

# STYLE

## Newspaper Headlines

Certain words are used very often in newspaper headlines because they are short or sound dramatic. Some of these words are not common in ordinary language or are used in a different sense. Headlines also omit certain words and use colloquial expressions, abbreviations and different verb tenses, e.g. STAR TO WED (A film star is going to get married).

- 1 For each of the following headlines find the sentence below which expresses it as it would appear in an ordinary news announcement.

**'POLLS RIGGED' CHARGES  
TWO SOUGHT AFTER BREAK-OUT DRAMA  
CABINET RESHUFFLE URGED  
SERVICE CHIEFS GAGGED: TWO QUIT  
GEMS HAUL SEIZED IN SWOOP**

- (a) Allegations have been made that election results were falsified.
- (b) Police raided a house today and took possession of jewellery stolen in a recent robbery.
- (c) Police are hunting two men who made a daring escape from prison by helicopter.
- (d) Senior officers of the armed forces have been instructed not to talk to the media and, as a result, two of them have resigned.
- (e) Strong appeals have been made to the Prime Minister to make changes in his ministers.

- 2 Match each of the following words from the headlines above with its meaning below.

<b>CHIEF</b>	<b>DRAMA</b>	<b>RESHUFFLE</b>	<b>GAG</b>	<b>GEMS</b>	<b>SWOOP</b>
<b>POLL(S)</b>	<b>QUIT</b>	<b>SEEK/SOUGHT</b>	<b>RIG</b>	<b>HAUL</b>	

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (a) jewels  | (g) to silence, censor, censorship               |
| (b) goods stolen in robbery or taken by police or customs | (h) exciting, dramatic event                     |
| (c) to falsify  | (i) election, voting, public opinion survey      |
| (d) director, high-ranking officer or official            | (j) to rearrange, rearrangement (of senior jobs) |
| (e) raid, to raid   | (k) to resign, leave                             |
| (f) to look for, ask for, want                            |  |

- 3 Express each of the following headlines as it would appear in an ordinary news announcement.

- (a) **EDITORS URGE END TO PRESS GAG**
- (b) **INDIA SEEKS US AID**
- (c) **GEM SMUGGLERS CAUGHT IN PORT SWOOP**
- (d) **BANK RAID CASH HAUL FOUND: 3 CHARGED**
- (e) **HEAD QUILTS OVER 'RIGGED' EXAM RESULTS**
- (f) **RAIL CHIEFS RESHUFFLED AFTER BIG LOSSES**
- (g) **GOVT DEFEATED IN POLL DRAMA**

4 For each of the following words, all frequently used in headlines, find the meaning in the list below. It will help you if you look to see how they are used in the headlines at the foot of the exercise. Then express each headline as it would appear in an ordinary news announcement.

<b>MOVE</b>	<b>CLASH</b>	<b>WOO</b>	<b>BID</b>	<b>FOIL</b>	<b>HALT</b>
<b>OUST</b>	<b>QUIZ</b>	<b>PLEA</b>	<b>BAN</b>	<b>BACK</b>	<b>FLEE</b>

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (a) to prevent                                       | (g) support, to support                               |
| (b) strong request, call for help, appeal            | (h) to force out of office, remove from high position |
| (c) attempt, to attempt                              | (i) run away from, escape                             |
| (d) stop, to stop                                    | (j) to try to attract                                 |
| (e) to prohibit, prohibition                         | (k) action, step, to take action                      |
| (f) fighting, argument, conflict, to argue, to fight | (l) to question, interrogate                          |

- (a) **DICTATOR OUSTED: PLEA FOR CALM**  
 (b) **NEW MOVES TO HALT BORDER CLASHES**  
 (c) **GOVT BACKS ARMS BAN TO WOO LEFT**  
 (d) **KIDNAP BID FOILED: 3 QUIZZED, 2 FLEE**

5 Instructions as above.

<b>SPLIT</b>	<b>LEAK</b>	<b>RIDDLE</b>	<b>PROBE</b>	<b>AXE</b>	<b>LIFT</b>
<b>CURB</b>	<b>BAFFLED</b>	<b>STORM</b>	<b>RAP</b>	<b>CALL</b>	<b>ENVOY</b>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (a) mystery                                    | (g) at a loss to explain, mystified      |
| (b) to escape, escape (of secret information)  | (h) restrict, restriction                |
| (c) diplomat, ambassador                       | (i) divide, division                     |
| (d) close, dismiss, cancel, closure, dismissal | (j) investigate, investigation           |
| (e) remove (restrictions, prohibitions)        | (k) to demand, to appeal, demand, appeal |
| (f) criticize, reprimand                       | (l) angry argument                       |

- (a) **CABINET LEAK: CALL FOR PROBE**  
 (b) **EEC SPLIT OVER LIFTING OF TRAVEL CURBS**  
 (c) **DEAD ENVOY RIDDLE: YARD BAFFLED**  
 (d) **PM RAPS BBC IN JOBS AXE STORM**

6 Make brief headlines from the following news stories.

- (a) Eighteen people were killed when the army tried to overthrow the government.  
 (b) A leading diplomat has been mysteriously murdered.  
 (c) The Prime Minister is trying to win the support of the coal miners' trade unions.  
 (d) The director of British Petroleum has been forced to resign.  
 (e) A Member of Parliament was questioned by the police in an investigation into the use of illegal drugs.

7 Express the following headlines in ordinary English.

- (a) **PEER DIES IN FLATS BLAZE DRAMA**  
 (b) **BLAST TOLL RISING: WITNESSES SOUGHT**  
 (c) **COMMONS STORM OVER DEFENCE CUTS**  
 (d) **M-WAY DEATH CRASH: BRITON HELD**