

Separating Fact from Opinion

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In the paragraph below, show which sentences are fact, opinion, and informed opinion.
(Highlight facts, underline opinions, and double underline informed opinions)

What is a fact?

What is an opinion?

What is an informed opinion?

Since it was enacted in 1982, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms has led to an expansion of the basic rights to which all Canadians are entitled and has had a profound effect on Canadian society.

Advocates for human rights group conclude that the expansion of human rights has been a benefit to Canadians and should be expanded further. As the examples in this chapter illustrate, the Charter has been instrumental in defining the rights of Canadians in relation to the police and the courts.

On the other hand, representatives of law enforcement agencies conclude that the expansion of rights in some areas has been misdirected, allowing criminals to escape punishment. The powers of the police to question, arrest, and conduct searches have been reduced.

Section 8 of the Charter guarantees everyone the right to be secure against unreasonable search and seizure. It severely restricts the ability of the police to carry out their duties. Police point to cases of drug dealers having charges dismissed on technicalities as a result of the way police carried out the arrest. However, it is necessary to protect the rights of citizens.

Fewer Young Criminals May Face Life-Without-Parole Sentences

Texas joined six other states this year in banning life sentences without the possibility of parole for young offenders.

The legislation reverses a 2005 law that allowed life sentences without parole under which four juveniles were incarcerated, according to Human Rights Watch. The new law will not retroactively affect those already incarcerated, although a measure may be introduced next year to change existing sentences.

Critics of lifetime incarceration for juveniles have long called for banning the practice because minors often act on impulse without the same level of emotional control of which adults are capable.

"A person's brain is not fully developed until he or she is an adult," said Deborah Kowalski, MD, Chair of the Children and Adolescents Committee of the Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians, in an interview with *Psychiatric News*.

A growing body of research on adolescent brain development has found that teens do not have the abilities of adults to make sound decisions, control their impulses, resist group pressures, or weigh the long-term consequences of their actions.

The new law "gives offenders an opportunity to make these changes and develop a better life," Kowalski said.

Human Rights Watch has found that the number of youths receiving such sentences was small until 1982 when the number began to rise until it peaked at 152 in 1996. Although the number of new sentences has declined since 1996, at least 2574 people are serving such sentences for crimes committed before they were 18 years old.

That research has led Congress to consider action on the issue. The Juvenile Justice Accountability and Improvement Act of 2009 (HR2289) would require states and the federal government to offer youth offenders meaningful opportunities for parole after serving 15 years of a life sentence.

a) What is the writer's opinion? Is it an informed opinion or an uninformed opinion?

b) What facts are used to back up the opinion?

c) Opinions are biased (having a preference for one idea over another, often considered unfair). Find an example of bias in the article. Does it take away from the opinion of the author?

d) What points would someone who held the opposite opinion to the author take?

Human Rights Graphic Organizer #1

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List one document (collection of official rules) that protects human rights (internationally, in Canada, and in BC). Show whether it can be enforced or not (such as by courts, police, military, etc.). Give 2 examples of situations that violate the human rights that are related to each document.

| | Name of Document | Can this document be enforced? | 2 examples of situations that violate the rights related to this document |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| International | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| Canada | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| British Columbia | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |

Human Rights Graphic Organizer #2

p.350 Step 2 #3

List 2 specific rights for each category or document.

| | |
|---|---|
| Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms | |
| Fundamental Freedoms | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| Democratic Rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| Equality Rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| Legal Rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| Mobility Rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| BC Human Rights Code | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | |
| Universal Declaration of Human Rights | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | |
| Children's Rights | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | |