>3</sup> I think it is better to tell the truth in this case. <sup>4</sup> However, if your girlfriend has a new dress and she really likes it, you should always say it is lovely. <sup>5</sup> If you say you don't like it, you will make her unhappy and angry with you. <sup>6</sup> You can lie if the truth will hurt and it is not important.



**3** Read the paragraph on page 42, *White Lies*, again and answer these questions.

- a. Which sentence is the topic sentence?
- b. What does the concluding sentence do?
  1. It restates the topic sentence.
  2. It makes a prediction.
  3. It makes a suggestion.
- c. What do sentences 2 and 4 do?
  1. They give advice.
  2. They give examples.
  3. They tell a story.

### Language focus: Giving an opinion

Your *opinion* is your personal feeling. A *fact* is something that is true. Most writing uses both facts and opinions. When you talk about your opinions, you can start your sentence with phrases such as:

**I think** *friends should always be honest.*

**I don't think** *white lies are dangerous.*

**I believe** *it is better to upset your friends than to lie.*

**In my view**, *it is often safer to lie than to tell the truth.*

**In my opinion**, *lying is the same as cheating or stealing.*

When you write, you can use one of the sentence starters above. However, be careful not to use too many, or to use them too often. That can make your writing sound weak. The reader knows that the paragraph is your opinion, because you wrote it!

**4** Look at the sentences below. Write **F** for the facts, and **O** for the opinions.

- a.  **O** Learning English is easier for girls than for boys.  
 **F** There are more boys than girls in my English class.
- b.  Good teachers don't give too much homework.  
 Our teacher gave us homework last week.
- c.  Keanu Reeves is a good actor.  
 Keanu Reeves starred in the *Matrix* films.
- d.  Many teenagers carry mobile phones these days.  
 Mobile phones are very convenient.
- e.  All students have to wear a uniform at my school.  
 Our school uniforms are not very comfortable.
- f.  I don't believe that wearing the latest fashions is important.  
 My favourite clothes are all black.

**5** For each topic below, write one fact and one opinion.

- Read your sentences to a partner.
- Your partner will tell you which sentence is the fact and which is the opinion.

**a.** tea

*Green tea is good for your health.* F

*Black tea tastes better than green tea.* O

**b.** university entrance exams

.....

.....

**c.** violent video games

.....

.....

**d.** dating

.....

.....

**e.** money

.....

.....

**f.** sports

.....

.....

**g.** (your choice of topic)

.....

.....



## Brainstorming: Discussion

Talking with other people is a good way to brainstorm:

- You can share ideas with different people.
- You can ask questions to help other students think more deeply.
- When other students ask you questions, you will think of examples to support your opinions.

When you're discussing, it's OK to disagree with your classmates. However, it is important to be respectful of opinions that are different from yours.



**6** In a group, form opinions about the topics below.

- Think of as many opinions as you can. You don't have to believe them.
  - Someone in your group should write down all the opinions in your group.
  - Share your opinions with another group or with the whole class.
- a. International marriages
  - b. Parents leaving a five-year-old child alone in the house
  - c. Secondary school students playing video games

## Writing focus: Supporting sentences with opinions and examples

In your topic sentence and supporting sentences, you can give an opinion. To support your opinion, you could give *examples*, which can either be facts or experiences you've had.

**7** Look again at the paragraph on page 42, *White Lies*. Which sentences are opinions? Which sentences are examples? Are some sentences both?



**8** Decide if these sentences are opinions (O) or examples (E). Write O or E next to each sentence.

- a. .... Smoking should be banned in all restaurants.
- b. .... Smoking is banned in restaurants in California and New York.
- c. .... The air is cleaner and healthier in non-smoking restaurants.
- d. .... I believe that customers prefer non-smoking restaurants.
- e. .... My clothes smelt horrible after I had dinner with a friend who smoked.
- f. .... I went to a smoky restaurant in Paris, and I couldn't eat my food.
- g. .... In my country, smoking is banned on buses and trains, and in all public buildings.



**9** Read this paragraph and answer the questions below.

Lying

<sup>1</sup> In my opinion, exaggeration is the same as lying. <sup>2</sup> My friend John is always exaggerating. <sup>3</sup> When we met two years ago, he told me he spoke French fluently. <sup>4</sup> However, last week we met a French man at a football match. <sup>5</sup> John couldn't say anything to him in French except, 'Where are you from?' and 'Do you like England?' <sup>6</sup> I think he lies because he wants to be exciting. <sup>7</sup> Last night, he told me he has a new millionaire girlfriend. <sup>8</sup> She probably has a lot of money but isn't a millionaire. <sup>9</sup> I don't believe John is a good friend.

- a. Tick (✓) the writer's opinions.
1.  A good friend doesn't exaggerate.
  2.  A good friend has a rich girlfriend.
  3.  A good friend is exciting.
  4.  A good friend tells the truth.
- b. Underline two examples used to support the writer's opinions.
- c. Work with a partner.
1. Give an example of a time you have told a white lie or exaggerated.
  2. Tell your partner your opinion about white lies and exaggeration.

## Put it together

**10** Choose one of the opinions you wrote for exercise 6 on page 45.

- Use this opinion for your topic sentence.
- Brainstorm ideas by discussing the opinion with a small group.
- Write down examples (facts or experiences) to support your opinion.

**11** Write a paragraph. Use opinions and examples.

**12** Check your writing.

Did you ...

- include a heading on your paper?
- format the paragraph properly?
- start and end each sentence correctly?
- use capitalisation correctly?
- give the paragraph a title?
- write a topic sentence?
- write supporting sentences? How many?
- only include one clear idea in each sentence?
- order the sentences logically?
- combine the sentences logically?
- write a concluding sentence?

**13** Exchange papers with a partner.

- Fill out the Peer Review Form on page 105.
- Talk with your partner and go over each form.

**14** Read your paragraph again.

- Think about the comments from your partner.
- Make any additions or changes to your paragraph that would make it stronger or more interesting.

**15** Hand in the second draft of your paragraph to your teacher.