

## **ABSTRACT**

Students in the early years of education make significant gains in their reading skills in the areas of word recognition and word decoding. Some students find it difficult to understand what has been read, indicating that their reading comprehension needs to be supported in focused teaching sessions. **Teaching students at all levels of their education reading strategies, aims to improve this area of word recognition and word decoding in their reading development.**

This research project aims to prove that teaching synonyms and paraphrasing to grade two at risk students will improve their reading comprehension.

Five students were selected for both the Intervention and the Control group. Each group was given the same pre and post testing; the tests selected were the Reading Progress test, Synonyms test and Paraphrasing test. The Intervention group participated in ten sessions where the focus was on synonyms and paraphrasing a text, these lessons spanned twenty to twenty-five minutes each. The students in the Control group were in another classroom for all these sessions.

The results were compared and they support the hypothesis. All students in the Intervention group made gains in most, if not all areas tested. Impressive gains were made in the area of synonyms and paraphrasing;

and good results were recorded in the area of reading comprehension with four of the five students maintaining or improving their reading comprehension.

It can therefore be stated that a series of focused teaching sessions using the reading comprehension strategy of paraphrasing, will assist students in developing a deeper understanding of what they have read.

## **INTRODUCTION**

During primary and secondary schooling, children are taught many skills and strategies to assist with their reading and comprehension of written texts. Neufeld (2005) believes that 'comprehension can be defined broadly as the process of constructing a supportable understanding of a text' (p.302). In the early years of education, children's literacy development is primarily based on word level decoding strategies, as noted in the Multiple Levels of Text Processing model, developed by Munro (2007).

As children are able to read words accurately, their ability to decode a text increases; however in some cases they have minimal understanding of what has been read. Comprehending a text is a skill that needs to be taught to children at an early stage of their language development. This is supported by Snowball (2006) who believes that 'teaching and learning about comprehension is of the greatest importance from the beginning of reading instruction right through schooling, and in all curriculum areas' (p.62).

Effective readers are able to use reading strategies to assist with their understanding of the text. Neufeld (2005) stated that 'the act of comprehending a written text is a complex one that depends upon a number of different thinking processes within the reader' (2005). As Munro (2007) suggests, 'effective readers are able to re-read and question what

is written; pause and consolidate while reading and visualise and paraphrase the words and sentences in a text' (p.11). When readers are aware of these strategies and are able to use them automatically, this will assist with the ability to comprehend a text. The First Steps Reading Resource Book states that 'The long term goal for all students is that they can select and use strategies flexibly and independently during any reading event' (p.123).

One reading strategy that aims to improve the reading comprehension of a text is Paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is the ability to read and retell a text using ones own words, without distorting the meaning. Fisk and Hurst (2003) note 'a good paraphrase will convey the meaning of the original document using the students own vocabulary and phrasing' (183).

Effective readers can paraphrase a text at the word, sentence and conceptual level. Readers need to be able to recognise key words, main points and discern the important ideas in a text. Fisk and Hurst (2003) go on to argue that 'when students are taught a technique for how to paraphrase a text, paraphrasing can strengthen comprehension of both fiction and nonfiction' (p.182).

Children will learn a new reading strategy when teachers are explicit and direct in explaining what these strategies are and why good readers use them. When teaching reading strategies it is important to promote opportunities for discussion about the process of reading and the thinking that takes place at the time of reading. Snowball (2006) suggests 'several

studies show that students who verbalise their strategies while reading score significantly higher on comprehension tests.' (p.63).

A scaffolding approach to learning and teaching is a model used in classrooms and was first developed by the theorist Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky is widely known for his research and creation of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD is 'the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving or in collaboration with more capable peers' (p.84). Smith (2006) also believes that 'teaching comprehension strategies using a scaffolding approach profoundly and positively affect the growth of student comprehension abilities' (p.764).

The Vygotskian (ZPD) theory infers that children master a skill and use it independently when they have assistance and guidance from an expert who has already developed that skill. This stage of developmental learning is the Zone of Proximal Development. It implies that learning takes place when a skill being learned is outside a child's current developmental level. 'Children learning at this level require leading questions, if the teacher needs to show how the problem is to be solved and the child solves it, or if the teacher initiates the solution and the child completes it or solves it in collaboration with other children, the solution is not regarded as indicative of their development' (p.88). Building on this,

once a student can work through the skill independently, without assistance, they have reached the Zone of Actual Development.

It is essential that teachers should model and explain reading strategies and allow time for children to practice and apply reading strategies when dealing with a variety of texts. The First Steps Resource Book states that 'Effective teachers have an understanding of how reading occurs and are able to plan learning experiences and instruction that supports students to become more successful readers' (p.112). Developing a well planned series of lessons that scaffold students to use the skill of paraphrasing independently, will have a positive affect on their ability to comprehend a text more fully. This is supported by Fisk & Hurst (2003) as they suggest that 'students will benefit from knowing why paraphrasing is helpful and when they will use it.' (p.183)

The children selected for this research assignment, and who appear in the Intervention group are currently grade two students. They are proficient in decoding and show confidence with their word attack. However, results from pre testing at the beginning of the school year indicate that they have difficulty with both recalling ideas from a text and answering literal questions. It is for these reasons they have been selected for this action research assignment, and it is hoped that their comprehension of texts will improve after teaching them the paraphrasing reading strategy.

This current action research assignment aims to show that teaching synonyms and paraphrasing to grade two at risk students will improve their reading comprehension. This objective will use earlier research to develop a series of lessons that focus on paraphrasing words and sentences from age specific texts. The series of lessons will engage the students by actively locating main words and ideas and repeating, rewriting and restating these in their own words, and integrating all modes of communication – reading, writing, listening and speaking in a supportive and non threatening environment.

## **METHOD:**

### *DESIGN*

This research assignment is a case study OXO design whereby the gain in reading comprehension is monitored for students in grade two who are able to decode texts but have difficulty with their understanding of written texts. Teaching and learning lesson plans were devised and used the outline derived by Munro's Paraphrasing teaching sequences (Appendix 1, Table 3) and also adapted by the teacher, for the age of the students (Appendix 1, Table 4).

### *PARTICIPANTS*

Five students were selected for this research assignment based on their literacy test results at the beginning of the 2008 school year. This group of students, the Intervention group, has demonstrated a limited understanding of what they have read. Pre testing results indicated that their reading level is age appropriate; they had all reached the benchmark set by the school. Despite this, their comprehension results were low; with two students unable to retell main points in the text they had read.

For the purpose of this action research assignment, each student was tested with three different tasks; these included the Reading Progress test, Synonyms test (Appendix 1, Table 5) and Paraphrasing test (Appendix 1, Table 6). This group of children required focused instruction on reading



strategies that would assist their reading comprehension of texts; especially their ability to restate characters and retell events in the story - therefore paraphrasing was selected as a necessary strategy for these students.

### *MATERIALS*

- Reading Progress test – to determine student’s comprehension of text
- Munro’s Synonym Test – to determine student’s ability to create a list of synonyms
- Munro’s Paraphrasing Test – to determine student’s ability to restate and retell what was read.
- Sea Creature’s Text – Intervention groups reading text during focused teaching sessions. This text was chosen as it strengthens students prior knowledge with the Integrated topic for grade two in term two being ‘Under the Sea’.
- Flash cards with synonyms – used in the earlier lessons for a warm up activity (Appendix 1, Table 7).
- Worksheet with sentences created by the teacher – used in lesson 3 to highlight synonyms in sentences (Appendix 1, Table 8).
- White board and White board markers – used in some sessions as a tool to record answers.

## *PROCEDURE*

The sessions for this study were conducted in the morning Literacy block. The Literacy block is structured so that the students participate in an hour reading session beginning with whole class explicit teaching instruction, small group reading tasks; two reading tasks, each over a twenty to twenty-five minute period, and ending with whole class share time.

The Intervention group participated in ten sessions on paraphrasing. Each paraphrasing sessions was conducted in a small group, in the front of the classroom, during the small group reading task. The Intervention group took part in ten, twenty minute sessions over a five week period.

All students were withdrawn from the classroom for the pre and post Reading Progress test. The administration of the Synonyms and Paraphrasing pre and post tests was conducted in the classroom over two sessions in the small group reading time.

The ten sessions were planned so that the students were taught various strategies used when paraphrasing a text at word and sentence level; the last few sessions also involved students identifying the main idea in a passage of the text. The teaching sequence was planned so that this reading strategy was modeled to the students. A scaffolding approach was then taken so that the students could then participate in learning experiences as a group, in pairs and finally on their own. The support

given to the students was reduced until they engaged in the reading strategy automatically. The text chosen was a non fiction text.

The following points outline the ten sessions;

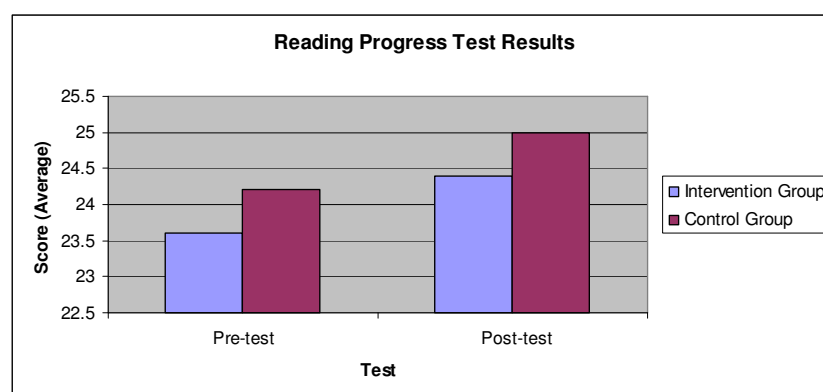
- Introduce synonyms – playing a matching game with synonyms pairs created by the teacher (Appendix 1, Table 7).
- Restating synonyms – read sentences to the students, as a whole group, highlighting words in a sentence that could be changed with a synonym.
- Revising synonyms and introducing the reading strategy *Paraphrasing* – read sentences to the students, students highlight words in a sentence that can be changed with a synonym and orally paraphrase the sentence.
- Restate the reading strategy *Paraphrasing* – Read sentences to the students from the previous lesson, and guide the students in writing a paraphrased version – teacher modeled and students copy onto whiteboards.
- Revise the reading strategy *Paraphrasing*- students state what they are to do and teacher reads a passage from a text. Discuss the main idea in the passage as a whole group. In pairs, students write down their paraphrased passage on whiteboards and share with the whole group.
- Revise the reading strategy *Paraphrasing*. – In pairs, students state what they are to do and read a passage from the text. In pairs,

students discuss the main idea in the passage and paraphrase the passage on whiteboards. Share with the group.

- Practice the reading strategy *Paraphrasing* – Individually read the passage of the text. Paraphrase the text and share with the group. Teacher records on poster paper and discusses how each student has paraphrased the passage on whiteboards. Discuss the main idea in the text.
- Practice the reading strategy *Paraphrasing* – Individually read two pages of the text and paraphrase in reading journals. Share with the group. Write a group response to decipher the main idea in the text.
- Practice the reading strategy *Paraphrasing* – Individually read pages of the text and paraphrase and write down the main idea in the passage in reading journals. Share with the group.

## **RESULTS:**

Results support the hypothesis that teaching synonyms and paraphrasing to grade two at risk students improves their reading comprehension. Four out of five students in the Intervention group made improvements in their reading comprehension. Figure 1 shows that both the Intervention and Control group made gains in their reading comprehension over the period of the ten teaching sessions. The improvements recorded for comprehension, for both groups were the same, as seen in Figure 2. The Reading Progress test was selected as a testing tool as it is aimed at the age of the students involved in the research. The test measures the reading comprehension of students and requires answers to a variety of questions. Further analysis of this test, later in this section, includes the reading age of the students, which also shows that most students made progress in relation to their reading age.



*Figure 1; Average score recorded by students in the Intervention and Control Group for Reading Progress Test*

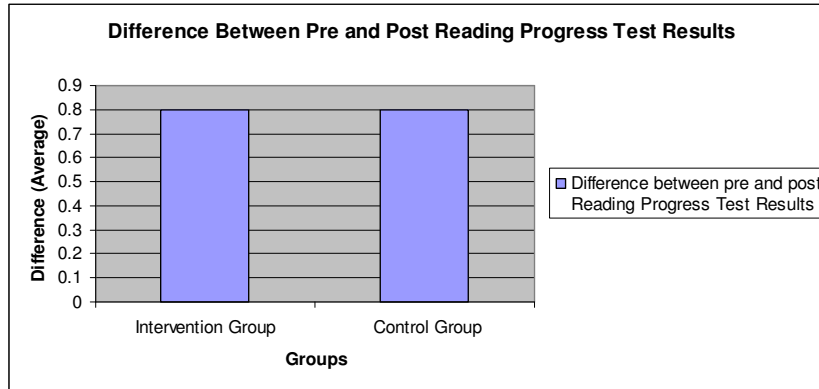


Figure 2; Gains made by students in the Intervention and Control Group for Reading Progress Test

The post-testing for the use of synonyms, shows impressive gains made by the Intervention group. All students improved the number of words used for synonyms. When marking the pre and post testing, one mark was awarded for each synonym given for the test word. The most impressive gains were recorded by Students 1, 2 and 4 (Appendix 1, Table 1).

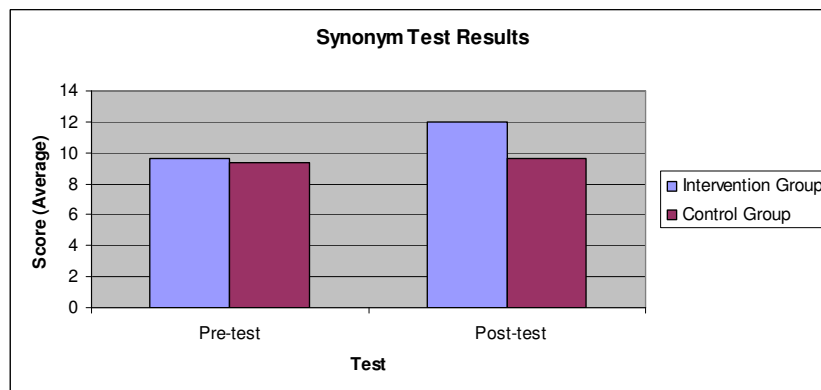


Figure 3; Average synonyms used

The post-testing results for paraphrasing were the most striking, as seen in Figure 4. As predicted, all students in the Intervention group made gains in this area. Paraphrasing was a new concept and the students enjoyed the challenge of creating lists of synonyms for words, and attempting to re-structure sentences. When marking the pre and post testing, one mark was awarded for each synonym used in a sentence. During the teaching

sessions, it was evident that the students were unable to re-order the ideas in a sentence/passage; and this was confirmed in the post-testing with students only changing words.

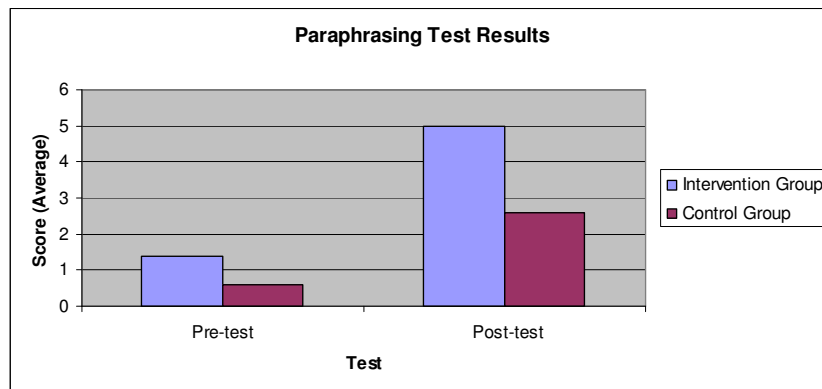


Figure 4; Average paraphrasing scores

Student 1 demonstrated improvement in all areas (Figure 5). During the earlier sessions student 1 paraphrased sentences by extending the sentence rather than selecting words to change into a synonym. When working with a partner, student 1 began to show an awareness of paraphrasing using synonyms and was eager to volunteer thoughts and ideas during the group brainstorming time. Sharing ideas and work tasks with a partner increased self esteem of student 1. Student 1 showed the greatest improvement in using synonyms in post-testing in both the synonym and paraphrasing test: each test recording a 50% improvement. Student 1 also showed improvement in reading comprehension indicated in the Reading Progress test by an increase of two scores.

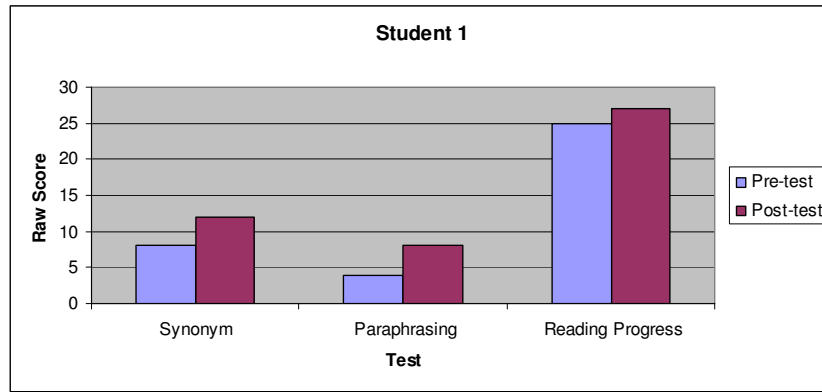


Figure 5; Testing results for student 1

Student 2 showed significant improvement in all areas (Figure 6). This student demonstrated a good understanding of synonyms in pre-testing, but was unable to complete the pre-test for paraphrasing. Student 2 worked well in the first few sessions when words were highlighted as needing to find a synonym. However, when completing written tasks, student 2 copied sentences without making any changes. It was also observed that this student could change words and ideas by using synonyms when talking to the group. My teaching focus then changed for this student, by using verbal strategies to paraphrase the sentence before writing it down. Post-testing results indicated a significant improvement in this area, even though only four out of six sentences were completed.

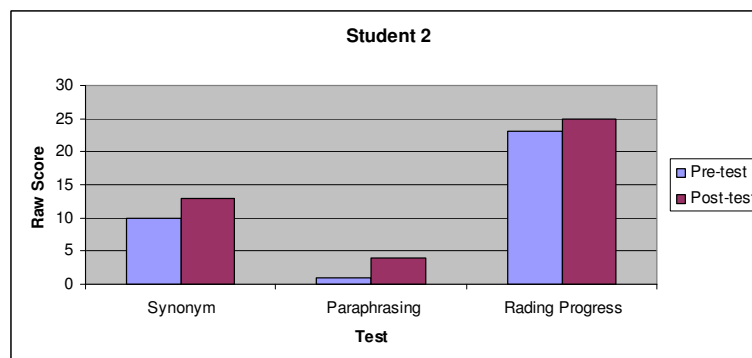


Figure 6; Testing results for student 2



In pre-testing, Student 3 showed the most confidence and recorded the best results (Figure 7). However, during the teaching sessions, Student 3 was reluctant to contribute thoughts and ideas. Student 3 was prompted on most occasions to add words to the groups' brainstormed list. The greatest improvement was made in the area of paraphrasing with an improvement of three raw scores. Although recording the highest result for the synonym pre-test, student 3 made slight gains, showing progress of one raw score. The Reading Progress result did not vary during pre and post testing, indicating that there were no gains made in reading comprehension.

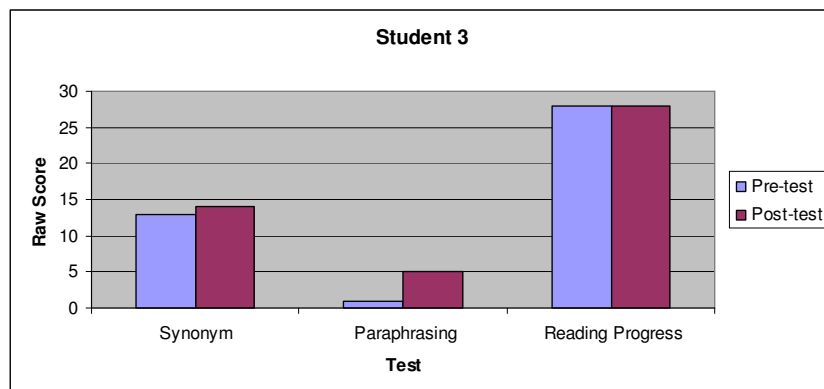


Figure 7; Testing results for Student 3

Student 4 demonstrated improvement in all areas (Figure 8). Student 4 is a quiet and unassuming child and has been observed in the past as a deep thinker who takes time to respond to questions and tasks. When pre-testing for paraphrasing, student 4 was unable to complete the task recording one out of six sentences. A score was not recorded as the sentence was directly copied. During work tasks, student 4 opted to work individually during partner work, however was extremely eager to contribute to group share time. The completed work tasks were of a very good standard. The post-testing showed an improvement in the raw

score and the number of sentences paraphrased. Where as pre-testing one out of six sentences were paraphrased, during post-testing four of six sentences were completed and two points were given. Reading comprehension was improved slightly by one raw score.

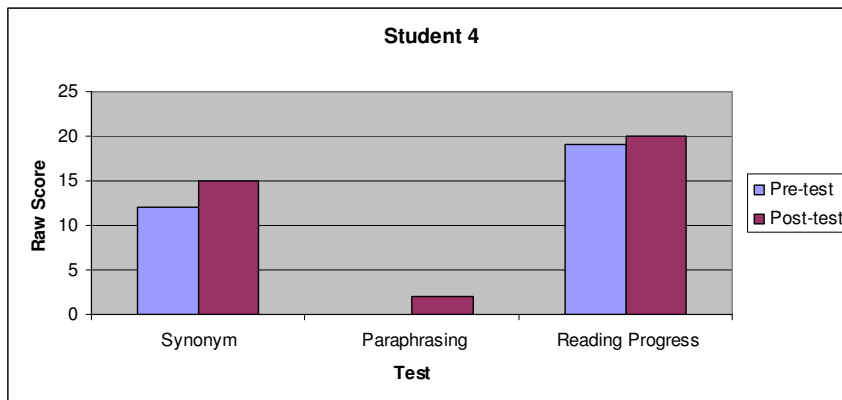


Figure 8; Testing results for Student 4

Student 5, the eldest of the group, did improve in most areas (Figure 9). Student 5 was absent for the last three teaching and learning sessions due to an unexpected family holiday. Student 5 was an enthusiastic participant during the sessions but found it difficult to listen to other students thoughts and ideas. Student 5 would fidget and observe what other groups were doing during the teaching session. It would have been ideal to withdrawal this group from the classroom to see if this student could concentrate on the task. The post-tests for synonyms and paraphrasing were conducted in the classroom and this student made improvements in both areas. However, the Intervention group was removed from the classroom for the Reading Progress test and this students' results decreased by two raw scores.

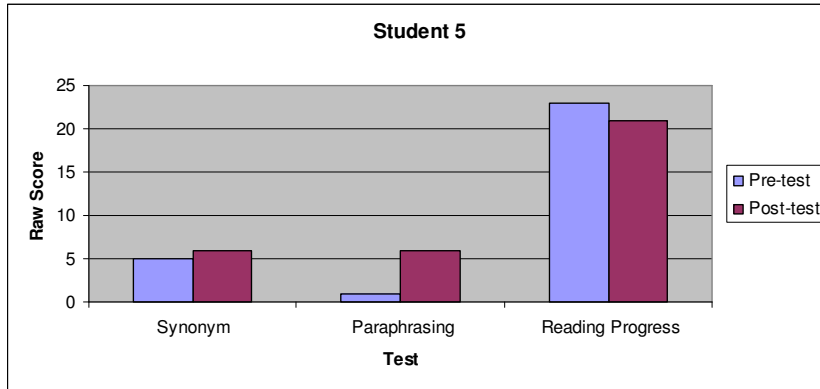


Figure 9; Testing results for Student 5

The reading age of the Intervention group, increased by 0.8 per cent (Figure 10). The Control group made greater gains, improving by 3 per cent overall. Students 1, 2 and 4 each made improvements over the period of the ten lessons. Student 3 maintained the reading age; however, as student 5's progress declined, so to did his reading age which dropped quite significantly. (Figure 11).



Figure 10; Reading Age of Intervention and Control group

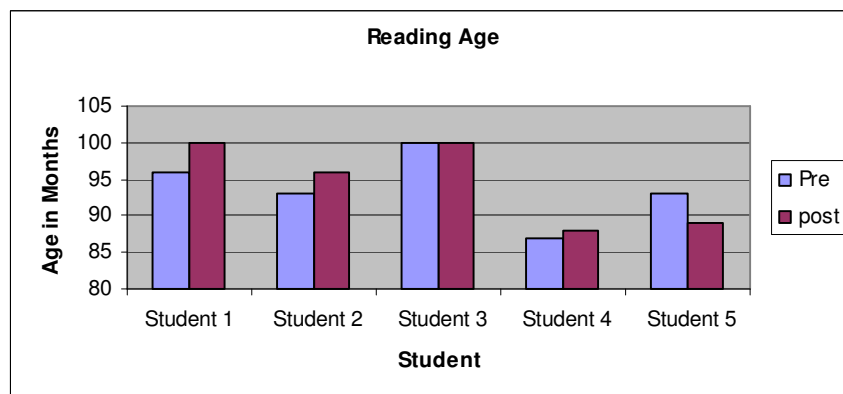


Figure 11; Reading age of the Intervention group

## **DISCUSSION**

The results support the hypothesis that teaching synonyms and paraphrasing to grade two at risk students will improve their reading comprehension. All students in the Intervention group made significant gains when using synonyms and paraphrasing, and four of the five students made improvements with their comprehension. The use of synonyms and paraphrasing when reading was a new concept for these students, so it was expected that gains would be made in between pre and post testing, however the scale of the gains was encouraging.

The Intervention group worked well together and most students had pre-established working relationships with each other. The discussion that began and concluded each session was lively and students put forth their thoughts and ideas without fear of rejection or put down from their peers. It was observed that during partner work students helped each other and engaged in conversation with other pairs to compare and contrast synonyms highlighted and created. This free and open communication in a group supports Neufeld's (2005) idea that when teaching a reading strategy it is best to be 'providing student's with numerous opportunities to practice the strategy they are learning in an environment where support and feedback are readily available.' (p.309)

The use of different materials during the ten sessions engaged the students in their learning. The use of flash cards, highlighters, individual whiteboards

and whiteboard markers, allowed the students to complete their work tasks in a different style than normally used. The text that was chosen for the ten sessions supported the Integrated unit that the students were currently learning about; this assisted with their existing knowledge including both their oral language knowledge and experiential knowledge as described by Munro (2007). This supports Munro's belief that readers use their existing knowledge to scaffold and support their reading (p.10). Therefore by using a text that was supportive of their current classroom inquiry, it was possible that the teacher could scaffold the new concepts of synonyms and paraphrasing further.

The students in the Intervention and Control group made gains in their comprehension of texts. Both groups increased their comprehension levels by an average of .8 per cent. (Appendix 1, Table 2). Both groups also recorded an increase in their average reading age, recorded from the reading age table in the Reading Progress test. (Appendix 1, Table 1). The Intervention group gained .8 per cent in their reading age and the Control group recorded an impressive 3 per cent increase. As the Control group are stronger readers, an increase in their results over a period of six weeks would be expected. However, it would be of interest to discover the focused teaching these students received during the same time period, and whether this influenced the comprehension post-test.

Devising lessons that encompassed reading, writing, listening and speaking was important as it supported Fisk and Hurst (2003) belief that

'paraphrasing for comprehension works so well because it integrates all modes of communication – reading, writing, listening and speaking – which leads to deeper understanding of the text' (p.182). Integrating these modes of communication was also a benefit for most of the students in the Intervention group as they work more enthusiastically on classroom tasks when they have the freedom to express their thoughts and ideas in a variety of ways.

The ten lessons were in line with the beliefs of Snowball (2006) who has researched ways to build independence and confidence with reading comprehension strategies. Snowball (2006) writes that 'Although comprehension strategies may be learned informally ... instruction should include specifically describing the strategy, demonstrating use of..., thinking aloud about the strategy, collaboratively use the strategy with each other' (p.62). The lessons that were implemented build on the strength of Snowball's (2006) work. Another important feature of the ten lessons was the scaffolding support. This approach to teaching and learning is supported by Smith (2006) who notes that 'scaffolding approaches are those that enable a teacher to assist a learner in a new task...while directing the learner how to achieve mastery of the component parts...' (p.764). The scaffolding approach did allow the students in the Intervention group to use the strategy of paraphrasing and using synonyms independently towards the end of the ten sessions.

If this research was conducted again it would be important to review several approaches that were taken during this present study. The pre and post testing for synonyms and paraphrasing was conducted in the classroom, and impressive gains were made by the students in the Intervention group. However, the students in both the Intervention and Control groups were tested for comprehension at the same time, as a withdrawal group. It would be interesting to see if this impacted on some of the data; especially for those students whose results stayed the same, and for those whose results declined. I would recommend that all testing be conducted in the same environment to eliminate this variable.

The students in the Intervention group were engaged during the ten lessons, however their interest seemed to wane slightly. It may be that the students could have been stimulated in further lessons by introducing another text, or that they were ready to move on to another teaching focus. The text that was chosen was right for the time frame in which these lessons took place; this was due to the length of the passages, the size of the text and the number of words on the page. It did take longer than planned for the students to record their thoughts and ideas, even during the sessions when the students were working with a partner. As these lessons were taking place in the classroom setting, managing the time was essential for the other groups work tasks. There was limited capacity for the lesson to run over time. It would be interesting to see whether the setting in which these lessons were conducted affected the results in some way.

The overall results did support the hypothesis that teaching synonyms and paraphrasing to grade two at risk students, will improve their reading comprehension. Although there were variables affecting the implementation of the teaching lesson, it is pleasing to note that all students were engaged, interested and made improvements in their understanding of a written text.



**APPENDIX:**

**Table 1:**

**DATA CHART**  
**RECORD OF ALL INFORMATION IN REGARDS TO THE STUDENTS IN THE CONTROL AND INTERVENTION GROUP**

Student Intervention	Age in months	EMA	Synonyms Pre test	Paraphrasing Pre test	Reading Progress Pre test	Reading Age Pre	Synonymn Post test	Paraphrasing Post test	Reading Progress Post test	Reading Age Post
Intervention Group										
1	94	0	8	4	25	96	12	8	28	100
2	93	0	10	1	23	93	13	4	25	96
3	95	0	13	1	28	100	14	5	28	100
4	95	0	12	0	19	87	15	2	20	88
5	104	0	5	1	23	93	6	6	21	89
Control Group										
6	93	0	12	0	28	100	11	2	28	100
7	92	0	8	1	26	98	8	3	27	99
8	97	0	10	1	30	108	11	3	31	114
9	89	0	8	0	20	88	8	1	20	88
10	94	0	9	1	17	84	10	4	19	87

**Table 2:**

**TABLES SHOWING THE COMPREHENSION SCORES**

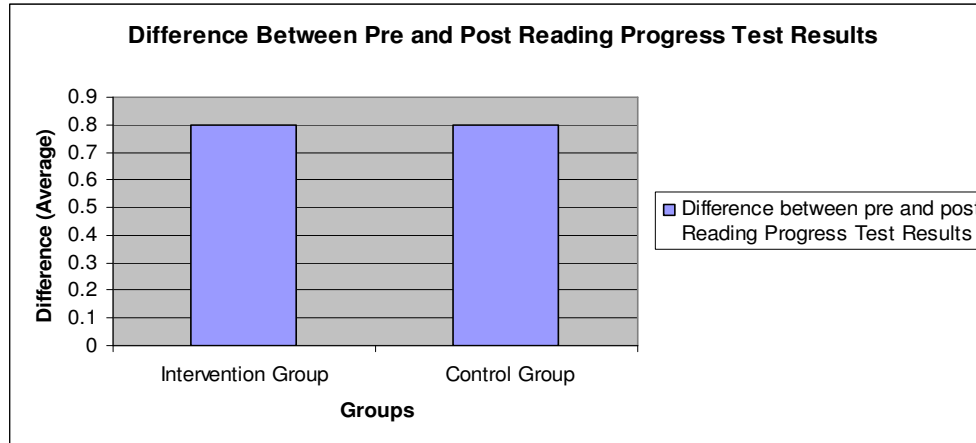


Figure 2; Gains made by students in the Intervention and Control Group for Reading Progress Test

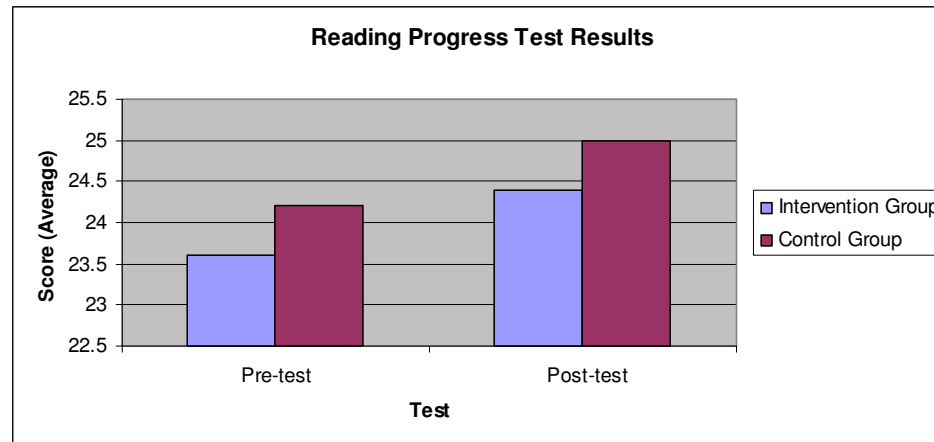


Figure 1; Average score recorded by students in the Intervention and Control Group for Reading Progress Test

**Table 3:**

**PARAPHRASING TEACHING SEQUENCES**  
**CREATED BY MUNRO**

***Introduce the strategy:** I am going to teach you something that you can do that will help you to remember what you read. It is called paraphrasing. This is what you do. After you have read each sentence, you say it in your own words. We will begin doing this with sentences, pairs of sentences and then with paragraphs.*

Session	Student activity
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teacher/students <u>read aloud</u> a paragraph. (modeling)</li><li>• Teacher/students paraphrase <u>sentence by sentence in whole group</u> activity.</li><li>• In <u>small groups</u> write a paraphrase of each sentence.</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teacher/students <u>read aloud</u> each paragraph. (modeling)</li><li>• Teacher/students paraphrase <u>sentence by sentence in whole group</u> activity.</li><li>• In <u>small groups</u> write a paraphrase of each sentence.</li></ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teacher/students <u>read aloud</u> each paragraph. (modeling)</li><li>• Teacher/students paraphrase <u>pairs of sentences in whole group</u> activity.</li><li>• In <u>small groups</u> write a paraphrase of sentences.</li></ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students <u>read aloud</u> each paragraph.</li><li>• Students paraphrase <u>pairs of sentences in whole group</u>.</li><li>• In <u>small groups</u> write a paraphrase for pairs of sentences.</li></ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students <u>read aloud</u> each paragraph.</li><li>• Teacher/students paraphrase <u>paragraph by paragraph</u> in whole group activity.</li><li>• In <u>small groups</u> write a paraphrase of each paragraph.</li></ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students <u>read aloud</u> each paragraph.</li><li>• Students paraphrase <u>sentence by sentence</u> in whole group activity.</li><li>• Each student <u>individually</u> writes a paraphrase of each sentence.</li></ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students <u>read silently</u> each paragraph.</li><li>• Students paraphrase <u>paragraph by paragraph</u> in whole group activity.</li><li>• In <u>small groups</u> they write a paraphrase of each paragraph.</li></ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students <u>read silently</u> each paragraph.</li><li>• Students paraphrase <u>paragraph by paragraph in whole group</u> activity.</li><li>• Each student <u>individually</u> writes a paraphrase of each paragraph.</li></ul>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students <u>read silently</u> each paragraph.</li><li>• Each student paraphrases each <u>paragraph silently</u>.</li><li>• Each student <u>individually</u> writes their paraphrase of each paragraph.</li></ul>

**Table 4:**

**TEACHING SEQUENCES USED IN THE  
TEN TEACHING SESSIONS**

(devised by the teacher, adapting John Munro's work - see table 3)

<b>SESSION</b>	<b>GOAL OF SESSION</b>	<b>TEACHING ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STUDENT ACTIVITY and MONITORING ACTIVITY</b>
<b>1</b>	Introduce synonyms (matching synonyms)	* introduce synonyms – words that are different but mean the same.	* whole group word game, student match pairs of synonyms. * List reason why it is important to understand what synonyms are.
<b>2</b>	Restating synonyms (matching sentences that have different words but mean the same)	* teacher has two sentence strips each with a similar sentence. (focusing at word level - synonyms) *discuss the differences between the sentences. *list the similarities in the sentences.	* as a while group, highlight words that can be changes with synonyms * List words highlighted words and teacher records on poster paper synonyms for these words.
<b>3</b>	Revising synonyms and introducing the reading strategy <i>Paraphrasing</i>	* re-state what synonyms * teacher hands out sheet of sentence(see appendix) * read to students * highlight words in sentence that can be easy to find synonym for (each student has their own copy, teacher has enlarged copy; students highlight their own paper) * brainstorm synonyms for highlighted words and write them on a chart	* Suggest synonyms for each highlighted word *students write down their best words from the group brainstorm on top of the words that have been highlighted *teacher paraphrases each sentence.
<b>4</b>	Restate the reading strategy <i>Paraphrasing</i>	* to begin, reflect on what good readers are able to do – re-write/ re-state information into own words *Re-state the term paraphrasing – show definition * use the sheet from previous lesson with sentences and highlighted words * read to students * discuss synonyms selected in previous lesson	* students discuss how they could paraphrase the sentence * teacher paraphrases sentences orally and then on class chart, students write down the paraphrased sentence on their handout
<b>5</b>	Revise the reading strategy <i>Paraphrasing</i>	* students state what they are to do when paraphrasing * Teacher reads a passage from a text 'Sea Creatures'. Discuss the main idea as a whole group. * Teacher reads page 2 aloud and paraphrases what was written.	* In pairs, students write down their paraphrased passage on whiteboards and share with the whole group.
<b>6</b>	Revise the reading strategy <i>Paraphrasing.</i>	* In pairs, students state what they are to do and read a passage from the text 'Sea Creatures' on page 4.	* In pairs, students discuss the main idea in the passage and paraphrase the passage on whiteboards. * Share with the group.
<b>7</b>	Practice the reading strategy <i>Paraphrasing</i>	* Individually read the passage of the text 'Sea Creatures' on page 8 and 10.	*Paraphrase the text on whiteboards. * Share with the group. * Teacher records on three paraphrased passages on poster paper * Discuss how each student has paraphrased the passage.
<b>8</b>	Practice the reading strategy	* Individually read the passage of the text 'Sea Creatures' on page 10-12.	* Students read individually *read two pages of the text and paraphrase in reading journals. *Share with the group orally.

<b>9</b>	Practice the reading strategy <i>Paraphrasing</i>	* Individually read pages of the text 'Sea Creatures' on pages 14-16	*paraphrase the passages and write down the main idea in reading journals. *Share with the group.
<b>10</b>	Practice the reading strategy <i>Paraphrasing</i>	Individually read pages of the text 'Sea Creatures' on pages 18-22	*paraphrase the passages and write down the main idea in reading journals. *Hand in to teacher

**Table 5:**

**SYNONYMS TASK – GROUP ADMINISTRATION**  
**JOHN MUNRO – PRE AND POST TESTING**

Administer the set of words below to a group of students. Say to the group: *I am going to say some words. After I say each word, I want you to think of another word that says the same thing. I would like you to write the word you think of. You can take as long as you need. This is not a spelling test. If you are not sure of how to spell a word, just write down how you think it is spelt. In this task it doesn't matter if you write words incorrectly.*

Go through the practice words below first. Then read each of the target words and ask the group to say write word that 'says the same thing'.

After the group has responded, ask "Remember to think of any other words that mean the same as...? Now write down any other words you can think of that mean the same thing as ... ."

Use the 'Teacher's Sheet' to correct the students' responses. The words in the second column are possible synonyms.

**DO NOT SAY ANY OF THE TARGET WORDS IN A SENTENCE. SIMPLY SAY THE WORD. REPEAT IT IF NECESSARY.**

Practice: *Thin.* Write another word that says the same as thin. Acceptable answers would be *skinny* or *slim*. If the child gives a correct response, ask "Did you think of other words that also mean thin?"

If some children hesitate, say "You could say *skinny* or *slim*. Other words that say the same as thin are *skinny* or *slim*."

Here is another word. *Dog.* Write another word that says the same as dog. Acceptable answers would include *puppy*, *hound*, or *terrier*. If some children hesitate say "You could say *puppy*, *hound*, or *terrier*. Other words that say the same as dog, *puppy*, *hound*, or *terrier*."

Here is another word. *Slide.* Write another word that means the same as slide. Acceptable answers would be *slip* or *skid*. Repeat the instructions above.

Here is another word. *Talk.* Write another word that means the same as talk. Acceptable answers would be *speak*, *natter*, *chat* or *say*. Repeat the instructions above.

Instruction: *Now have a go at each of these words. I will say a word and I want you to write another word that says the same thing. You can take as long as you want. If you don't hear a word that I say the first time, just tell me and I will say it again.*

	Practice word	Possible correct responses
1.	thin	skinny or slim
2.	dog	puppy, hound, or terrier.
3.	slide	slip or skid
4.	talk	speak, natter, chat say

**SYNONYMS TASK: TARGET WORDS AND POSSIBLE RESPONSES  
TEACHER'S SHEET**

Target word		Possible correct responses
1.	small	tiny, little, wee, mini, miniature, short, shrimp, slight, stunted, teensy, minor, trifling
2.	fast	quick, rapid, brisk, snappy, speedy, hasty, swift
3.	old	aged, ancient, elderly, experienced, geriatric, senior, veteran, outdated, stale
4.	leave	go, clear out, scam, stop
5.	car	vehicle, automobile, sedan
6.	shoe	boot, slipper, runners, sneaker
7.	child	boy, girl, infant, tot, baby, youngster, brat, kid, kiddie, toddler
8.	fat	rotund, plump, overweight, burly, corpulent, obese, oversize, paunchy, portly, stout, blubbery, bulk, lard
9.	walk	stroll, amble, hike, march, pathway, amble, tramp
10.	cat	kitten, moggy, puss, leopard, lion, tabby
11.	fatigued	tired, all in, beat, exhausted, weary, worn-out, zonked, sapped
12.	boat	ship, types of boats
13.	clean	neat, tidy, clear, flawless, trim, sparkling
14.	sick	ill, unhealthy, unwell, weak, queasy, diseased,
15.	tiger	cat cheetah, cougar, jaguar, leopard, lion, panther
16.	engine	motor machine, apparatus, appliance, gadget
17.	ignore	disregard, avoid, cut, neglect, omit, overlook, reject
18.	precious	expensive, dear, prized, treasured, valued, invaluable, prized
19.	angry	mad, irate, crazy, cross, out/enraged, fiery, fuming, furious, storming
20.	hit	slap, strike, punch, bat, smack, smash, sock, swipe, success, achievement, triumph
21.	give	donate, provide, contribute, dole out
22.	stop	prevent, bar, impede, halt, end, block, close, finish, terminate, rest, still
23.	cage	pen, cell, prison, enclosure, coop, cavity, chest
24.	adolescent	teenager, immature, juvenile, youthful, minor
25.	station	terminus, headquarters, stop, base, depot, terminal
26.	release	free, liberate, acquit, let go
27.	flow	run, move, drift, ooze, stream, abound, progress
28.	liberate	free, let out, loosen, release
29.	a building	a construction, edifice, home, house, dwelling, structure

**SYNONYMS TASK: GROUP ADMINISTRATION  
PRE AND POST TESTING**

**ADAPTED BY THE TEACHER**

**STUDENT'S SHEET**

	Record Sheet				
small					
fast					
old					
leave					
car					
shoe					
child					
fat					
walk					
hit					



**Table 6:**

**PARAPHRASING TASK: GROUP ADMINISTRATION**

**JOHN MUNRO – PRE AND POST TESTING**

*In this task we are going to be reading and writing sentences. This is not a spelling test. If you are not sure of how to spell a word, just write down how you think it is spelt. In this task it doesn't matter if you write words incorrectly.*

*Look at the first sentence. I will read it and I want you to read it to yourself with me. Then I will try saying it another way. After that I will ask you to try.*

*Read the sentence. Then say I will try saying it another way. I will change as many words as I can but still say the same thing. This person who makes toys moved to a new town. Now you have a go at saying the sentence another way. Change as many words as you can. When you have thought of another way of saying it, write down your sentence in the space. Remember you don't need to spell all the words correctly.*

*Now you have a go at the second sentence. Read it to yourself. Now have a go at saying it another way. Change as many words as you could. Write down your sentence. Remember you don't have to spell all the words correctly. Ask some students to share their responses with the class and provide useful corrective feedback. Now listen to how I say it. It says "He wanted to find a place to live." I could say "He needed to get a house to stay." Write down what I have said in the space.*

*Now you have a go at the third sentence. Read it to yourself. Now have a go at saying it another way. Change as many words as you could. Write down your sentence. Remember you don't have to spell all the words correctly. Ask some students to share their responses with the class and provide useful corrective feedback. Now listen to how I say it. It says "He needs to get to know the city." I could say "He wants to find out where things are in the big town." Write down what I have said in the space.*

*Tell the children that you may not be able to change every word in a sentence. Sometimes you will have to say some of the words that are in the starting sentence.*

*Now you have a go at the fourth sentence. Read it to yourself. Now have a go at saying it another way. Change as many words as you could. Write down your sentence. Remember you don't have to spell all the words correctly. Ask some students to share their responses with the class and provide useful corrective feedback. Now listen to how I say it. It says "After he bought a map he looked for a bus." I could say, "First he got himself a map. Then he searched for a bus stop." Write down what I have said in the space.*

Sentence read	Teacher	Your try
A toy maker went to live in another city	This person who makes toys moved to a new town.	
He wanted to find a place to live.	He needed to get a house to stay.	
He needs to get to know the city.	He wants to find out where things are in the town.	
After he bought a map he looked for a bus.	First he got himself a map. Then he searched for a bus stop.	

*Introduce the set of target sentences. Give the students the following instructions: Read each sentence to yourself. Tell yourself what it says. Then write another sentence in the space that says the same message. Try to change as many words as you can in the sentence you read, but make sure it still says the same thing. Remember I am keen to know about the sentences you make. You will probably say different things from each other.*

The young man and his friend rode on the bike.	
They were enjoying themselves.	
The birds were singing in the trees.	

The two friends chatted. They were not paying attention to anything.	
They were supposed to watch where they were going.	
The track became narrow and twisted.	
Suddenly it began to slope down and the bike sped up.	
People in the park watched and gasped as it went faster and faster.	
The two riders weren't smiling and chatting any longer.	
Now they were gripping the bike as tightly as they could, showing fear on their faces.	
People in the park had stopped what they were doing and started to yell, "Stop" or "Be careful".	
All of a sudden the path goes around a sharp curve.	
Ahead they see in the middle of the path, a huge stone.	
The closer they get to it, the more enormous it becomes.	
As they fly towards it, their hearts are beating louder and louder and they try to take avoidance action.	
There is loud thud, the front wheel crumples and the young couple is airborne, flying over the obstacle to the grass on the side of the path.	

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**PARAPHRASING TASK: GROUP ADMINISTRATION  
PRE AND POST TESTING**

**ADAPTED BY THE TEACHER**

**STUDENT WORK SHEET**

**Student name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_

Sentence	Teacher	Your try
A toy maker went to live in another city	This person who makes toys moved to a new town.	
He wanted to find a place to live.		
He needs to get to know the city.		
After he bought a map he looked for a bus.		

	Sentences	Your sentences
1.	The young man and his friend rode on the bike.	
2	They were enjoying themselves.	
3	The birds were singing in the trees.	
4	The two friends chatted. They were not paying attention to anything.	
5	They were supposed to watch where they were going.	
6	The track became narrow and twisted.	

Table 7:

Flash Cards created by the teacher

home	house	wash	clean
pick	choose	under	bottom
beside	next to	see	look
game	match	table	desk
push	shove	yard	playground
peace	quiet	loud	noisy

**Table 8:**

**Worksheet with sentences created by the teacher**

PARAPHRASING

1. Highlight words that you can find synonyms for.
2. With a partner, paraphrase each sentence ~ remember to change the words, but it must have the same meaning!

**The little old man walked past the Church building.**

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**The children were running around the school yard.**

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**The angry dog was barking loudly when the children were running past the gate.**

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**The lady was in a hurry to get to the shops before they closed.**

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