

# HEADLINES

A game of crime stories, hidden details, and clever guesses

## INTRODUCTION

You are all ambitious journalists, competing for the front page. Each of you has uncovered a sensational incident. But in the newsroom, details don't matter unless the **headline** works. Instead of revealing the full story, you pitch it using only a single headline. A few words that must capture **when, where, who, how, and why**. Now it's up to the other journalists to reconstruct what really happened. So write cleverly. Guess boldly. And prove that your headline tells the whole story.

## SETUP

1. Each player draws **5 cards from each category** (25 cards total)
2. Each player places these cards into a **their personal 5x5 grid**, with:
  - one column per category
  - order within each row chosen freely

Note: Other players may see your grid, no need to hide it.

## WRITING YOUR HEADLINE

Each player now creates their own secret crime story.

### Pick the Plot:

1. Choose **one card from each column** (when, where, how, why, who (could be the culprit OR victim)).
2. Write the **Plot IDs** of your five chosen cards on the back (e.g. A1,B3,C1,D5,C5) - this info should remain secret.

### Write the Headline:

1. Think of a **headline of up to three words** that captures the *essence* of your story. (Fill words such as "the", "and", "or" do not count)
2. **Restrictions for headlines:**
  - You may **not** use any word printed on your chosen cards.
  - You may **not** use close synonyms, direct descriptions

- Headlines should suggest meaning, not spell out details.
  - You should **not** indicate the Plot IDs or their positions
3. Write the **headline** on your card's front.

### Example

Plot: Midnight / Harbor / Vehicle / Stranger / Accident  
Headline: Blinded by Water (2 words, 1 fill words)

*Note: If your headline is too vague or misleading, guessers will score few or no points - and so will you. The best headlines invite clever guesses without spelling out the answer.*

## GUESSING PHASE

Players take turns being the presenting **Author**. (Note: there's no bonus or malus in being first or last)

1. The Author reveals **only their headline** (via their front card) and their grid.
2. All other players (**Guessers**) simultaneously and secretly write down **one guess for each category**
3. When everyone is ready, the Author goes into verbose story-telling mode and shares the full story!

## SCORING + WINNING

**Guessers:** Score **1 point for each correctly guessed element**

**Author:** Scores points equal to the **highest number of correct guesses achieved by a single Guesser** for their headline (only once, even if multiple players tie & only if it would be at least 3 points) - Example: If the best Guesser gets 3 elements right, the Author scores 3 points.

### Example

Player 1: **Midnight / Harbor / Vehicle / Stranger / Accident** - 5 Points  
Player 2: **Midnight / Restaurant / Poison / Wife / Accident** - 2 Points  
Player 3: **Midnight / Harbor / Drowning / Smuggler / Greed** - 2 Points  
Author: 5 Points

After **all headlines have been guessed**, add up points. The player with the **most points** wins!