Formal and informal words 2

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

UPPER-INTERMEDIATE | B2

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Match each everyday expression with its measured formal alternative.

1 a bit	____	a approximately
2 a lot	____	b probable
3 maybe	____	c appears
4 about	____	d slightly
5 clear	____	e perhaps
6 enough	____	f evident
7 likely	____	g considerably
8 seems	____	h sufficient

2 Complete the cautious reporting expressions.

appears | **approximately** | **considerably** | **evidence** | **extent** | **perhaps** | **relatively** | **suggests**

1 the data _____ that

2 it _____ likely that

3 _____ 40 per cent

4 increased _____

5 to a limited _____

6 _____ little variation

7 the available _____

8 this _____ reflects uncertainty

3 Choose the appropriately qualified statement.

1 The intervention *worked / appears to have been effective*.

2 The sample was *tiny / relatively small*.

3 Costs rose *a lot / considerably*.

4 *Maybe / Perhaps* the pattern reflects age.

5 *About / Approximately* 60 per cent responded.

6 The evidence is *obviously clear / reasonably persuasive*.

7 This proves / *This suggests* an association.

8 There was *enough / sufficient* time for analysis.

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4 Complete the evaluation with words from the box.

appears | approximately | considerably | evident | perhaps | probable | relatively | sufficient

The revised programme **1** _____ to have improved attendance. **2** _____ 65 per cent of participants completed the course, a **3** _____ high proportion. Improvement was **4** _____ in all groups but was **5** _____ greater among younger learners. It is **6** _____ that flexible scheduling contributed. **7** _____ other factors were also involved. The evidence is **8** _____ for a cautious recommendation.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

Hedging is not weakness

Academic and professional writers qualify claims when evidence has limits. Words such as may, appears and relatively distinguish observation from certainty. This is not evasiveness when the degree of confidence is stated accurately. However, excessive hedging can make a conclusion unusably vague, just as excessive certainty can overstate the evidence. Effective qualification calibrates language to the quality and scope of support.

1 Why do writers qualify claims? _____

2 Name two hedging words from the text. _____

3 Is accurate hedging necessarily evasive? _____

4 What can excessive hedging cause? _____

5 What can excessive certainty do? _____

6 What should qualification match? _____

6 Rewrite using the expression in capitals.

1 About half responded. **APPROXIMATELY** _____

2 The evidence shows a small effect. **SLIGHT** _____

3 Maybe cost explains the pattern. **PERHAPS** _____

4 The result seems reliable. **APPEARS** _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a **120-150 word** balanced evaluation of a programme, study or proposal, carefully qualifying the strength of each claim.

[ ] Use at least ten qualifying expressions. [ ] Avoid both overclaiming and vagueness. [ ] Link confidence to evidence.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Measured alternatives

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

2 Cautious reporting

1 **suggests** 2 **appears** 3 **approximately** 4 **considerably** 5 **extent** 6 **relatively** 7 **evidence** 8 **perhaps**

3 Qualified statements

1 **appears to have been effective** 2 **relatively small** 3 **considerably** 4 **Perhaps**
5 **Approximately** 6 **reasonably persuasive** 7 **This suggests** 8 **sufficient**

4 Evaluation

1 **appears** 2 **Approximately** 3 **relatively** 4 **evident** 5 **considerably** 6 **probable** 7 **Perhaps** 8 **sufficient**

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 Evidence has limits. 2 Any two: may, appears, relatively. 3 No.
4 An unusably vague conclusion. 5 Overstate evidence. 6 The quality and scope of support.

6 Rewriting - possible answers

1 **Approximately** half responded. 2 The evidence shows a **slight** effect. 3 **Perhaps** cost explains the pattern. 4 The result **appears** reliable.

Over to you: Answers will vary. Check calibration, evidence and clarity of conclusions.