PREDICTION HYPOTHESIS:

“Developing meaning at the sentence level through the explicit teaching of paraphrasing will improve comprehension.”

MATERIALS

Texts: Picture story books – The Wide Mouthed Frog (Faulkner & Lambert)
- The Puzzled Penguin (Faulkner & Lambert)
  - The Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing and Other Fables from Aesop (Literacy Links)
  - Aesop’s Fables (Brimax Classics)

Eight fable stories were chosen. These were used for the eight intervention lessons. The two picture story books were used for pre-intervention oral focus activities and vocabulary development (synonyms).

The fable texts were graded on the Fry’s Readability Scale (Fry 1977) at mid grade 3 level. These texts were supported by use of picture. Cue cards were used to help student recall self-help strategies. Thesaurus, used when working on synonyms.

PROBE, reading assessment (Triune Initiatives 2002)
Oral Retell Checklists – completed by the teacher at the conclusion of each session. (Appendix)

PROCEDURE

The student was withdrawn from the classroom for 10 sessions to work in a small group situation. This was to allow for the student to feel comfortable about being withdrawn. The sessions ran for 30 minutes. These were carried out during the literacy block over 5 weeks. An assessment session took place prior to intervention and an assessment session took place at the conclusion of the 10 sessions.

The first two sessions had an oral focus. The students listened to a picture story book. Story retell from group. Review story highlighting particular sentences within the story, e.g. “A little penguin plodded along, shivering through the thick snow.” How could you say this in your own words?

What other words could we use instead of little, but still mean the same. What other words could we use instead of plodded or shivering or thick, etc.?

The Thesaurus was used to assist.

Now say it in your own words, “A small penguin walked …”

This procedure was followed for both picture story book sessions.

The following eight sessions preceded as thus:
1. Text re-tell (previous session)
2. Reading together (practise paraphrasing)
3. Synonyms
4. Reading Target Words (new passage)
5. Writing Target Words (new passage)
6. Paraphrasing
7. Oral Share - What I have learnt

At the conclusion of the 10 sessions, Post –testing of the student (PROBE)
ORAL RETELL CHECKLIST – Comprehension

Teacher assessed

1. Where does the story take place?
2. When does the story take place?
3. Who are the main characters?
4. Who are the other important characters?
5. What was the problem in the story?
6. How did ------ try to solve the problem?
7. Was it hard to solve the problem?
8. Was the problem solved?
9. What did you learn by reading the story?
10. Can you think of a different ending?

TEACHING UNIT

The aim of this teaching unit:
To improve use of paraphrasing strategies to enhance sentence level comprehension. This links into Munro’s model at intervention at the sentence level, assisting students to visualise, re-read, question develop ‘how to’ strategies.

*Unit designed for small group instruction (5-6)
*Unit designed for Gr.4
*30 minute sessions
*10 sessions in unit
*Students withdrawn from classroom.

LESSON OUTLINE

SESSION 1.

Method:

1. Read: The Wide-Mouthed Frog (Faulkner and Lambert)
2. Select sentences from pages 4, 6, 8
   Write these sentences out on strips of cardboard. Begin with one strip at time
   and follow this procedure for each one:
   *Read sentence
*What do you think this means?
*Discuss
*How could you say that in your own words?
*Highlight the main topic words in the sentence
*What other words could you use that still mean the same?
   These are synonyms, e.g. pointy – sharp, delicious – yummy
*Use Thesaurus if needed.
*Share new sentence – group task

2. Re-read text, as the teacher approaches the pages from which the focus sentences were taken, a student from the group is asked to paraphrase with their own.

3. Implement Oral Retell Checklist

SESSION 2

Method:

1. Read: *The Puzzled Penguin* (Faulkner and Lambert)

2. Select sentences from pages 1, 5, 7

3. Write these sentences out on strips of cardboard. Begin with one strip at a time and follow this procedure for each one:
   *Read sentence
   *What do you think this means?
   *Discuss
   *How could you say this in your own words?
   *Highlight the main topic words in the sentence
   *What other words could you use that still mean the same?
   What do we call these words? Synonyms
   e.g. , shivering – shaking, little – small, tiny
   *Use the Thesaurus if needed.
   *Each student creates their own paraphrase for each sentence strip card.
   *Share with the group.

4. Re-read text, as the teacher reads the page from which the focus sentences were taken, students take it in turn to paraphrase with their own.

5. Implement Oral Retell Checklist

SESSION 3

Method:

1. Text retell – *The Puzzled Penguin* (Faulkner and Lambert)

2. Text reading from previous text. Go back over the paraphrasing from previous session. Read focus sentence from text. Say it in your own words.

3. Synonyms – cue the students into use of synonyms from last sessions. How did it help? What did you do? What words did you replace?

Write onto cards key content words from story to use for lesson. Sort words which could be used in place of words in the story. These are synonyms, e.g. sheepfold – pen, paddock Shepherd – farmer, owner

5. Write up these words

6. Read text together. Before starting students need to verbalise how paraphrasing is going to assist them when they read. Read a sentence. Now put it in your own words.

7. Oral Share Time
   “What have I learnt today?”
   Allow each student to contribute.

8. Implement Oral Retell Checklist

SESSION 4

Method:

1. Text retell – The Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing – Aesop Fable

2. Text reading from previous lesson. Go back over the paraphrasing from previous session.

3. Synonyms – cue the students into use of synonyms. How did it help? What did you do? What words did you replace?

4. Read new text – ‘The Frogs who wanted a King.’- Aesop Fable. Write onto cards key content words from the story to use for the lesson. Sort words which could be used in place of words in the story. These are synonyms, e.g. marsh-swamp, satisfied-happy, etc.

5. Write up these words.

6. Read text together. Before starting, students need to verbalise how paraphrasing is going to assist them when they read. Read a sentence. Now put it in your own words.

7. Oral Share Time – “What have I learnt today?” Allow each student to contribute.

8. Implement Oral Retell Checklist

SESSIONS 5 to 10

Follow this exact same format as outlined in SESSION 3 and 4
Texts used are from Literacy Links – The Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing/Aesop’s Fables

SESSION 5 – The Bundle of Sticks
SESSION 6 – Hungry but Free
SESSION 7 – Coyote and Goat
SESSION 8 – The Fox and the Stork

The texts for Sessions 9 and 10 are from: Aesop’s Fables (Brimax)
SESSION 9 – The Hare and the Tortoise
SESSION 10 – The Lion and the Mouse.