

## ANALYSIS

### 3 Identifying the type of article

Use the descriptions below to characterize the type of article you have read on pp. 90-91. Discuss your choice in class.

#### Info

### Types of articles

Articles can be distinguished by the way they are written and the purpose they serve. Sometimes you may find articles that contain features of more than one type.

**News article:** The main focus of a news article is on factual information and therefore it provides mainly answers to the who, what, where, when, why and how of an incident.

**Feature article:** It is an article that explores a news story in more depth. Its main purpose is not to tell you what has happened, but to look at the wider context of a news story. The author's opinion may shine through, but it should always be based on the analysis of the situation, not a personal attitude or bias.

**Editorial/opinion piece/comment(ary):** In this type of article, the author clearly expresses his or her view on a certain issue. The style of writing may be argumentative, entertaining, biased or evaluative.

### 4 Distinguishing between fact, opinion and bias

- a) You are now going to look more closely at the author's point of view. Read the article again and identify passages that express either facts or opinions. Write down examples with line numbers. Explain why you consider them facts or opinions.

#### Info

### Facts and opinions

**Facts:** An article usually contains a number of facts. A fact is something that is known to be true and can be proved to be so, for example with the help of figures, statistics and details of what happened.

**Opinions:** However, the author may also include his or her opinion, i.e. what he/she believes about the topic at hand. It should usually be clearly highlighted in an article so that the reader recognizes a statement as the author's view. As a reader though, one may not always notice it so easily since the author's opinion may not be introduced by phrases such as "I think" or "in my opinion".

- b) **Language awareness** Based on your findings in a), analyse whether the article is biased. Describe the effect on the reader. The following checklist may help you understand what bias means and then help you come to a conclusion.

#### Checklist

#### Bias

If the author's opinion is not explicitly stated and an article presents a one-sided version of the events or a topic, the article is said to be biased and must therefore be read very critically. Otherwise, there is the risk that one's opinion is influenced by the article without the reader noticing it.

The following points are typical of biased texts:

- positive and negative facts not balanced out, but the article leans to one side
- facts, quotations, personal statements and examples just or mainly supporting one side, possibly leaving out facts supporting the opposite view
- opinions presented as facts

Points to watch out for in the article here:

- ✓ Does the article present the pros and cons of gap years in a rather balanced way?
- ✓ Which statements, figures and examples are given in the article? Which side do they mainly support?
- ✓ Are the facts really facts or just opinions in disguise, e.g. by not giving the source of your information and just claiming something (e.g. *Most gappers ...*)

- c) Reassess what kind of newspaper article this is. Use your findings from b) for support.

