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TEACHING THE PARAPHRASING STRATEGY TO YOUNGER STUDENTS

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Paraphrasing, restating in one's own words information gained from the printed page, is a valuable reading comprehension tool. Paraphrasing forces the reader to process information at a deeper level than mere passive reading would demand, thereby ensuring a greater degree of understanding as well as retention. In addition, paraphrasing keeps the reader actively involved with the material, thus requiring a higher level of motivation and attention to the task.

The adaptations described below are based on The Paraphrasing Strategy: Instructor's Manual by J. B. Schumaker, P. H. Denton, and D. D. Deshler (University of Kansas Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities, 1984).

Prerequisite Skills

In order for students to benefit to the maximum extent from instruction in the Paraphrasing Strategy, they should be able to:

1. Differentiate between important and unimportant ideas in a paragraph.
2. Identify and state the main idea of a paragraph.
3. Identify and state details from a paragraph.
4. Restate information in their own words.

Although many of these abilities will develop as students practice the Paraphrasing Strategy and receive corrective feedback, you may wish to teach these prerequisite skills prior to

introducing the Paraphrasing Strategy.

Instruction in Prerequisite Skills

Identifying Main Ideas and Details

Model for students how to think about a main idea. Use two detail sentences and two main idea statements (one which is related to the two detail sentences and one which is not related). Read the detail sentences and "think aloud" as you check the two main idea statements to decide which one is related to the detail sentences. Then, provide students with detail sentences (at least two) which could support one main idea. Ask the students to select an appropriate main idea statement from two choices.

Refer to the Paraphrasing Strategy: Instructor's Manual, page 32, How to trouble-shoot. Use the ideas in this section to teach students how to identify main ideas and details.

Restating Words, Phrases, and Sentences in Your Own Words

Teach students to restate information in their own words by describing how this can be done, modeling the task of restating information in your own words, and conducting guided practice. Begin with single words, and advance to phrases, sentences, and paragraphs.

The sequence below illustrates how a lesson on restating words using synonyms might be
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presented. One or more lessons using phrases, then sentences, and then paragraphs could be presented the same way.

RESTATING WORDS USING SYNONYMS

Your goals: To introduce the concept of paraphrasing.
To describe to students how to paraphrase single words.
To model for students how to paraphrase single words.
To guide students' initial practice with paraphrasing single words.

What to do:

1. Give an advance organizer. "Today, we are going to learn how to say the same thing using synonyms or different words with the same meaning. We need to know how to put information into our own words so that we don't repeat someone else's words exactly. I will tell you and show you how to paraphrase or put information into your own words, then I will ask you to help me."
2. Describe and model. "When we paraphrase information, we use our own words to say the same thing that someone else said. The meaning is still the same, but we use different words. What do we do when we paraphrase?"

[Elicit responses such as, "use different words," "say the same thing with different words," "use our own words," etc.]

"When we put information in our own words, we are paraphrasing. What are we doing when we put things into our own words?"

[Elicit the response, "Paraphrasing."]

"When we paraphrase words we use synonyms or words that mean the same. Let me show you how to paraphrase a word. I want to use the word 'talked,' but I want to say it differently. Umm... I could use, 'said,' 'chatted,' or 'spoke.' All of these words mean the same thing as 'talked.' Can you think of another word that means the same thing as 'talked'?"

[Elicit responses.]

3. Guided practice. "You help me with this one. I want to use the word 'difficult.' I could say 'not easy.' What other words could I say that mean the same thing?"

[Elicit responses or contribute words or phrases such as "hard," "intricate," "complicated," "puzzle," "problem," etc. Continue presenting single words and eliciting synonyms until students can easily provide synonyms or phrases with the same meaning. Add other synonyms when needed. Some words you might use include: run, yell, chair, person, storm, floor, pen, free, etc. Choose words appropriate to the age of your students.]

4. Give a post organizer. "Today, we learned how to use our own words to say the same thing that someone else said. When we use our own words but keep the same meaning, we are 'paraphrasing.' We can use paraphrasing whenever we need to tell about something, but we cannot use the exact same words as we read or as someone else said."

When students can paraphrase words accurately, continue similar lessons with phrases, then sentences, and later paragraphs. The phrases and sentences below might be used in examples and student practice activities. Paragraphs could be chosen from reading materials.

An illustration of an open book. The left page is being turned, showing a dark, textured surface underneath. The right page is visible, containing text and a small, dark, rectangular object, possibly a stamp or a piece of tape, near the bottom center. The book is shown from a slightly elevated perspective.

Student practice:

ran away		crossed the finish line
hit the ball a long way		jumped up on the chair

Examples: Joe went to the basketball game. (Joe watched the boys play basketball).
Mary's collie is the biggest dog on our block. (Mary's dog is the largest one in our neighborhood.)
The Royals scored more runs than their opponent. (The Royals beat the other team.)

Model complete statements for students, and show them how to check for the subject(s) and verb(s) in the statement. Then, have the students practice making oral statements which are complete thoughts (contain both a subject and a verb). To facilitate speaking in complete thoughts, the teacher or a student makes an opening statement that sets up a story (i.e., an incomplete thought, such as "The girl in the front row . . ."); and a student completes the thought, and the next student adds a logical second statement. The group analyzes each statement to determine whether it is complete. To test a statement for completeness, have students ask themselves, "What is the action or 'state-of-being' word?" and "Who or what (action)?" You may wish to use the list of state-of-being words from the Sentence Writing Strategy to assist students in identifying state-of-being words.

The flowers . . .	My friend in Kansas . . .
After I went home yesterday, . . .	Last week, the soccer team . . .

Teaching the Paraphrasing Strategy

Teach Concepts in a Meaningful 'Way'

<u>Concepts</u>	<u>Potentially Meaningful Explanation</u>
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Analogy of an ice cream sundae:
Main idea—ice cream sundae

(continued from pg. 3)

Repetitions of the same word

Details—ice cream, chocolate syrup, whipped cream, nuts, etc.

Words that are repeated or said over and over (such as the words "backpacking," "backpack," etc. occurring frequently in a paragraph)

Use Short Lessons

During Paraphrasing Strategy instruction, lessons should be adjusted to an appropriate length for younger students (approximately 10 to 25 minutes). Each lesson should include: (a) an advance organizer (explaining the content the lesson will cover, how it relates to previous lessons, why it is important, what the students and the teacher will be doing); (b) a description of information related to the strategy, a model of strategy steps, a guided practice using the strategy, and/or an independent practice; and (c) a post organizer (restating what the lesson covered, why it is important, and what will happen next).

For example, the Describe Stage of the Paraphrasing Strategy may be divided into 5 short lessons.

Lesson 1: Advance Organizer

Introduce the concept of the Paraphrasing Strategy

Describe and elicit rationales for using the strategy, general characteristics of situations and example situations where it can be used

Describe results students can expect

Post Organizer

Lesson 2: Advance Organizer

Review content of Lesson 1

Set goals

Describe the steps, the remembering system, and the mnemonic device of the Paraphrasing Strategy

Post Organizer

Lesson 3: Advance Organizer

Review the content of previous lessons

Introduce the criteria for a good paraphrase, explain criteria 1 and 2

Practice activity related to criteria 1 and 2

Post Organizer

Lesson 4: Advance Organizer

Review the content of previous lessons

Explain criteria 3, 4, and 5 for a good paraphrase

Practice activity related to criteria 3, 4, and 5

Post Organizer

Lesson 5: Advance Organizer

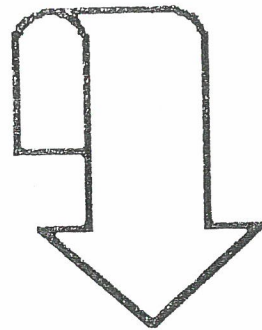
Review the content of previous lessons

Explain criteria 6 and 7 for a good paraphrase

Practice activity related to criteria 6 and 7

Compare the Paraphrasing Strategy to the students' previous reading habits

Post Organizer



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Conduct Guided Practice

With younger students, you may need to provide many models of the use of the Paraphrasing Strategy and opportunities to participate in practice activities which you direct and guide before students begin to practice using the strategy independently. During practice opportunities, you and the students should verbalize all thought processes and evaluate the quality of the paraphrases using the criteria for a good paraphrase (Cue Card #3). In conducting guided practice, you might use the following suggestions:

- * Have students paraphrase detail statements first while you continue modeling how to paraphrase main idea statements. After they have seen many models of paraphrases of main idea statements, ask them to construct some.
- * During your model, ask students to tell what step of the strategy was just completed or what step you should do next. (NOTE: This should not be done during the very first paragraph which you model, but you may use questions to involve students in subsequent models.)
- * Ask students to evaluate your paraphrases and those of their peers.
- * Use all types of reading material—textbooks, library books, newspaper articles, comic books, etc.
- * Use cooperative group work led by the teacher. Have one student (or the teacher) read the paragraph. Ask one student to paraphrase the main idea; ask a second student to paraphrase one detail statement, and ask a third student to provide a second detail statement. Make certain that each student has an opportunity to paraphrase both main idea and detail statements.

Jazz-Up Instruction and Involve Students

Construct a colorful bulletin board about the Paraphrasing Strategy which involves the students in practicing behaviors used in this strategy; you might use the theme of exploring or searching for a good paraphrase. Post words, phrases, or sentences on the bulletin board, and ask students to match each word, phrase, or sentence with its correct paraphrase (students could connect items with a piece of yarn or colored string). Or, you could ask students to paraphrase the words, phrases or sentences which are posted; provide cards on which they can write their paraphrases, and have them post their card next the word, phrase, or sentence it matches.

As students are learning the Paraphrasing Strategy, you can jazz-up instruction by varying the activities while maintaining the intent of each stage of the instructional process. The following suggestions may help you "jazz-up" instruction and involve students in this strategy.

Stage 2: Describe

- * incorporate frequent reviews and checks; you may model the desired response first, then ask students to respond as a group or individually; make certain all students participate by giving individual and group responses
- * maintain a lively pace
- * build in a game or activity to allow students to practice a specific step of the strategy (for example, after you describe the "P" step, ask students to work as a team to restate a sentence in their own words); make certain all students participate

Stage 3: Model

- * maintain a lively, fluid pace
- * after the initial model, gradually involve all students in the model; involve them first in easier parts of the task

Stage 4: Verbal Rehearsal

- * maintain a lively pace
- * involve every student in stating individual steps of the strategy
- * vary the practice by having the entire group rehearse aloud the steps of the strategy
- * use unique practice techniques, such as: saying the steps as a cheer; playing a telephone game where one student whispers a step to another who passes it on, the last person says the step aloud; have students practice with a partner; divide the group into 2 teams, have one team state the first step, the other team gives Step 2, and so on
- * chart progress and celebrate achievement of mastery

Stage 5: Controlled Practice and Feedback and Stage 6: Advanced Practice and Feedback

- * on occasion, use high-interest reading materials (other than textbooks) for practice activities. e.g., comic books, sports page from the newspaper, written material about a "hot" topic of interest to the students
- * on occasion, use games in which students practice a part of the strategy [e.g., divide the group into two teams, teacher reads a paragraph, a student (or a team) must paraphrase the main idea (or a detail), points are awarded to the team for a correct paraphrase (or students may roll a die) and move forward on a game board]
- * have 2 students practice together by reading the paragraph, discussing the main idea and detail statements, agreeing on their statements to record
- * Use cooperative group work as described above.

Stage 7: Posttest and Commitment to Generalize

- * celebrate achievement of mastery with a special activity
- * post the names of students who have met mastery in a prominent place
- * have a party when several students have met mastery

Stage 8: Generalization

- * Have students set goals and develop plans to use the Paraphrasing Strategy in other school and out-of-school settings. The concept of "Bonus Missions" used in the Social Skills for Daily Living curriculum might be adapted for use in the Generalization Stage with younger students.