



Hedging

Sometimes you do not want to state a fact too categorically as you are not sure that you can prove that it is true. You can use a range of expressions to distance yourself from facts and opinions. This is called hedging.

Hedging with verbs

<p><u>Appear and Seem</u></p> <p>It <u>seems</u> that the President may soon stand down. It <u>appears</u> that the news reports are true. The weather <u>appears</u> to be changing The outcome <u>seems</u> to be inevitable.</p>	<p>And add more distance, by adding <u>Would</u>:</p> <p>It <u>would seem</u> that the President may soon stand down. It <u>would appear</u> that the news reports are true. The weather <u>would appear</u> to be changing The outcome <u>would seem</u> to be inevitable.</p>
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Hedging with the passive

Using the passive shows that an opinion is not necessarily your own.

<p>To be widely recognised that To (not) be believed To be (not) known</p>	<p>It <u>is widely recognised that</u> the President may soon stand down. There <u>are not believed</u> to be any survivors. It <u>is not known</u> whether he will accept the offer.</p>
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Hedging with noun phrases

<p>There is little doubt that... There is some doubt that... There is no doubt that... There is little evidence that...</p>	<p>the President will soon stand down.</p>
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Practice

Can you hedge these phrases?

- Life is healthier 800 metres above sea level.
- Football causes social unrest.
- Sedentary lifestyles are changing the shape of our bodies.
- Most people prefer to live in cities.
- Edinburgh is the best city in the UK.
- Exams are easier now.
- Being a lawyer is a great job.
- It is better to give than receive.
- Girls are easier to raise than boys.
- Home grown vegetables taste better than shop bought ones.