Headline English

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

ADVANCED | C1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Match each critical headline concept with its meaning.

1 transitivity framing	____	a choosing what receives greatest attention
2 agent deletion	____	b wording that invites curiosity while withholding key information
3 presupposition trigger	____	c presenting an institution or place as an actor
4 evaluative loading	____	d representing who acts, who is affected and by what process
5 metonymic agency	____	e lexical material that carries a value judgement
6 epistemic calibration	____	f expression that treats information as already accepted
7 clickbait gap	____	g adjustment of certainty to available evidence
8 foregrounding	____	h omission of the actor responsible for an event

2 Complete the critical collocations.

agent | **attention** | **clickbait** | **epistemic** | **evaluative** | **metonymic** | **presupposition** | **transitivity**

1 _____ framing

2 _____ deletion

3 a _____ trigger

4 _____ loading

5 _____ agency

6 _____ calibration

7 a _____ information gap

8 direct reader _____

3 Choose the concept that best explains the effect.

1 *Protesters Clash with Police* assigns active roles through *transitivity framing / clickbait gap*.

2 *Mistakes Were Made* removes responsibility through *agent deletion / metonymic agency*.

3 *Minister Admits Policy Failed* treats failure as accepted via a *presupposition trigger / foregrounding*.

4 *Brutal Cuts Hit Families* carries strong *evaluative loading / epistemic calibration*.

5 *Brussels Demands Reform* uses place-for-institution *metonymic agency / agent deletion*.

6 *Study May Link Diet to Sleep* uses *epistemic calibration / clickbait gap*.

7 *You Won't Believe What Happened Next* creates a *clickbait gap / presupposition trigger*.

8 Placing job losses first produces *foregrounding / metonymic agency*.

4 Complete the editorial analysis with terms from the box.

agent deletion | clickbait gap | epistemic calibration | evaluative loading | foregrounding | metonymic agency | presupposition trigger | transitivity framing

The headline's **1** _____ casts officials as actors and residents as affected participants. A passive alternative would create **2** _____. The verb *admits* is a **3** _____, treating the embedded claim as true, while *reckless* adds **4** _____. Naming *the capital* as decision-maker uses **5** _____. The word *may* provides **6** _____. A teaser withholds the outcome through a **7** _____. Across the page, size and position produce **8** _____ of conflict over cooperation.

5 Read the text and answer the questions concisely.

A headline is a theory of relevance

Selection and compression do not merely shorten a story; they propose what matters within it. Naming an actor assigns visibility, choosing a verb suggests a causal structure, and omitting uncertainty changes the apparent strength of evidence. These effects can arise without deliberate deception. Nevertheless, repetition across many headlines may stabilise a frame: migration becomes pressure, negotiation becomes surrender, and public spending becomes a burden. Responsible editing tests factual accuracy, inferential implications and patterned effects across coverage.

1 What does headline compression propose? _____

2 What does naming an actor assign? _____

3 What can verb choice suggest? _____

4 What happens when uncertainty is omitted? _____

5 Can framing occur without deliberate deception? _____

6 What three dimensions should editors test? _____

6 Paraphrase using the expression in capitals.

1 The passive removes the responsible actor. **DELETION** __

2 The verb presents the claim as already true. **PRESUPPOSES** _

3 The modal accurately limits certainty. **CALIBRATES** ___

4 Page position gives the dispute prominence. **FOREGROUNDS** _

OVER TO YOU

Write a **160-190 word** critical comparison of two headlines about the same event. Analyse agency, certainty, evaluation and likely reader inference.

[ ] Use at least eight analytical terms. [ ] Separate fact from inference. [ ] Propose a transparent alternative.

ANSWER KEY

1 Critical headline concepts

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

2 Critical collocations

1 **transitivity** 2 **agent** 3 **presupposition** 4 **evaluative** 5 **metonymic** 6 **epistemic** 7 **clickbait** 8 **attention**

3 Conceptual distinctions

1 **transitivity framing** 2 **agent deletion** 3 **presupposition trigger** 4 **evaluative loading**
5 **metonymic agency** 6 **epistemic calibration** 7 **clickbait gap** 8 **foregrounding**

4 Editorial analysis

1 **transitivity framing** 2 **agent deletion** 3 **presupposition trigger** 4 **evaluative loading**
5 **metonymic agency** 6 **epistemic calibration** 7 **clickbait gap** 8 **foregrounding**

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 What matters in a story. 2 Visibility. 3 A causal structure. 4 Evidence appears stronger.
5 Yes. 6 Factual accuracy, inferential implications and patterned effects.

6 Paraphrasing - possible answers

1 The passive creates agent **deletion**. 2 The verb **presupposes** the claim is true. 3 The modal **calibrates** certainty. 4 Page position **foregrounds** the dispute.

Over to you: Answers will vary. Check agency, evidence, inference and editorial transparency.