

## **Teaching Grade 3 students how to paraphrase factual and nonfactual texts will improve their literal and inferential comprehension.**

The 10 lessons were taught in 40 minute blocks over a 3 week period. As synonyms were a new concept for all of the students, these were introduced first. The students were given the definition of what a synonym is and as a class came up with a list of synonyms. To reinforce their new learning, the students then participated in games of synonym memory. The game cards were made by the teacher and the games were played in small groups. At the end of the lesson the students had a further brainstorm to add to the list that they came up with at the beginning of the lesson. This was constantly referred back to and added to throughout the ten lessons.

When the students had a basic grounding of what synonyms are it was explained to them how they related to paraphrasing. They were then introduced to passages of texts. Each text was used for a minimum of two lessons and the passage from the previous lessons text was revised at the beginning of the next lesson.

During the lessons the text was read aloud as a class. Students then suggested synonyms for key words. It was also discussed which words could not be changed as it would change the meaning of the passage. This helped the students in their understanding of what paraphrasing is. The students then reread the passage and, using synonyms, paraphrased the text individually. The class then came back together and the students then offered their suggestions as the class paraphrased the text as a group. The teaching model of whole, individual, whole was followed throughout the 10 lessons. During the following lesson the students reread the text and revisited the paraphrasing that was done as a whole class.

During each lesson the class paraphrased a passage individually and then as a class. The individual paraphrasing tasks were used to monitor the student's progress throughout the lessons. The teacher collected these and the students were given a score out of 2 according to their level of paraphrasing (2 points = if a student rewrites the sentence and changes most of the words, 1 point = the student changes some of the words, 0 points = no words changed). Anecdotal notes were also taken during each lesson to monitor the student's progress. See appendix 1 for further information on the lessons.

At the conclusion of the ten lessons all students were tested again using the same materials and procedures and under the same conditions that were used during the pre-testing. The one difference was the TORCH test that was administered to the students in the post-testing. In the pre-testing *Grasshoppers* was used and in the post-testing *Lizards Love Eggs* was the test administered. This was done as the post-test is deemed harder and therefore gave a better indication of growth and more information of a student's comprehension as opposed to administering the same test in both pre- and post-testing which would have given limited information. This is able to be done because of the 'torch' unit which is a special unit of measurement developed for the TORCH. The 'torch' unit enables students who have done different tests to be measured on the same scale.

## **Teaching unit on paraphrasing**

### **Lesson 1 – Teaching synonyms**

#### **Introduce the strategy**

*Over the next couple of weeks we are going to learn a strategy that will help us with our reading. That strategy is paraphrasing. Before we can learn about paraphrasing though we have to learn about synonyms. These will help us paraphrase.*

#### **Teaching strategy**

1. Ask students if they know what synonyms are.
2. Explain that synonyms are words that have the same meaning but are spelt differently. Give some examples.
3. Class brainstorm synonyms.
4. Explain that when we learn something new we have to do an activity to help us remember the new skill. Explain that that's what playing synonym memory will do. Explain how to play synonym memory.
5. Students play synonym memory in groups of 5.
6. Come back as a whole group and revise what synonyms are and ask the students if they have any more to add to the list made at the beginning of the lesson.

### **Lessons 2 – Revising synonyms**

#### **Introduce the strategy**

*Last lesson we learnt about synonyms. This lesson we are going to learn how synonyms can help us with paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is when we read something, ask ourselves questions about the text and put the text in to our own words. How do you think synonyms would help us with that? Discuss students answers.*

#### **Teaching strategy**

1. Review what synonyms are and what was done in the previous lesson.
2. Add to the poster of synonyms that they students came up with in the previous lesson.
3. Read one sentence from a text that all students can see.
4. As a class students try to change as many words as they can in the sentence. Keep rereading the sentence to make sure it still makes sense.
5. Repeat with another sentence.
6. Students practice the strategy individually.
7. Discuss answers students came up with as a class.
8. Students practice individually with another sentence.
9. As a whole class review the skills used during the lesson.

### Lessons 3 – 10

All lessons followed the same format

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Task Description</b>
Review text from previous lesson	Students reread text from previous lesson and reread the whole class paraphrase from the previous lesson.
Read new text	As a class read new text for the lesson.
Brainstorm synonyms	Verbally brainstorm synonyms that the students could use in their paraphrase.
Reread text	Students reread text individually.
Individual paraphrasing	Using this lessons text, students complete paraphrasing activity individually.
Whole class paraphrase	Come back as a class and drawing on the students individual paraphrase, paraphrase this lessons text as a whole class.
Synonyms poster	Students add new synonyms to the poster that was started in the first lesson.
Review	Review what was done during the lesson.
Reflection	Students reflect on new skills learnt and skills consolidated during the lesson.

As the students paraphrasing skills improve, increase the number of sentences in the paraphrasing activity.

### Texts Used

<b>Lesson</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>Genre</b>	<b>Series (if applicable)</b>	<b>Pages</b>
2	Michael Milton: Wonder Skier	Non-fiction	Rigby	4 – 8
3	Michael Milton: Wonder Skier	Non-fiction	Rigby	4 – 8
4	Ready, Set, Puppy	Fiction	Rigby	3 – 12
5	Ready, Set, Puppy	Fiction	Rigby	3 – 12
6	Animals in Disguise	Non-fiction	Rigby	4 – 13
7	Animals in Disguise	Non-fiction	Rigby	4 – 13
8	Charlotte's Web	Fiction		50 – 62
9	Charlotte's Web	Fiction		50 – 62
10	Charlotte's Web	Fiction		50 – 62