The Headline That Lied

When the article came out, Nora was horrified.

"Local Coach Confesses: 'We Rigged the Final Game!'" screamed the headline.

The problem? She had never said that. What she had admitted was far more innocent: "Yes, we tried a new strategy that hadn't been approved by the committee. I thought it was worth the risk."

The reporter had paraphrased it as *rigging*, suggesting illegal manipulation.

Nora accused the journalist of misrepresenting her words. He denied doing anything unethical.

"It was a fair interpretation," he claimed.

The school board suspended her while they investigated.

"She confessed to cheating," said the vice principal.
"No, I admitted trying something new," Nora insisted.

The real damage, though, was online. People posted memes, commented without context, and even her friends started to backtrack.

The story had already done its job: *reframe the truth to create a villain.*

A. True or False – Correct if False

1. Nora openly said she had rigged the game. **True/False**
2. The reporter changed her words slightly but kept the same meaning. **True/False**
3. The vice principal supported Nora. **True/False**
4. Nora felt the headline distorted her intentions. **True/False**
5. Public opinion turned against her. **True/False**

B. Match the idiom or phrase to its meaning:

Idiom / Phrase	Meaning
1. Put a spin on (it)	A. Change your position or opinion (often publicly)
2. Backtrack	B. Present something in a way that suits your goals
3. Take out of context	C. Twist someone's words by removing key parts
4. Call into question	D. Suggest that something may not be true
5. Blow out of proportion	E. Exaggerate the importance of something

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GRAMMAR FOCUS

Reporting Verbs & Verb Patterns

Many verbs used to report what others said or did follow specific patterns.

🔹 Common Patterns:

Verb	Pattern Example	Meaning
admit, deny, suggest	+ **gerund**	She admitted **cheating**.
promise, agree, refuse	+ **infinitive**	He refused **to talk**.
advise, convince, persuade	+ **object + infinitive**	They persuaded her **to stay**.
accuse of, apologise for	+ **preposition + gerund**	She was accused of **cheating**.
say, claim, confess, explain	+ **that-clause**	He claimed **that he was innocent**.

🛠️ Useful Notes:

- Some verbs have **multiple possible patterns** with subtle meaning changes.
  E.g., *He admitted cheating* = he did it.
  He confessed that he had cheated = similar, more formal.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

C. Choose the correct option

1. She admitted *(to cheat / cheating / to cheating)* during the match.
2. He claimed *(that he had proof / having proof)* of her innocence.
3. They persuaded her *(to speak / speaking / speak)* to the press.
4. He denied *(breaking / to break)* the rules.
5. The coach was accused of *(rigging / rig to)* the final.
6. I advised him *(not joining / not to join)* the discussion.
7. The student apologised for *(lying / to lie)* about the grade.
8. She suggested *(to try / trying)* a different approach.
9. The vice principal said *(that / to)* she would investigate.
10. He refused *(to comment / commenting)* on the article.

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D. Rewrite the sentences using the verb in brackets and the correct pattern

Example: "I didn't take the money," he said. → He denied **taking** the money.

1. "I used a new strategy," she said. (admit)

_____

2. "You should speak to the press," they said to her. (advise)

_____

3. "She's not telling the truth," he said. (claim)

_____

4. "I'll resign if needed," she said. (promise)

_____

5. "You cheated!" they said. (accuse)

_____

6. "Sorry I shouted," he said. (apologise)

_____

7. "Please don't publish this," he said. (ask)

_____

8. "Let me explain what happened." (offer)

_____

9. "You must lie in court," he said to her. (persuade)

_____

10. "I won't answer any more questions." (refuse)

_____

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