Formal and informal words 1

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

ADVANCED | C1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Match each register concept with its meaning.

1 register	____	a language choice shaped for intended recipients
2 tenor	____	b expression associated with informal conversation
3 field	____	c subject matter and activity represented in discourse
4 mode	____	d relationship and roles between participants
5 formality	____	e noun form used to package a process or quality
6 colloquialism	____	f channel and rhetorical organisation of communication
7 euphemism	____	g speaker or writer's position, certainty or evaluation
8 nominalisation	____	h variety selected according to situation and purpose
9 stance	____	i indirect or mild expression replacing a sensitive one
10 audience design	____	j degree of social distance, convention and explicitness

2 Complete the register-analysis collocations.

audience | **discursive** | **interpersonal** | **lexical** | **mitigated** | **nominal** | **register** | **stance**

1 a shift in _____

2 _____ variation

3 express epistemic _____

4 _____ relations

5 a _____ formulation

6 _____ density

7 _____ choices

8 _____ design

3 Choose the concept that best explains the feature.

1 Changing style for expert readers: *audience design / euphemism*.

2 Using *kids* in conversation: *colloquialism / nominalisation*.

3 Saying *passed away* instead of died: *euphemism / field*.

4 Replacing *we decided* with *the decision*: *nominalisation / tenor*.

5 Expressing cautious commitment with *may*: *stance / mode*.

6 Expert-novice relations shape language: *tenor / field*.

Formal and informal words 1

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

ADVANCED | C1

4 Complete the discourse analysis with terms from the box.

audience design | colloquialism | euphemism | field | formality | mode | nominalisation | register | stance | tenor

The text's **1** _____ reflects an institutional setting. Its technical **2** _____ concerns public health, while its **3** _____ positions an expert addressing non-specialists. The written **4** _____ supports dense organisation. Frequent **5** _____ packages processes as nouns, and cautious modals express **6** _____. A single **7** _____ creates informality; a **8** _____ softens a sensitive point. These choices reveal careful **9** _____ and a high degree of **10** _____.

5 Read the text and answer the questions concisely.

Register as rhetorical choice

Formal and informal are not fixed properties of individual words. A term acquires value through genre, relationship, institutional expectations and surrounding language. Strategic informality can build solidarity or make expertise accessible, whereas unnecessary formality can conceal responsibility and exclude readers. Effective register management therefore requires ethical as well as stylistic judgment: writers decide not only what sounds appropriate, but whose interests a particular style serves.

1 Are formality values fixed in individual words? _____

2 Which four factors shape a term's value? _____

3 What can strategic informality achieve? _____

4 What can unnecessary formality conceal? _____

5 Why is register management ethical? _____

6 What question should writers ask about style? _____

6 Paraphrase using the expression in capitals.

1 The writer adapted the style for specialists. **AUDIENCE** _

2 The noun phrase concealed who acted. **NOMINALISATION** _

3 The modal expressed cautious commitment. **STANCE** __

4 The phrase softened an unpleasant fact. **EUPHEMISM** _

OVER TO YOU

Write a **160-190 word** critical comparison of formal and informal versions of the same message. Analyse audience, purpose, power and rhetorical effect.

[ ] Use at least ten target terms or collocations. [ ] Analyse choices rather than label them only. [ ] Address ethical effects.

Formal and informal words 1

ANSWER KEY

1 Register concepts

1 **h** 2 **d** 3 **c** 4 **f** 5 **j** 6 **b** 7 **i** 8 **e** 9 **g** 10 **a**

2 Register-analysis collocations

1 **register** 2 **lexical** 3 **stance** 4 **interpersonal** 5 **mitigated** 6 **nominal** 7 **discursive** 8 **audience**

3 Conceptual distinctions

1 **audience design** 2 **colloquialism** 3 **euphemism**
4 **nominalisation** 5 **stance** 6 **tenor**

4 Discourse analysis

1 **register** 2 **field** 3 **tenor** 4 **mode** 5 **nominalisation**
6 **stance** 7 **colloquialism** 8 **euphemism** 9 **audience design** 10 **formality**

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 No. 2 Genre, relationship, institutional expectations and surrounding language.
3 Build solidarity or improve access. 4 Responsibility. 5 Style serves interests and affects access. 6 Whose interests it serves.

6 Paraphrasing - possible answers

1 This was **audience design**. 2 **Nominalisation** concealed agency. 3 The modal expressed **stance**. 4 The phrase was a **euphemism**.

Over to you: Answers will vary. Check conceptual precision, rhetorical analysis and ethical awareness.