

# BIAS

Bias is... prejudice in your beliefs for or against a person, group, or idea.

People demonstrate bias when they present their opinions as facts.

# Identifying Bias

It's important to identify bias when we read, listen, or watch...

Some people or groups want us to believe that their opinion is the truth, but they often do not tell the whole story, and use other tricks to get us to believe them...

# Detecting Bias – Four Steps

- Does the author exaggerate or use loaded words?
- Does the author use opinions instead of facts?
- Does the author leave out parts of the story?
- Does the author leave out other perspectives?

# Step 1 - Exaggeration

People demonstrate bias by exaggerating to make their point stronger. They use words like best/worst, always/never, or exaggerate numbers.

Examples:

...single-handedly winning the game...

...biggest cheater in the NBA...

...the guy who beat me up weighed like 1,000 pounds...

...we get 3 hours of homework in Social Studies every day...

# Step 1 - Loaded words

People demonstrate bias when using “loaded” words – words that have a very strong meaning and generate emotional responses from readers...

Examples:

...courageously pulled down the rebound...

...viciously hacks Russell Westbrook...

...eating school lunch is torture...

# Step 2 - Opinions

People demonstrate bias by stating opinions in their writing instead of facts. Be careful – people often state their opinions as if they were facts.

How can you tell the difference? Remember – facts can be proven. Opinions cannot.

Examples:

Jay-Z is taller than Drake (fact – we can measure)

Jay-Z is way cooler than Drake (opinion – no way to measure this)

## Step 3 - Not telling the whole story

People demonstrate bias by leaving out parts of the story that would weaken their argument.

Examples:

The Lebron James fan doesn't mention the contributions of his teammates (they had 68 points in that game)

The Thunder fan doesn't mention the bad calls that helped the Thunder

Mountain Dew loves to tell you about how good it tastes and how much energy it will give you, but doesn't talk about the high calories and caffeine that are very bad for you

## Step 4 - Leaving out other perspectives

People demonstrate bias by only telling one side of the story and leaving out other important perspectives – this happens all the time in historical documents.

Examples:

Neither the Thunder or Heat fan mentions how the other side might have seen the final play.

Kids do this all the time..."But I was just joking..." – they don't ever mention the fact that the other person does not like to be teased...

## Detecting Bias - Practice

Read the two accounts of American tourists visiting a Turkish market. Use the “Detecting Bias” worksheet, examining the SECOND story for signs of bias.