Discovering Language Arts
Intermediate Fiction
Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 6–8	**Curriculum Focus:** Language Arts	**Lesson Duration:** 2–3 class periods

Program Description

Science Fiction (9 min.)—This genre combines science with the elements of exaggerated science or fantasy. *The Real Great Gatsby* (6 min.)—Understanding the historical context of a work of fiction gives a deeper insight into its themes and characters. *The Plot Thickens* (13 min.)—A work of fiction contains a plot developed through a conflict, climax, and resolution. *Developing Character Through "Courage"* (6 min.)—Authors bring characters to life through their words, actions, thoughts, and feelings. *Inferencing and Drawing Conclusions* (6 min.)—Making inferences when reading means drawing conclusions based on what an author has suggested or implied. *Literary Devices "It's Elementary"* (7 min.)—Flashbacks, suspense, and foreshadowing are tools authors use to keep a reader's attention. *Boris the Lifeguard* (5 min.)—Writers may use figurative language to evoke a particular image in a reader's mind. *A Civil Rights Poem* (6 min.)—A poet's challenge is to join precise words and phrases to create a feeling or image. *You've Got Style* (6 min.)—An author's style affects the way a reader feels. *A "Great" Point of View* (6 min.)—The type of narrator determines the perspective of a story. *Different Stories, Common Themes* (6 min.)—Recurring themes appear in books, plays, and stories because they appeal to many types of readers. *Connecting to Stories* (5 min.)—How the characters and events in a story relate to a reader helps form a connection and enhances the reading experience.

Onscreen Questions

- Read a science fiction short story. While reading, write down the elements of science fiction you find.

- Think of another story you have read that makes use of historical context. How does this add to your appreciation of the book?

- Write a few sentences about the plot of one of your favorite books. Explain the conflict, climax, and resolution of the story.

- Think about your favorite book. What do you know about the main character? How does that character change throughout the story?

- Based on what you've learned about Gulliver's character, how do you think he would feel traveling into the year 2050?

- Think about other suspenseful stories. Write down examples of when the author used foreshadowing or flashback.

- Think about your favorite animal. Describe it using simile, metaphor, or hyperbole.

- Write a poem about an important event in history. Choose words that set the mood for your reader.

- Read another passage from *The Pit and the Pendulum.* Write down examples of imagery you find.

- Select three or four books you might want to read. Scan the first page of each and identify the point of view.

- Think about books you have read. Can you find recurring themes in these stories?

- Think about your favorite book. Can you connect the characters or events to your own life?

Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Identify the elements of science fiction literature.
- Write a science fiction story using real and exaggerated science.

Materials

- *Intermediate Fiction* video

- Science texts, magazines, encyclopedias or other resources that contain information about current scientific inventions or breakthroughs

- Computer with Internet access (optional)

- Writing paper

- Pencils and erasers

- Drawing paper

- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Procedures

1. Have students watch *Discovering Language Arts: Intermediate Fiction* to learn about the science fiction genre and about character and plot development. Then talk about writing fiction; ask students: What is fiction? How does fiction differ from other kinds of writing? What are some important elements in fiction? What are the three main components of plot?

2. Then discuss the science fiction genre. Using the example provided in the program, Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea,* dissect the elements of science fiction. Ask students: What is science fiction? What are the necessary elements of science fiction? Why is it important that real and exaggerated science be used? How does science fiction resemble other types of fiction?

    Remind students that although the science and fantasy are important in science fiction, it is still necessary to develop solid characters and maintain a plot when writing science fiction. Ask students what they think makes *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* interesting and exciting.

3. Tell students that they are going to write science fiction. First they will think about what is going on in science today. Ask students to provide examples of some discoveries or inventions. Using one as an example, create a sci-fi story plot. What is the real scientific information we know about this discovery or invention? How could we exaggerate the information? Write ideas on the board or on a piece of chart paper. Then ask students to brainstorm about plot and characters that could work with the ideas. Help them create characters by asking them questions about who might be interested or involved with this discovery or invention. Then, write conflicts, climax, and resolution for a possible plot.

4. Explain to students that they will use newspapers, magazines, and the Internet to research information about real science. They will use their information to write their own sci-fi story. Stories must include real and exaggerated science; follow a three-part plot with a conflict, climax, and resolution; and feature at least two well-developed characters. The stories must be at least two pages long and include at least one illustration. The following Web sites may be helpful for research:

    *   http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org/

    *   http://www.eurekalert.org/kidsnews/

    *   http://www.sciencenews.org/

5. Give students time to work on their stories and illustrations in class and as homework if necessary. Remind students to think about the elements of science fiction, as well as plot and character development.

6. When students have finished, divide them into groups of three or four, and have each student read a story aloud to the group. Have the groups discuss the stories, starting with these questions: What did students like about the stories? Do they think the story fit the science fiction genre? Why or why not?

7. Once all stories have been discussed, hold a class discussion on the process of writing science fiction. Ask students these questions: Was it difficult to write a story that was believable and fantastic? Do they think any of the inventions, discoveries, or creations of their peers might be realized in the future? If so, which ones? What did they like about writing or reading science fiction?

8. Display the stories with their illustrations in the classroom so that students may read them during their free time.

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- **3 points:** Students were able to easily and clearly identify the elements of science fiction literature without assistance; wrote creative, unique stories that used real and exaggerated science and addressed all the stated criteria.

- **2 points:** Students were able to generally identify the elements of science fiction literature with little assistance; wrote somewhat creative, unique science fiction stories that that used real and exaggerated science and addressed most of the stated criteria.

- **1 point:** Students were unable or unwilling to identify the elements of science fiction literature without a great deal of assistance; and wrote incomplete or incoherent science fiction stories that used neither real nor exaggerated science and addressed little of the stated criteria.

Vocabulary

character

Definition: A person portrayed in an artistic piece, such as a drama or novel
Context: Characters come to life through the author's depiction of their words, actions, thoughts, and feelings.

exaggerate

Definition: To represent as greater than is actually the case; overstate; stretch the truth
Context: Exaggerated science is an element found in science fiction.

genre

Definition: A category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, marked by a distinctive style, form, or content
Context: Walk down the aisles at any bookstore or library to see that literature encompasses many genres.

novel

Definition: A fictional prose narrative of considerable length, typically having a plot that is unfolded by the actions, speech, and thoughts of the characters
Context: Writer Jules Verne is considered a pioneer of the science fiction novel.

plot

Definition: The pattern of events or main story in a narrative or drama
Context: The many conflicts in *Les Miserables* revolve around the plot.

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit
http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Language Arts—Reading: Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process; Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts

- Language Arts—Writing: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process; Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing; Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions

- Language Arts—Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

The National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association have developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching the English language arts. To view the standards online, go to http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110846.htm

This lesson plan addresses the following English standards:

- Students use spoken, written and visual language to accomplish their own purposes

- Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes

- Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts

- Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities

- Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works

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Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html

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DVD Content

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How To Use the DVD

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Play Video—This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.

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Curriculum Units—These are specially edited video segments pulled from different sections of the video (see below). These nonlinear segments align with key ideas in the unit of instruction. They include onscreen pre- and post-viewing questions, reproduced below in this Teacher's Guide. Total running times for these segments are noted. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the TV remote or click once on the Curriculum Unit title on a computer.

Standards Link—Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

Teacher Resources—This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

Video Index

I. Science Fiction
Examine author Jules Verne's novel 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea and learn about elements of science fiction.

II. The Real Great Gatsby
Discover how The Great Gatsby and other fictional works can reflect real settings, events, and characters.

III. The Plot Thickens
Watch a short film based on Victor Hugo's novel *Les Miserables* and examine the components of plot development.

IV. Developing Character Through "Courage"
Explore character development after watching a short film based on *The Red Badge of Courage,* by Stephen Crane.

V. Inferencing and Drawing Conclusions
See how making inferences can help you fill in missing details and understand characters in a story.

VI. Literary Devices: "It's Elementary"
Examine the literary devices of flashbacks, foreshadowing, and suspense and learn how to spot them.

VII. Boris the Lifeguard
Learn how to use figurative language to evoke images in a reader's mind.

VIII. A Civil Rights Poem
Listen to poet Rita Dove discuss her motivation for choosing the language in her poem "Rosa."

IX. You've Got Style
Explore how Edgar Allan Poe used imagery in his stories.

X. A "Great" Point of View
Discover types of narration, including first and third person and limited and omniscient.

XI. Different Stories, Common Themes
Friendship and good versus evil are two literary themes that recur often because they appeal to readers across cultures and decades.

XII. Connecting to Stories
Explore how forming a connection to a literary work can enhance the experience of reading.

Curriculum Units

1. Fantasy and Reality in Science Fiction
Pre-viewing question
Q: Why is science fiction a popular genre?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: Where did Jules Verne get his idea for a submarine in *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*?
A: The book was written in 1873, but Verne took the science of the day and stretched it to create his story. During the Civil War the Confederate Army built a submarine that sank, but it provided enough information for Verne to build a plausible story.

2. Historical Context in Fiction
Pre-viewing question
Q: Do you prefer to read about a particular time period?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What does the term "fiction" describe?
A: The term is used to describe a story that is made up but may be based on historical settings, characters, and events.

3. Creating a Plot
Pre-viewing question
Q: What elements make a good plot in a story?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: Describe plot development.
A: The main components of plot are conflict, climax, and resolution. Early events in a plot reveal a conflict. As the plot develops, the events climax at the point of greatest interest and emotion. The resolution tells how the conflict gets solved. Many stories also tell subplots, or smaller stories that happen alongside the main plot.

4. Character Development
Pre-viewing question
Q: How do authors bring characters to life?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: How does Henry change in *The Red Badge of Courage?*
A: At the beginning of the book, Henry is a frightened teenager who has just enlisted in the army and believes that the only way to earn respect from his fellow soldiers is to get wounded. Everything changes when he is wounded facing the enemy. To maintain his image as a hero, Henry finds the courage to fight in battle, and he understands its importance and seriousness. Now motivated by a sense of duty, he embraces his newfound courage and is eager to fight. By the end of the book he acts bravely and honorably.

5. Interpreting Literature
Pre-viewing question
Q: Have you ever drawn your own conclusions about something you read?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: How does making inferences help a reader?
A: By making inferences, a reader can fill in missing details and draw conclusions based on what an author may imply.

6. Examining Literary Devices
Pre-viewing question
Q: What tools or techniques are useful to make fiction writing more interesting?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What are three common literary devices?
A: Foreshadowing, flashback, and suspense. Foreshadowing introduces something that will have significance later on. In a flashback the story order is interrupted by an event that happened in the past. Suspense creates apprehension about what is going to happen next.

7. Simile, Metaphor, and Hyperbole
Pre-viewing question
Q: Give some examples of figurative language.
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: Describe simile, metaphor, and hyperbole.
A: A simile compares two unlike things using the words "like" or "as." *(Example: The dog smells like a skunk.)* A metaphor also compares two unlike things, but it doesn't use the words "like" or "as." *(Example: The quiet house is heaven.)* Hyperbole uses exaggeration to emphasize what the writer is trying to express to the reader. *(Example: He was running so fast that I couldn't see his feet.)*

8. The Language of Poetry
Pre-viewing question
Q: Do you have a favorite poem or poet?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What feelings or images does the poem "Rosa" evoke for you?
A: Answers will vary.

9. Imagery and Point of View
Pre-viewing question
Q: Why do suspenseful or scary stories appeal to readers?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: How can an author's use of imagery and point of view influence how a reader feels?
A: Imagery is the use of words that appeal to the senses. The phrase "cold, dark, and eerie" can make a scene feel more vibrant.

An author may use point of view to affect the reader, who will have a different experience, depending on who is telling the story and explaining what is happening.

10. Types of Narration
Pre-viewing question
Q: How important is the narrator in a book or movie?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What is the difference between first-person and third-person narration?
A: In first-person narration, the narrator plays a role in the story, which can be identified by the use of "I." In third-person narration, the narrator is outside the story, recognizable by the words "he," "she," and "they."

11. Recurring Themes
Pre-viewing question
Q: Name some recurring themes in books or stories you have read.
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: How does the theme of friendship appear in the stories *The Wizard of Oz* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*?
A: In *The Wizard of Oz,* Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Cowardly Lion support each other and work as a team to find the wizard, and they all reach their goals. In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,* Huck and Jim help also each other. Together they escape their miserable homes and embark on many adventures, and they both find freedom.

12. Connecting With Characters
Pre-viewing question
Q: Why do fictional stories remind readers of their own lives?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: Can you connect any characters in the video based on *Moby-Dick* to your own life? Explain your answer.
A: Answers will vary.

Discovering Language Arts
Intermediate Nonfiction
Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 6–8	**Curriculum Focus:** Language Arts	**Lesson Duration:** 1–2 class periods

Program Description

Read Around Washington (5 min.)—In an unfamiliar city a travel brochure is very helpful. *Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl* (6 min.)—A journal is a collection of thoughts and experiences. *Have Information, Will Time Travel* (5 min.)—Magazines, biographical sketches, and news stories are informational texts. *A View From the Nile* (4 min.)—Autobiographies and historical documents convey information are told from different perspectives. *Summing Up Neanderthals* (5 min.)—Summarizing and paraphrasing are two ways to restate information. *New Information* (5 min.)—Reading new information about a familiar subject can clarify, elaborate, or extend your ideas and opinions. *Implicit and Explicit* (6 min.)—Implicit information is implied or understood, and explicit information is directly stated. *Fact vs. Opinion* (4 min.)—Informational texts may include facts and opinions, and it's helpful to know how to differentiate between the two.

Onscreen Questions

- Plan a trip in your town. Use a map to construct the route you would take from site to site.

- Write a journal entry about a personal experience from the past month. Include information that might have historical significance.

- Use two different types of informational texts to learn more about time travel. What is another type of informational text you could consult?

- What other types of informational texts would you use to find out more about Cleopatra?

- Read an article about Neanderthals. Then write a summary on the article.

- Make a list of what you already knew and what you learned about gravity. Use what you learned to draw new conclusions about gravity.

- Next time you read a novel or short story, look for implicit and explicit information that can help you draw conclusions about the story.

- Read an informational text. Then write a paragraph on the different facts and opinions that were presented.

Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Describe the difference between fact and opinion.

- Write statements of facts and opinion based on information found in an article.

- Differentiate between factual statements and statements of opinion written by a classmate.

Procedures

- *Discovering Language Arts: Intermediate Nonfiction* video

- Newspapers and magazine articles on current events

- Computer with Internet access (optional)

- Pencils and erasers

- Writing paper

Materials

1. Have your students watch *Discovering Language Arts: Intermediate Nonfiction* to learn about reading for information and informational texts. Then ask students: What is the difference between fact and opinion? Why is it important to be able to differentiate between fact and opinion in an informational text?

   Talk about some examples of facts and opinions used in the program segment "Fact vs. Opinion" and how to spot the differences between factual statements and opinions.

2. Tell students that they will write statements of fact and opinion based on information about a current event of their choice. Students will read an article from the newspapers or magazines available in the classroom, or they may choose an article from the following list of Web sites (or other reliable news sites):

   - http://www.nytimes.com/
   - http://www.latimes.com/
   - http://www.kidsnewsroom.org/
   - http://www.cnn.com/

   After reading an article, students will write five factual statements and five opinion statements. Explain to students that they should not label their statements fact or opinion because they will share statements with a classmate, who will try to determine which statements are fact and opinion.

3. Give students time to research and read an article and write their 10 statements. If students are unable to complete all three tasks during class, have them finish their work as homework.

4. Have students share statements with a partner. Tell each pair to read the statements and determine facts from opinions. Give students a few minutes to read the statements quietly, then discuss the statements to see if they were successful in their task.

5. Discuss the statements with the class. Ask students to provide examples of factual statements their partners wrote. How did they know this statement was factual? Ask students to share some examples of opinions. How did they know this statement was an opinion? Discuss any statements that presented ambiguity or other difficulties, and offer guidance or clarification as needed.

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- **3 points:** Students easily and accurately described the difference between fact and opinion; wrote five clear statements of fact and five clear statements of opinion about a current event; and accurately determined which five statements written by a classmate were factual statements and which five were opinions.

- **2 points:** Students generally described the difference between fact and opinion; wrote at least three clear statements of fact and three clear statements of opinion about a current event; and somewhat accurately determined which five statements written by a classmate were factual statements and which five were opinions.

- **1 point:** Students were unable to describe the difference between fact and opinion; wrote at two or fewer clear statements of fact and two or fewer clear statements of opinion about a current event; and were unable to determine which five statements written by a classmate were factual statements and which five were opinions.

Vocabulary

fact
Definition: Knowledge or information based on real occurrences
Context: A fact is a statement that can be proved.

influence
Definition: To produce an effect on by imperceptible or intangible means; sway
Context: Factual information may influence what you know about a subject.

information
Definition: Knowledge derived from study, experience, or instruction
Context: When you read for information try to restate what you have learned.

objective

Definition: Uninfluenced by emotions or personal prejudices

Context: An author of historical documents tries to remain objective.

opinion

Definition: A belief or conclusion held with confidence but not substantiated by positive knowledge or proof

Context: Well-presented facts in an article may change your opinion about an issue.

perspective

Definition: Subjective evaluation of relative significance; point of view
Context: Authors with different perspectives often write about the same topic.

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- Language Arts—Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

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- Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts

- Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.

- Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities

- Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes

Support Materials

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- http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html

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running times for these segments are noted. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the TV remote or click once on the Curriculum Unit title on a computer.

Standards Link—Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

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Video Index

I. Read Around Washington
Use travel brochures and maps to find information as you tour the sites in Washington, D.C.

II. Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl
Explore excerpts from Anne Frank's journal and examine the historical information presented in such a work.

III. Have Information, Will Time Travel
Magazine articles, biographical sketches, news stories, and other informational texts are often helpful research tools.

IV. A View From the Nile
See how reading autobiographies and historical documents together can provide a great deal of information about an event.

V. Summing Up Neanderthals
Discover the difference between summarizing and paraphrasing and how to do both for the same information.

VI. New Information
See how reading articles and texts about familiar topics can provide new information that may change your ideas or opinions.

VII. Implicit and Explicit
Learn how to draw conclusions and make inferences from explicit and implicit information.

VIII. Fact vs. Opinion
Examine how facts and opinions differ and see why it is helpful to be able to distinguish between the two.

Curriculum Units

1. Travel Brochures and Maps
Pre-viewing question
Q: What is a good way to navigate in a new place?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What kinds of information do travel brochures include?
A: Travel brochures usually contain information about tourist attractions, including background details and a map.

2. Reading a Personal Account
Pre-viewing question
Q: What can you learn by reading a journal or diary?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What information does Anne Frank's diary provide readers?
A: The diary offers a personal account of a Jewish girl hiding from the Nazis in Amsterdam during World War II. Readers learn about life for Jews in Amsterdam during the war, details about living in hiding, and some events of the Holocaust.

3. Magazines, Biographies, and News
Pre-viewing question
Q: Where can you find information about current events?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What kinds of informational texts provide details about specific topics, individuals, and recent events?
A: Magazines contain a variety of stories that express ideas about a specific topic. Biographical sketches give a brief synopsis about the life and work of a person. News stories contain information about current events.

4. Autobiographies and Historical Documents
Pre-viewing question
Q: How does an autobiography differ from a biography?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: Why is an autobiography considered subjective while a historical document is not?
A: An autobiography is written from a personal point of view, so its information is subjective. Authors of historical documents write objectively, basing the facts they present on evidence.

5. Summarizing and Paraphrasing
Pre-viewing question
Q: How can you share information you have read?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What is the difference between summarizing and paraphrasing?
A: Summarizing and paraphrasing are two ways to restate information you have read. A summary is a shortened account that outlines the main points or ideas. Paraphrasing maintains the author's main ideas but puts them in the writer's own words. A sentence included from the original piece must have quotation marks around it.

6. New Information, Familiar Topics
Pre-viewing question
Q: What topics would you like to read more about?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: Describe something you read that provided new information about a familiar topic.
A: Answers will vary.

7. Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences
Pre-viewing question
Q: How does reading help you draw conclusions?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What is the difference between implicit and explicit information?
A: Implicit information is implied, or understood, and explicit information is information that is directly stated.

8. Statements of Fact and Opinion
Pre-viewing question
Q: How can reading help you form opinions?
A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question
Q: What is the difference between facts and opinions? Why is it important to differentiate between the two?
A: Facts are statements that can be proved. Opinions are personal beliefs or feelings. It is important to differentiate between the two so you can formulate your own opinions.