

Lesson Plan: News and media language

Level	Intermediate / Advanced (B1–C1)
Time	60–90 minutes
Skills	Vocabulary, reading, speaking
Focus	Headline conventions; reporting verbs and their nuance; news vocabulary; media register

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand the distinctive features of newspaper headlines
- Use reporting verbs accurately — with the nuance each carries
- Read and understand news articles with confidence
- Discuss news stories using media-specific vocabulary

TARGET LANGUAGE & EXAMPLES

Headline conventions

- Present tense for past events: Government RAISES taxes (not raised)
- Infinitive for future: President TO RESIGN
- Articles and auxiliaries often omitted: Hundreds Injured in Train Crash
- Nouns as verbs/adjectives: SHOCK verdict / BID to win / BOOST for tourism

Key news vocabulary

- to report, claim, allege, confirm, deny, reveal, warn, announce
- breaking news, exclusive, source, correspondent, statement, spokesperson
- crisis, conflict, policy, legislation, reform, summit, bilateral talks

Reporting verbs and their nuance

- said/told — neutral: reports speech without judgment
- claimed/alleged — suggests the statement is disputed or unconfirmed
- warned — implies danger or negative consequences are possible
- revealed — suggests new, surprising, previously hidden information
- admitted — suggests reluctant acknowledgment of something negative
- denied — contradicts a specific claim

Meaning & Nuance

Reporting verb	Nuance	Example
said	neutral — simply reports speech	The minister said the situation was under control.
claimed	statement is disputed	The company claimed no rules were broken.
alleged	stronger doubt — often legal	The report alleges widespread corruption.
warned	implies negative consequences	Scientists warned that temperatures could rise by 3°C.

admitted	reluctant acknowledgment	The CEO admitted the product had safety flaws.
denied	contradicts a specific claim	The government denied any involvement.
revealed	surprising new information	An investigation revealed the extent of the fraud.

LESSON PROCEDURE

1. Warm-up: Decode the headline (10 min)

Task: Students rewrite 5 headlines in full, grammatical sentences.

- 'PM TO FACE VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE' → 'The Prime Minister is going to face a vote of no confidence.'
- Discuss: why do headlines omit articles and use present tense?

2. Vocabulary presentation (15 min)

Task: Reporting verbs — nuance changes the meaning significantly.

- 'She said' vs. 'She alleged' vs. 'She admitted' — how does each shift the reader's interpretation?
- Register: breaking news language vs. analysis piece language.

3. News analysis task (20 min)

Task: Students read a short news article and identify: reporting verbs, headline conventions, key vocabulary.

- Questions: who said what? Are any claims disputed? What are the confirmed facts?

→ *Builds authentic reading skills in a media context.*

4. Create a news story (25 min)

Task: Students write a short news report (100 words) on a real or invented event.

- Must include: a headline (using conventions), 3+ reporting verbs, key news vocabulary.
- Present the story to the class as if reading the news.

TEACHER NOTES

- News language is a goldmine for vocabulary, grammar, and cultural awareness simultaneously.
- Reporting verbs with nuances are frequently tested at B2/C1 level in Cambridge and IELTS exams.

EXTENSION / HOMEWORK

Choose one or more:

1. Read a news article and write a 100-word summary using at least 5 reporting verbs.
2. Rewrite 5 newspaper headlines in full grammatical sentences.
3. Write your own news article using headline conventions and at least 4 reporting verbs.