

Hedging Language

Expressing caution and tentativeness in academic writing

NAME _____

DATE _____

KEY RULE:

Hedges soften claims: might, appear to, tend to, broadly, arguably.

1 Hedging Modals & Verbs

EASY

Choose the best hedging expression.

Word bank: might / may / could / would appear to

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. The results ____ suggest a link. | 2. This ____ indicate a wider problem. |
| 3. Prices ____ continue to rise. | 4. The data ____ point to a trend. |
| 5. She ____ have misunderstood. | 6. The findings ____ be significant. |
| 7. This ____ be seen weakness. | 8. The situation ____ improve. |
| 9. Their approach ____ work better. | 10. The proposal ____ be reconsidered. |

2 Hedging Adverbs & Phrases

MEDIUM

Choose the correct hedging phrase.

Word bank: Broadly speaking / largely / arguably / to some extent

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. ____, the plan has merit. | 2. The study is ____ accurate. |
| 3. ____, technology brings risks. | 4. The findings are ____ positive. |
| 5. ____, this is the best approach. | 6. This is ____ a complex issue. |
| 7. The results are ____ conclusive. | 8. ____, costs will rise. |
| 9. The approach is ____ effective. | 10. ____, the benefits outweigh risks. |

3 Hedging with It-Constructions

HARD

Choose the correct it-hedge.

Word bank: It seems / It appears / It could be argued

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. ____ that change is needed. | 2. ____ that costs will rise. |
| 3. ____ that this is the best way. | 4. ____ that more research is due. |
| 5. ____ to be a widespread issue. | 6. ____ that views are mixed. |
| 7. ____ that the plan will work. | 8. ____ that problems exist. |
| 9. ____ clear there is no easy fix. | 10. ____ to suggest a causal link. |

4

Rewrite Using Hedging Language**VERY HARD**

Rewrite to make the claim more tentative.

1. Technology causes inequality.

3. This proves the theory correct.

5. Climate change is man-made.

7. The drug cures the disease.

9. This method is superior.

2. The plan will fail completely.

4. The economy will recover fast.

6. This is the wrong approach.

8. She made the wrong decision.

10. The data shows a clear link.

Answer Key

Check your answers below

1 Exercise 1 Hedging Modals & Verbs

- | | |
|-------------------|----------|
| 1 would appear to | 6 could |
| 2 might | 7 could |
| 3 may | 8 might |
| 4 could | 9 could |
| 5 may | 10 might |

2 Exercise 2 Hedging Adverbs & Phrases

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Broadly speaking | 6 arguably |
| 2 largely | 7 not entirely |
| 3 Arguably | 8 In all likelihood |
| 4 broadly | 9 relatively |
| 5 To some extent | 10 On the whole |

3 Exercise 3 Hedging with It-Constructions

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 It seems | 6 It seems |
| 2 It appears | 7 It might be hoped |
| 3 It could be argued | 8 It is generally acknowledged |
| 4 It is worth noting | 9 It is not entirely |
| 5 It appears | 10 There is evidence |

4 Exercise 4 Rewrite Using Hedging Language

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Technology may contribute to inequality. | 6 This could be seen wrong approach. |
| 2 The plan could potentially fail. | 7 The drug appears to help treat the disease. |
| 3 This would appear to support the theory. | 8 She may have made the wrong decision. |
| 4 The economy might recover relatively quickly. | 9 This method could be considered superior. |
| 5 Climate change is largely considered to be man-made. | 10 The data appears to suggest a possible link. |