

PLUTO AND NEW HORIZONS

Scientists try to be very precise. Their training teaches them to make **formal** statements that can be verified by evidence. Of course, they are also human and when the space probe, New Horizons, launched in January 2006, flew past Pluto and successfully sent home lots of information, scientists, in their excitement, made a few **informal** remarks as well. Write **formal** or **informal** after each statement.



Pluto and its large moon, Charon, are 5 billion km from the Sun in the dim outskirts of the Solar System.

formal

Data from New Horizons will downlink to Earth over the next sixteen months.

formal

This observation is so tantalising, I'm finding it hard to patiently wait for more data to arrive.

informal

Pluto's surface, including the distinctive heart-shaped area, is covered by several different types of ice.

formal

Pluto is a really fascinating place – both beautiful and strange.

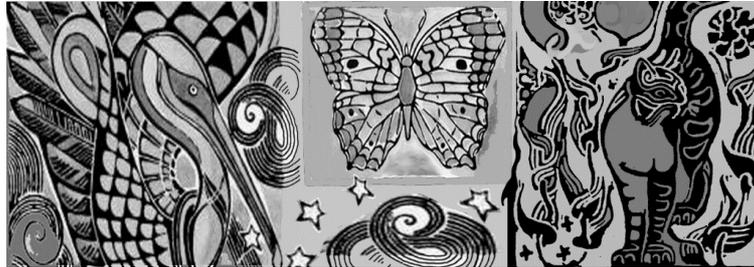
informal

I knew it was going to be cool. I just didn't know it was going to be this cool.

informal

THE ECCENTRIC ARTIST

Read this information about an American artist. It contains **facts** and **opinions**. Then tick the correct boxes.



Walter Anderson was born in New Orleans on 29 September 1903 and died in the same city on the coast of Mississippi on 30 November 1965. It was in Ocean Springs that the family opened Shearwater Pottery – still operating today – selling ceramics, paintings and woodcarvings. Managed by his older brother, Peter, it may have been the case that Walter, an emerging artist, found this highly frustrating. He referred to his work on small, decorated figures sold to the tourist trade as the manufacture of ‘widgets’.

His frustrations, the death of his father, and recurring bouts of malaria and fever possibly led to depression and a mental breakdown. No one can be sure. Between 1938 and 1940, he spent some time in and out of mental hospitals. It has been said that, on one occasion, he escaped by tying sheets together and climbing out of the window.

He spent his later years hidden away in a wooded corner of Shearwater inside a wooden shack which he kept padlocked. He must have been a lonely man. When he died and family members entered his sanctuary, they must have been amazed. Every inch of every wall and ceiling is painted in bright, jewel-like colours. The creatures of the coast – butterflies, crickets, deer, possum, blue jays, fish, frogs, lizards and alligators – are displayed in their habitats of entangled branches, flowers and rivers. Today, the sight is still breathtaking.

Few visitors to Shearwater today are allowed access to the simple shack that is, in effect, a shrine to the work of this artist. No doubt, many would love to see inside. For there, it still stands, a doorway to the creative mind of Walter Anderson.

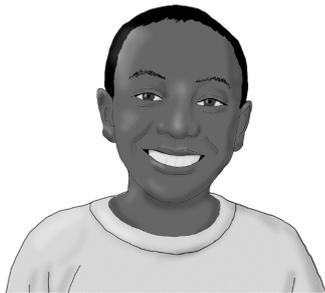
Now decide whether the following statements are **facts** or **opinions**.

statement	fact	opinion
Walter Anderson was born in New Orleans.	✓	
Shearwater Pottery is still operating today.	✓	
Walter found decorating figures for the tourist trade highly frustrating.	✓	
Walter suffered from recurring bouts of malaria and fever.	✓	
The death of his father and other problems led to a mental breakdown.		✓
He spent some time in and out of mental hospitals.	✓	
He escaped from a mental hospital by climbing out of the window using sheets he had tied together.		✓
He spent his later years in a wooden shack which he kept padlocked.	✓	
He must have been a lonely man.		✓
When family members entered his sanctuary, they must have been amazed.		✓
The colours of the paint are jewel-like.		✓
The creatures of the coast are displayed in their habitats.	✓	
The sight is breathtaking.		✓
Few visitors to Shearwater today are allowed access to the simple shack	✓	
a shrine to the work of this artist		✓
No doubt, many would love to see inside		✓

THE END-OF-YEAR CONCERT

Year 6 have just performed an end-of-year musical covering some of the historical events during and after the Second World War. Look at these speech bubbles and underline the facts.

Ten of us in the class were the evacuees. I loved it. I had to trudge round the hall among all the parents. My best friend, Haaruun, thought I looked like a complete and total misery. What was horrible was having to wear the gas mask and squeeze into the cardboard Anderson Shelter.



I enjoyed singing 'We'll Meet Again'. Seemed to set off a few tears among the audience. Maybe it was Karl's tuneless singing that did it. I played Winston Churchill. If Mum and Dad had kept quiet about having a trick cigar at home, I might have been the Queen.



I had two parts. I was in charge of the sound effects and the CD player. I did a pretty good job too. My timing was perfect. I sort of held the whole thing together in a way. I had to stand in for one of the rock 'n roll dancers when Anita was scared by Elvis's wig.



I know I'd make a great astronaut. That's probably why I was picked to play the part of Neil Armstrong. A pity the CD player jumped during the fanfare when I was planting the flag on the Moon. I just improvised a bit of moon walking. Audience loved it.



WHAT THE ACTORS THOUGHT

Those taking part in the Year 6 concert expressed some views about the show. Next to each person, write down **two** of their **opinions**.



I loved it.
What was horrible was having to wear the gas mask and squeeze into the cardboard Anderson shelter.



Seemed to set off a few tears among the audience.
Maybe it was Karl's tuneless singing that did it.



I did a pretty good job too.
My timing was perfect.
I sort of held the whole thing together in a way.



That's probably why I was picked to play the part of Neil Armstrong.
A pity the CD player jumped...
Audience loved it.

The main idea

Strand: Comprehension

National Curriculum reference:

- identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph

Reading Test / Content Domain links: 2a, 2b, 2c, 2f