

Explicit teaching of the use of synonyms and paraphrasing to grade 3/4 students who display reading difficulties will improve their comprehension.

Lesson Structures for Paraphrasing

Lesson 1

Oral session

Introduce the Term Synonym. Ask the students to verbalise the term.

Present what synonyms do and why they can be important in helping us understand text.

Present a list of words on a poster to find synonyms for:

Chair, hot, bright, rough, happy, fast, loud, motor, etc

Teacher models: Use of synonyms and articulating what he is doing.

Students orally find other words to replace these.

Introduce.. Listen to the word, say it to your self, close your eyes picture it / ask yourself about the word, Verbalise an alternative.

Listen to a part of a story.

Use the text: **The Talent Quest. By Jenny Giles (PM level 24)**

Ensure that the story is well introduced so that the students do have a chance to draw on prior understandings.

Teacher stops and asks for substitute words for identified words. At each pause ask the students to repeat the same steps as above.

Conclusion: Students verbalise their learning from the sessions and why they think this learning might help them.

Session 2

Oral session

Revise the meaning of synonyms

Ask some students to remember what they did and what they learned at the last session.

Repeat the activity from session 1 using the same text but continuing further into the story.

Conclusion: Students verbalise their learning from the sessions and why they think this learning might help them.

Session 3

Mainly Oral session

Review Meaning of Synonyms

Review the process we are using to find new substitute words.

Read a non-fiction text and look to find synonyms as we read.

Use the text: Big Book. “**Our Solar System**” by **Julie-Anne Justus**

Teacher reads and models the use of synonyms at strategic parts of the text.

Students contribute alternative words as a group.

Conclusion: Students verbalise their learning from the session and why they think this learning might help them.

Session 4

Revise the synonym definition again.

Teacher articulates why using these words can help as a reading strategy.

Students articulate their understanding of the reasons for using this strategy.

Work in pairs with a short paragraph from the text.

Text used: Big Book. “**Our Solar System**” by **Julie-Anne Justus**

Read the text to your partner.

Partner chooses words from the text to find synonyms for and then shares their suggestions.

Students choose the best suggestions to share at the end of this activity.

Each person has a turn with his or her short paragraph.

Share each person’s paragraph with substituted words with the group.

Conclusion: Students verbalise their learning from the session and why they think this learning might help them.

Session 5

Begin to look at sentences and re word them using synonyms and linking the ideas from the sentence to maintain the meaning.

Use the text: “**Troy’s Movie**” by Joy Cowley

Teacher reads a sentence and models paraphrasing it.

Discuss what strategy you used.

Read the text

Ask your self about it and what it means

Put the ideas from the sentence into your own words and change as many of those words as you can.

As a group ask the students to have a go at a sentence.

Discuss alternatives and write down the best alternative we can come up with as a group.

Discuss why it is the best.

Work in pairs and take sentences from the text to change

Share your best-paraphrased sentences with the group

Teacher introduces the acronym RAP to help remind the students of the strategy they can use.

Students asked to verbalise this acronym and what it stands for from a poster.

Conclusion: Students verbalise their learning from the session and why they think this learning might help them.

Session: 6

Revise RAP strategy

As a group activity. Students take turns in reading a paragraph and asking the next person to have a go at paraphrasing it.

Use the familiar text: “**The Talent Quest**”

Teacher reads a paragraph and models paraphrasing it.

Discuss what strategy you used.

Read the text

Ask your self about it and what it means

Put the ideas from the paragraph into your own words and change as many of those words as you can.

As a group ask the students to have a go at a paragraph.

Discuss alternatives and write down the best alternative we can come up with as a group.

Discuss why it is the best.

Work in pairs and take a paragraph to change.

Share your paraphrased paragraph with the group

Conclusion: Students verbalise their learning from the session and why they think this learning might help them.

Session 7

Revise the RAP acronym and the synonym meaning.

Teacher repeats one of the group paraphrasing successes from lesson 6.

Teacher models articulating the strategy aloud

“When I read I ask my self what the text is about and what it means. I then try to put it into my own word to make it make sense to me.”

Students have the opportunity to articulate their understanding of the RAP strategy.

Teacher discusses with the students reasons for using this strategy.

Students are given a paragraph from the same text: Big Book. “ **Our Solar System**” by

Julie-Anne Justus

They read the text individually and try to paraphrase it.

Teacher moves around and asks the students individually what they are doing in their heads as they read..... Ask the student to articulate the RAP strategy as they work.

Ask them why they are using this strategy.

Share paragraphs and consider other ways of paraphrasing some ideas in them.

Conclusion: Students verbalise their learning from the session and why they think this learning might help them.

Session 8

Revise the RAP strategy

Teacher reads whole paragraphs and asks students as a group to pick out the main ideas being conveyed in the text. Share these ideas and clarify as a group.

Use the text Weather: *Rain and Us* by Jillian Powell

Students work individually from cards made from the paragraphs in this text to identify the main ideas. Now put these ideas in your own words.

Complete a worksheet

Paragraph:	Main meaning in this. What is it about?	In my own words...
Thunderstorms can bring heavy rain. The electricity in lightning can heat up the air quickly, and the air makes a booming sound. Thunderclouds carry big Raindrops.	Storms bring rain. Lightning heats the air The heat makes the booming sound. The raindrops are big.	?????

Share student ideas with the group.

Conclusion: Students verbalise their learning from the session and why they think this learning might help them.

Session 9

Revise the RAP strategy by telling a partner how it works and why it is useful.

Ask students to tell the group what their partner said.

Complete one paragraph as a group and ask students to say out loud what they are doing as they work through it. Explain the value of "Talking to yourself" to make things clearer and more meaningful.

Discuss the fact that there is little use in reading words if we do not know what they are trying to say to us.

Complete some Oral paraphrasing practice from the text *Troy's Movie* by Joy Cowley.

Divide this story into parts and have the students work individually to paraphrase it so that we can put the story back together. Does it still give the same message and is it even more clear to us now????

Conclusion: Students verbalise their learning from the session and why they think this learning might help them.

Session 10

Revise synonyms and paraphrasing as useful strategies in helping us to understand what we are reading.

Use the text **“RAIN and Us”** by **Jillian Powell**.

There are many short factual paragraphs in this text.

As a group share some fun in paraphrasing these as quickly as we can after saying what we are doing

Eg: I am reading the text and asking myself what it is about.

It is about.....

I can change it to read like this.....

Ask each child to articulate what the ten sessions have taught them.

What will this do for them when they read?????

Will you use it when you are reading by yourself...??? Why??

Will you be talking to yourself inside your head???