

5 Opinion Paragraphs

In this unit, you will learn how to ...

- distinguish between fact and opinion.
- organize and write paragraphs expressing opinions and arguments.
- use transition words to express causality.
- use modal expressions to make recommendations.

○ Facts and opinions

A *fact* is a piece of information that is true: *That movie was three hours long.*

An *opinion* is an idea or belief about a particular subject: *That movie was boring.*

Writers use facts to support their opinions and to show why they hold their beliefs.

An opinion paragraph

I Read this letter to the editor of a newspaper. Answer the questions.

Dear Editor,

More people should ride bicycles into town. Last year, seventy-three percent of all workers drove their own car to work. Car traffic in town is terrible, parking places are hard to find, and pollution from cars is a real problem. Citizens who want a cleaner, nicer place to live ought to try this non-polluting form of transportation. Cycling is good exercise, too! The city must not allow this problem to get worse. Instead, people should ride bicycles to work and school—and enjoy the health benefits of daily exercise.

Bill Adams
Bellingham



- a. What is the main idea of this paragraph? Circle the sentence.
- b. What is the writer's purpose? Why did he write this letter?
- c. Underline the sentences or parts of sentences that show an opinion.
- d. Why do you think the writer included a fact in this paragraph?