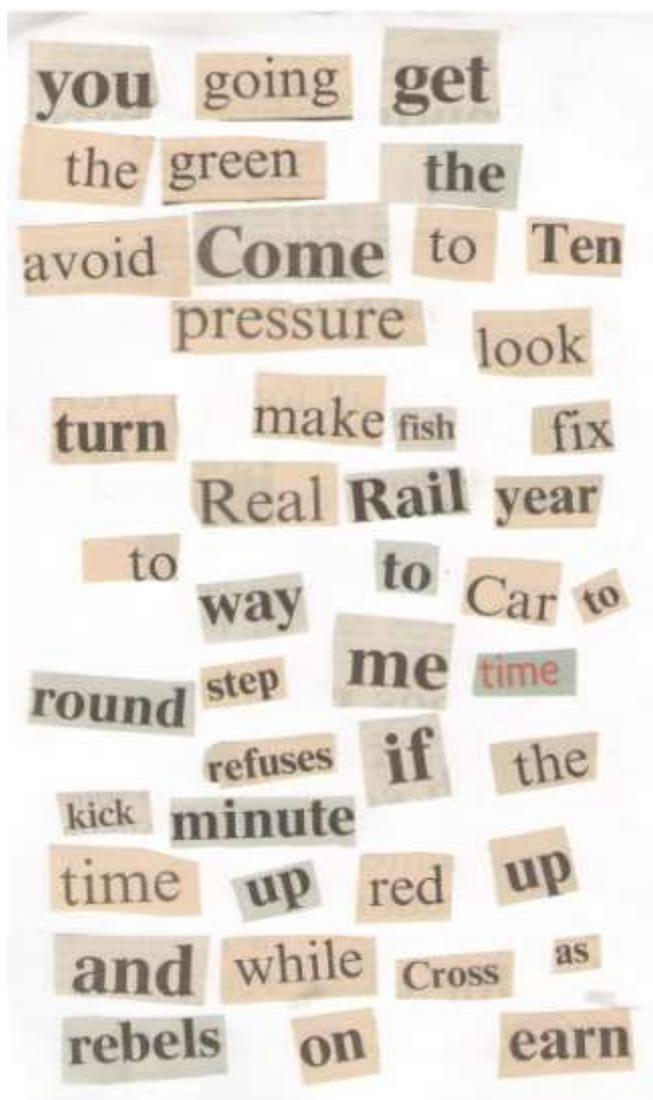


Making headlines/précis

Level: Can be used for all secondary classes – with different extension activities for older and younger students. The idea for this activity is simple. You need a (preferably English-language) newspaper – or you can print selected pages from the Internet. Cut out various words from various headlines, and stick them onto a piece of paper.



1. Brainstorm/explain/elicite the features of newspaper headlines, including why they are so short and succinct. (It's worth mentioning that in many English-speaking countries, the day's headline is used to advertise the newspaper – outside newsagent's shops, on street corners etc). **see notes below**

2. Students then, in small groups, write headlines (in a limited time – 1-2 minutes) using first five words, then four, then three, then two words.

3. *Younger students:* Pass on the four headlines to another group, who have to rewrite them using correct structures and verb tenses.

Older students: Each group's headlines get passed on to the next group, who have to invent and write introductions to a potential newspaper article. Encourage them to be imaginative and concise, strictly answering the following questions WHAT WHEN WHERE WHO WHY and a little bit of HOW – in two or three sentences.

Some of the features of newspaper headlines are:-

- No articles
- Noun phrases – headlines made up of two or more words – *Big explosion in factory; Road deaths up*
- Noun strings (3, 4 or even 5 nouns together: *Toyota remote accelerator enquiry*)
- Verb changes – verbs are often in simple/infinite form (without *to*). An additional mini-exercise can be to get students, in pairs, to write headlines correctly, using the correct verb tenses -eg.

Forgotten Brother Appears = A forgotten brother has appeared (after a long period of time).

Professors Protest Pay Cuts = Professors are protesting pay cuts (at the university).

Mayor to Open Shopping Mall = The mayor is going to open a new shopping mall.

James Wood to Visit Portland = (Famous actor) James Wood is going to visit Portland soon.

Man Killed in Accident = A Man has been killed in an accident.

Tommy the Dog Named Hero = Tommy the Dog has been named a hero (by the mayor).