Unit 6 — Media Literacy, Advanced — Teacher copy

Track E · Klasse 11 · Niveau E (Basisfach / Leistungsfach)

Niveau E

1. Vocabulary

Match each item to its meaning or use it in a sentence.

Term	Your note
frame	
framing effect	
agenda-setting	
sourcing	
anonymous source	
on-the-record	
off-the-record	
attribution verb	
lede	
nut graf	
disclosure	
conflict of interest	
false balance	
both-sidesing	
structural balance	

2. Reading

Read the text and use it for the activities below.

Reading — *Verbs of Attribution*

Long-form journalism is, mostly, a question of framing and verbs. The frame is what the article treats as the question; everything before the subhead is doing frame work. The verbs of attribution carry, accordingly, more weight than their dictionary definitions suggest. Said is neutral; *claimed* signals doubt; *insisted* signals stubbornness; *added* signals subordination. A reader who counts the verbs already knows half the writer's argument before they reach the conclusion.

Vocabulary — media critique (advanced)

frame, framing effect, agenda-setting, sourcing, anonymous source, on-the-record, off-the-record, attribution verb, lede, nut graf, disclosure, conflict of interest, false balance, both-sidesing, structural balance.

3. Practise

Niveau E — controlled

1. Rank attribution verbs by neutrality (most neutral first): *insisted, said, claimed, added, denied*.
2. Match: lede → article opening; nut graf → core-argument paragraph; both-sidesing → false balance.

Niveau E — productive

3. Build 4 sentences using 4 advanced media-critique terms about a long-form article.

4. Your turn

Media-criticism essay, 300 words. Pick a long-form article. Identify framing, sourcing, attribution pattern, and one disclosed limitation. Use 5 advanced media-critique terms + 2 hedges.

Sample

The article frames the protest as a question of public order versus expression. This is itself a framing choice; an alternative frame — *housing-rights protest* — would have produced a different piece. Accordingly, the lede privileges police concerns, and the nut graf does not appear until paragraph four. The sourcing pattern is asymmetric: the police source is on-the-record and named; the two protester sources are anonymous, citing fear of professional consequences. This asymmetry is disclosed in a half-sentence late in the piece, which is a transparent if minimal acknowledgement. The attribution verbs do, however, do most of the covert work. The police source *says* and *adds*; the anonymous protesters *insist* and *claim*. By the end of the article, the careful reader has been voted at — without a single fact having to bend. However, the piece is not, in my view, dishonest. It is conventionally framed in a way that a neighbouring outlet would frame differently. The more useful critique is structural: the routine choice of *public order* as the default frame is not decided by individual writers but by the desk above them. Caution is warranted; readers who count attribution verbs will, in this regard, get more out of long-form than readers who don't. The framing habit, like the verbs, is teachable.

5. Further reading / listening

- Reuters Institute Digital News Report.
- Columbia Journalism Review — accessible essays.

6. Teacher answer key

Controlled. 1. *said* > *added* > *insisted* > *denied* > *claimed* (rough ranking; *added* and *denied* depend on context).

2. all true.

Productive. 3. Open.