

Warm up**Write the following up on the board:***I (don't) think ...**I (don't) believe ...**I doubt ...**I'm sure ...*

Ask students what they would expect to read next after beginnings like these. Elicit or prompt with suggestions such as:

I think this is true. I doubt that the theory is correct.

Ask the class if they think academic texts are this obvious – with writers putting *I think ...* before their point of view. Students who have done any academic reading will realize that this does sometimes happen, but writers also tend to express their opinions in much more subtle ways.

Ask your students if they can suggest any ways we might be able to identify a writer's point of view. Elicit as many answers as possible along the lines of *the choice of words* or *the tone of a text*. Explain that the Worksheet will look at some of the less obvious ways a writer can express their point of view.


Using the Factsheet**There are three possible ways to use the Factsheet:**

- 1 Give students the Factsheet before the lesson, so they can read it at home and come to the lesson prepared to do the Worksheet. If you use this approach, start the lesson by checking that all students have read and understood the Factsheet, and answer any questions.
- 2 Give students the Factsheet at the beginning of the lesson and start by working through it with the students.
- 3 Focus on the Worksheet in the lesson, then give students the Factsheet at the end of the lesson, so they can take it home and keep it as a reference or revision tool.

Theory to practice**Suggested answers**

- a Probably not – it is fairly neutral in tone.
- b We understand that the writer doesn't believe the new system is actually fairer.
- c The reasons for a person's previous credit problems.
- d *common sense*
- e *concerning*

Using the Worksheet**Practice**

- 1**  **Read the extracts. Then circle the correct phrase to complete each statement of the writer's point of view. Discuss the words and phrases from the extracts that led you to the correct answers.**

- You might like to go through the first extract with the class. Read out the extract and then the statement with the either/or choices below it. Elicit that the writer *thinks* that we should change how we assess students, and ask students to suggest clues from the text which tell us that (see the suggested answers).
- When everyone has understood, allow up to five minutes for students to do the remainder of the task. Encourage them to work alone at first. After that, they can compare notes with a partner.
- **Note:** The answers below are suggestions. Allow your students to offer different suggestions and encourage them to justify their opinions. Accept any logical ideas.

Suggested answers

- a *thinks*
The writer uses the word *but* to introduce doubt about examinations. They then use the phrase *can't help feeling*, meaning *I feel*. Point out that the first word, *We*, could suggest the writer is in education, or it could refer to *we* as in *society*.

b *sometimes*

The use of *However* raises doubt about what comes before it, while *counterproductive* does the same thing. Both *resentment* and *rebellion* are often negative, so the suggestion is that strict discipline doesn't always work.

c *worth considering*

The writer uses a double negative (*not the worst*) to suggest a positive (if not the best, at least worth considering).

d *of fear of what the law would do*

It is the *legal implications* that people fear, and this is made clear by the causal (**so forbidding that ...**). It was one particular move (*it*) that people were scared to sanction. Note the meaning of *forbidding* here as *threatening* or *frightening*.

e *less*

The writer suggests a controversy over where the diamonds came from, but the sentence finishes praising the work – as if their provenance is something that needs mentioning but can ultimately be overlooked.

f *would like to know*

The use of the adverb *sadly* suggests the writer would like to know.

2 Read the text and answer the questions.

- Students may recognize the text as being from *C21 English for the 21st Century*, Level 5, Unit 3. Ask them to read the text and see if there are any obvious clues to the writer's point of view, such as *I think ... I believe ...* etc. Elicit that there is nothing so obvious, and explain that they are going to do a little detective work on the text to find out the writer's point of view.
- Allow up to five minutes for students to do the task. Again, encourage them to work alone, at least initially. They can compare notes with a partner after they have attempted the task. Again, allow your students to offer different suggestions to the answers below, and accept ideas that are logical.

Possible answers

- a** The writer works in a school and has students. She is therefore likely to be a teacher.
- b** She is casting doubt on the idea of there being 'right' and 'wrong' answers. / She is introducing the possibility of there being a different way to teach and test.
- c** The writer wants teachers to provide 'opportunities for our students to explore alternative ways to solve problems'. We know this because the writer has dismissed the method described in the first sentence and uses the word *avoid* to suggest something positive which is being missed.
- d** The writer believes this would be the result if we continue to 'avoid providing opportunities for our students to explore alternative ways to solve problems'.
- e** She is suggesting that it would be a good idea to pose questions with more than one answer. / She implies that this might be a way to avoid the bad consequences for the future mentioned in the previous sentence.

3 Read the extracts and choose the tones from the box that best describe each one.

- Explain that students are going to look at tone. Give them a few minutes to read the texts and form their initial opinions. They can compare with a partner after this.
- Elicit answers, encouraging discussion of all suggestions.

Suggested answers

- a** formal, scientific, serious
Point out the formal use of *us*, meaning *scientists* or *society*, as well as the frequent use of the passive voice and the lack of any kind of emotional, personal or biased language.
- b** dismissive, disparaging, sarcastic
Point out that there is an element of formality here, too (e.g. *whereby*); but mainly the text is informal and dismissive, with key indicators being *frankly*, *absurd*, *ridiculousness*, *so-called science*, *fruitless*, etc.

Reflect

4 Read the checklist and answer the questions.

- Encourage students to look back over the Factsheet and the Worksheet.
- With the class, discuss the questions and the points on the checklist.
- Remind them to use the checklist in their own studies.