Explicit teaching of synonyms and paraphrasing will improve the reading comprehension of Grade Two students.

TEACHING UNIT - 10 Lesson Sequence

Teaching Year Two students to create synonyms and paraphrase text after reading increases their comprehension ability.

*Teaching unit based on material presented in John Munro – Effective Literacy Intervention Strategies (2008)*

**Session One** – 60 mins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text: Little Miss Spider at Sunny Patch School by David Kirk (fiction)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus: using the Meaning Making Motor to create synonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction: <em>Today I am going to teach you how to work out the meaning of words, think of other words that have the same meaning by using the dictionary we have in our head.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Teacher:  
  *Step 1:* Read the text from start to finish.  
  *Step 2:* Go back and select a sentence to write on the board/poster paper.  
  *Step 3:* Underline a focus word.  
  *Step 4:* Model using your Meaning Making Motor (see appendix 1).  
  *Step 5:* Model making a list of synonyms for the focus word on the board/poster paper, repeating the process of using the Meaning Making Motor for each new word.  
    • Repeat steps 2-5  
  *Step 6:* The teacher scribes the next sentence, from the text, on the board/poster paper and underlines a focus word. |
| Students: (whole class)  
  *Step 1:* Practise using their Meaning Making Motor with teacher prompting.  
  *Step 2:* Teacher scribes student’s responses (synonyms) above the focus word.  
    • The teacher scribes the next sentence, from the text, on the board/poster paper and underlines a focus word.  
    • Students repeat steps 1 and 2. |
| Teacher and students review action plan:  
*Let us look at what I have done today. I have used my Meaning Making Motor to work out the meaning of words and used the dictionary in my head to brainstorm other words I know and use without changing the meaning of the sentence.*  
  • Teacher creates a Meaning Making Motor, step-by-step poster for a class display. |
## Session Two – 60 mins

**Text:** Ladybird, Ladybird by Ruth Brown (fiction)

**Focus:** using the Meaning Making Motor to create synonyms

### Introduction:
- Recall the previous session.  

I am going use my Meaning Making Motor to help me create a list of synonyms, that is, words that have the same meaning.
- Recap the Meaning Making Motor strategy using the chart.

### Teacher:
*Step 1:* Read the text from start to finish.
*Step 2:* Go back and select a sentence to write on the board/poster paper.
*Step 3:* Underline a focus word.
*Step 4:* Model using your Meaning Making Motor.
*Step 5:* Model making a list of synonyms for the focus word on the board/poster paper, repeating the process of using the Meaning Making Motor for each new word.
- Repeat steps 2-5

*Step 6:* The teacher scribes the next sentence, from the text, on the board/poster paper and underlines a focus word.

### Students: (small groups)
*Step 1:* practise using their Meaning Making Motor with teacher prompting.
*Step 2:* a student scribes the group’s responses (synonyms).
- The teacher scribes the next sentence, from the text, on the board/poster paper and underlines a focus word.
- Students repeat steps 1 and 2.

### Teacher and students review action plan:
Let’s look at what we did today. We used our Meaning Making Motor to create synonyms. Creating synonyms help us to understand what we are reading and remember what we have read.
- Define the word ‘synonyms’ with the students and add to class display.

## Session Three – 60 mins

**Text:** Butterfly Kisses (fiction)

**Focus:** using the Meaning Making Motor to create synonyms

### Introduction:
We will use our Meaning Making Motor to create synonyms because when we create synonyms it help us to understand what we are reading and helps us to remember what we have read.

### Teacher:
*Step 1:* Read the text from start to finish.
*Step 2:* Use the text to select a sentence and write it on the board/poster paper.
**Session Four – 60 mins**

**Text:** The Buggliest Bug (fiction)

**Focus:** using the Meaning Making Motor to create synonyms.

**Introduction:**

*Today, we are going to practise making synonyms with as many words in the sentence as we can.*

**Teacher:**

*Step 1:* Read the text from start to finish.

*Step 2:* Select a sentence from the text and write it on the board/poster paper.

*Step 3:* Underline three to four focus words.

*Step 4:* Model using your Meaning Making Motor.

*Step 5:* Write the synonyms above the focus words, repeating the process of using the Meaning Making Motor for each word.

*Step 6:* The teacher scribes the next sentence, from the text; on the board/poster paper and underlines three/four focus words.

**Students:** (independently)

*Step 1:* use the Meaning Making Motor strategy.

*Step 2:* student writes synonyms above three of the focus words.

- The teacher scribes the next sentence, from the text, on the board/poster paper and underlines four focus words.

*Step 3:* use the Meaning Making Motor strategy.

*Step 4:* student writes synonyms above four of the focus words.

**Teacher and students review action plan:**

- Discussion question: *How might synonyms help us when we read?*

- Students record responses and share with the class.
### Session Five – 60 mins

**Text:** Eight Year Old Hero Saves Her Father (fiction) Comet magazine  
**Focus:** generating synonyms to assist with paraphrasing text.  
**Introduction:**  
After I finish reading, I am going to ‘go-back’ to the first sentence and change as many words as I can for other synonyms. Once I have changed as many words into synonyms, I will then check to make sure that the sentence makes sense and that it has the same meaning as the information I have read.  

**Teacher:**  
*Step 1:* Read the text from start to finish.  
*Step 2:* reread the first sentence.  
*Step 3:* Model the thinking process for generating synonyms for as many words as possible in the sentence.  
*Step 4:* write the synonyms above the words in the sentence.  
*Step 5:* read the sentence aloud by including the synonyms instead of the author’s word.  
*Step 6:* model verifying that the paraphrasing makes sense and that the meaning is similar to the original text.  
*Step 7:* read the next sentence.  
  - Repeat steps 3-6.  

**Students:** (whole class)  
*Step 1:* Teacher and students read the next sentence aloud.  
*Step 2:* Teacher asks students to assist by thinking of synonyms to replace the text.  
*Step 3:* Teacher writes the students responses above the words in the sentence.  
*Step 4:* Teacher asks volunteers to have-a-go at orally paraphrasing the sentence, using the synonyms.  
*Step 5:* Teacher asks “Does that make sense?” “Does our sentence have the same meaning as the writing?”  
  - Repeat steps 1-5

**Teacher and students review action plan:**  
The teacher and students discuss the meaning of paraphrasing. The teacher records a class definition for paraphrasing on a poster and adds it to the classroom display.

### Session Six – 45 mins

**Text:** Ants (non-fiction) enlarged photocopied text  
**Focus:** generating synonyms to assist with paraphrasing text.  
**Introduction:**  
Today I am going to read the information about snails and then paraphrase a sentence. Paraphrasing will help me to understand what I have read because it is in my own words.  

**Teacher:**  
*Step 1:* Read the entire text.  
*Step 2:* Reread the first sentence.  
*Step 3:* Model changing as many words in the sentence into synonyms.  
*Step 4:* Orally, model paraphrasing the sentence.  
*Step 5:* reread the next sentence.  
*Step 6:* model creating synonyms by writing them above the words in the sentence.  
*Step 7:* orally, model paraphrasing the written text.
**Students:** (in small groups)
Step 1: read the next sentence.
Step 2: write synonyms above the written text.
Step 3: orally paraphrase the sentence using the synonyms.

- Repeat steps 1-3 with teacher prompting.

**Teacher and students review action plan:**
Discussion question: *How might paraphrasing help you with your reading?*
- Teacher records students’ responses and add chart to class display.

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**Session Seven – 45 mins**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text: Snails (non-fiction) enlarged, photocopied text</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Focus: generating synonyms to assist with paraphrasing text.</td>
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</table>

**Introduction:**
Recap the meaning and purpose of paraphrasing after reading.

**Teacher:**
Step 1: Read the entire text.
Step 2: Reread the first sentence.
Step 3: Model changing as many words in the sentence into synonyms.
Step 4: model paraphrasing the sentence aloud.
Step 5: model checking that the meaning is clear and comparable to the text.
Step 6: reread the next sentence.
Step 7: model changing as many words in the sentence into synonyms.
Step 8: paraphrase the sentence aloud.
Step 9: model checking that the meaning is clear and comparable to the text.

**Students:** (with a partner)
Step 1: Read the photocopied text.
Step 2: Reread two sentences.
Step 3: Change as many words using synonyms and write the synonym above the text.
Step 4: paraphrase the sentence to their partner.
Step 5: Check the meaning.

- Repeat steps 2-5

**Teacher and students review action plan:**
- Discussion question: *what strategies did you use while you were paraphrasing?*
- Students record their strategies by listing the actions they performed when paraphrasing.
### Session Eight – 60 mins

**Text:** Insects (non-fiction) enlarged and photocopied text  
**Focus:** generating synonyms to assist with paraphrasing text.  

**Introduction:**  
Play Synonym Memory game: students match cards with the same meaning.  

**Teacher:**  
- Model paraphrasing:  
  1. Step 1: read the text from start to finish.  
  2. Step 2: reread each paragraph.  
  4. Step 4: rewrite the paragraph in their own words.  
  5. Step 5: Check the meaning and edit.  

**Students:** (with a partner)  
1. Step 1: read the text from start to finish.  
2. Step 2: reread each sentence/paragraph.  
4. Step 4: write the paragraph in their own words.  
5. Step 5: Check the meaning and edit.  

**Teacher and students review action plan:**  
Teacher and students sequence a series of flashcards, for ‘how to paraphrase.’ That is:  
- Read the whole story.  
- Reread each sentence/paragraph.  
- Change as many words into synonyms.  
- Paraphrase the sentences.  
- Check the meaning and edit.  

### Session Nine – 60 mins

**Text:** Mini beasts – Millipedes (non-fiction)  
**Focus:** paraphrasing and comprehension (literal)  

**Introduction:**  
*Today I will teach you to find the main idea or point in the sentence that you read so that you can put it in your own words.*  

**Teacher:**  
1. Step 1: read the paragraph aloud.  
2. Step 2: model thinking aloud, identifying the main point, interpreting the sentence, (“what is the most important event/information in this sentences?”)  
4. Step 4: model checking that the meaning is maintained.  

**Students:** (independently)  
1. Step 1: read the text from start to finish.  
2. Step 2: reread each paragraph.  
3. Step 3: find the important part of the sentences/paragraph.  
4. Step 4: create synonyms for words in the sentence.
### Session Ten – 60 mins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text: The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle (fiction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> paraphrasing and comprehension (dispositional level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction:</strong> Discuss the importance of how paraphrasing helps us to remember the author’s message, the lesson or moral of the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: read text from start to finish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: model thinking aloud using the key words in the text to identify the main points, the author’s intentions or the lesson the story is teaching us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: model writing about the author’s role in delivering the text.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Students:</strong> (independently read Giant by June Crebbin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: read the text from start to finish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: find the key words to identify the purpose of the story.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 3: write about the author’s message in your own words.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher and students review action plan:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reflection: <em>How do you feel about paraphrasing? What is useful about paraphrasing? How has paraphrasing helped you with your reading? How do you feel about your reading?</em></td>
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