

## Whom Do You Trust?

**Decide whether you trust the judgment of the narrators of the following little stories by answering the questions below**

**1.** Oh, man, these teachers. I mean, they got it in for me. Four different teachers send me to the dean in the same month. It must be a conspiracy. And, I tell you, I don't deserve it. Nope. This is just another classic case of discrimination.

- a. Is this a case of discrimination?
- b. What makes the narrator reliable/unreliable?
- c. What do you think is the truth of the situation? (Remember, if you decided the narrator is unreliable, use your knowledge about human nature to determine what may be the truth of the situation).

**2.** The buildings—they are so beautiful. We have nothing like them in my country. And the sun, when it shines in the windows, it is golden. Even the—what are they called—sidewalks. They glisten. Perhaps they have diamonds in them. I am so lucky to be here in Milwaukee. It is surely the most beautiful city in all the world.

- a. Is Milwaukee the most beautiful city in all the world?
- b. What makes the narrator reliable/unreliable?
- c. What do you think is the truth of the situation? (Remember, if you decided the narrator is unreliable, use your knowledge about human nature to determine what may be the truth of the situation).

**3.** Well, today's the day. I have to break up with her. I'm getting kidded all the time by the guys. They say she's not cool enough for me. Just because she dresses a little differently and is do involved in school. And I like her. A lot. But I can't stand the kidding. I'm afraid everyone will start to think I'm not cool enough for them. So I'll just have to tell her I can't see her anymore.

- a. Does the narrator like the girl a lot?
- b. What makes the narrator reliable/unreliable?
- c. What do you think is the truth of the situation? (Remember, if you decided the narrator is unreliable, use your knowledge about human nature to determine what may be the truth of the situation).

**4.** My daughter came home and told me that Mr. Carl taught something that was way too hard for students and then refused to explain it to them. That's when she showed me her exam that she failed. She said she wasn't the only one who failed the exam that a bunch of other students did as well. I think Mr. Carl should be fired.

- a. Should Mr. Carl be fired?
- b. What makes the narrator reliable/unreliable?
- c. What do you think is the truth of the situation? (Remember, if you decided the narrator is unreliable, use your knowledge about human nature to determine what may be the truth of the situation).

**5.** Sometimes teachers can be so unfair. Take what happened to Jane this afternoon in English. Jane worked so hard on her paper. She finished it last week and asked me to read it. It was, quite frankly, better than mine. Jane had always done solid work, but this was exceptional. When I told her that I thought her work was better than mine, she blushed. She said, "you always get the highest mark in the class, though. And you're the editor of the paper. You're just saying that." I reminded her that this was the only time I had ever said it, even though I had read many of her papers before. This afternoon we got the papers back—two days ahead of schedule. I received my usual A, but I couldn't be happy about it. Jane received her usual B. After class I went up to Mr. Smith and asked whether he would consider rereading Jane's paper. I told him that I had read it and that I thought it was an exceptional work. He started shouting that it wasn't my place to accuse him of being careless. I tried to tell him that I had no such thoughts, that I realized with so many papers to grade, teachers cannot spend too long with any one paper. He shouted that he had taken exceptional care with everyone's paper and that I had no right to question his dedication. I feel so sorry for Jane. She deserved a better mark. She really did.

- a. Was Mr. Smith unfair?
- b. What makes the narrator reliable/unreliable?
- c. What do you think is the truth of the situation? (Remember, if you decided the narrator is unreliable, use your knowledge about human nature to determine what may be the truth of the situation).

**6.** I owe it to the shareholders of this company to make as big a profit as possible. And if that involves forcing aging and expensive employees into quitting, well, that's just the way of the world. Can you believe that one of them sued me? And hired a female lawyer to boot! Age discrimination! What a joke. Just like lady lawyers. Of course, my time is much too valuable to waste it in court. Maybe a bribe. A little cash will certainly make that lady lawyer handle this case, shall we say, a little less aggressively. One thing you can count on: everyone has a price, and for most, that price isn't very high.

- a. Is it certain that the opposing lawyer will handle the case less aggressively?
- b. What makes the narrator reliable/unreliable?
- c. What do you think is the truth of the situation? (Remember, if you decided the narrator is unreliable, use your knowledge about human nature to determine what may be the truth of the situation).

**7.** Of course, I'm upset. Anyone would be. She leaves me for no reason. To take up with that slime. I break into a sweat whenever I think about it. And I think about it. Always. I was so good to her. Three, four, five phone calls a day. Flowers twice a week. And all this after only one date. What more could any woman ask? Now I sit in my car outside her door, watching, waiting, hoping to catch even a glimpse of her. But she is with him. I know what she is. It makes me sweat just to think about it.

- a. Was the narrator so good to the woman?
- b. What makes the narrator reliable/unreliable?
- c. What do you think is the truth of the situation? (Remember, if you decided the narrator is unreliable, use your knowledge about human nature to determine what may be the truth of the situation).