

Teaching Year 4 Students to use synonyms and visualisation during reading will increase comprehension of Non Fiction Texts

Teaching Sequence: Intervention Group

Session Outline: adapted from Munro's teaching sequence on Comprehension – Paraphrasing (2005) and Munro's Teaching Vocabulary (2005).

Session One: Synonyms

Activity	Task Description	Time
Clarify Terms	Teacher re visits the term Synonym – a synonym is a word that means the same as another word Synonyms help us to say things in another way without changing the meaning. Eg: thin – skinny or slim Dog – hound or puppy Slide – slip or skid Talk – speak, chat, say Discuss how each of the suggested synonyms do not mean something different from the target word.	5 mins
Text Reading (Shared Strategy)	Look at list of the following words; happy, close, dish, strong, hard, cry. Ask the students to suggest synonyms for the words. If they are having difficulty show them the following list and ask them to select synonyms from there: glad, shut, plate, powerful, difficult, weep.	7 mins
Reading Target Words and Applying the Strategy	Matching game of synonyms. Read through target words with students Ask students match words on cards with others that mean the same.	10 mins
Sharing Our Words	Students share words they grouped together. Do these share the same meaning?	5 mins
Reflection	What have I learnt today? Students record in book.	5 mins

Session Two: Revision of synonyms and Introduction of Visualising

Activity	Task Description	Time
Text Retelling	What did we learn last session? (students will define the term synonym)	3-5 mins
Synonyms	Students give examples of synonyms they know or learnt yesterday	5 mins
Text Reading (Shared Reading Strategy)	We have been learning how to use synonyms to change words and keep the same meaning. We can do this when we are reading to help us understand what we are reading. Write a sentence taken from pre test text <i>The Game of Soccer</i> . Eg: <i>Soccer is the most popular football game in the world today.</i> Ask the students to describe the picture they get in their head after they have read the sentence. Above the following words place 2 cards – one with a synonym for the word and one with a word that is not a synonym. (popular, football game) Ask target students to choose the word they think is the correct synonym and say	10 mins

	why. Re read the sentence with the correct synonym and ask them to describe the picture they have in their heads. Is it the same as the first picture? Why or why not.	
Applying the strategy Suggesting Synonyms	Provide students with another sentence from the pre test text <i>The Game of Soccer</i> . Eg: <i>The <u>goalkeepers</u> are the only players who are <u>permitted</u> to <u>touch</u> the ball with their hands.</i> Read together and ask students to visualise. Ask them to suggest synonyms for the underlined words in the sentence on their own.	5 mins
Reflecting	Students share their synonyms and discuss. Ask students to describe the picture they have in their head...is it the same? If the picture os the same that means we have used the correct synonyms and haven't changed the message of the text. What have I learnt today?	5 mins

Session Three: Visualising and using synonyms.

Activity	Task Description	Time
Text Retelling	Re visit sentences from previous session showing original sentence. How did we change this sentence using synonyms? Revise the technique of visualising when we read to give us a picture in our head. How did this help us with our synonyms?	3-5 mins
Synonyms	Give students a fill the gaps where they complete a sentence by writing in a word from the box that means the same thing as the word in brackets. Encourage students to use the visualising technique when the read the sentence first and then again when they have inserted the synonym and compare their picture Is it the same or different?	5 mins
Text Reading (Shared Reading Strategy)	We have been learning how to use synonyms to change words and keep the same meaning. We can do this when we are reading to help us understand what we are reading. Read the first paragraph from the text titled <i>Different Solids</i> . Colour each sentence a different colour to separate ideas. Re read the first sentence with students <i>There are many kinds of Solids</i> . Ask them to select the key word/term in the text we would change. Ask them to suggest synonyms for words in the sentence and record them.	7 mins
Applying the strategy Suggesting Synonyms	Students read next sentence and write down the key words and suggest synonyms for each term. Share what they have done. Repeat for remaining sentences, reminding them to visualise where possible.	10 mins
Reflecting	Share the synonyms students came up with and discuss why they are good/not so good selections. What have you learnt today?	5 mins

Session Four: Using synonyms in a sentence.

Activity	Task Description	Time
Text Retelling	What did we do with the paragraph in the last session? (we changed the key words in the paragraph using synonyms. We also tried to visualise the sentences to check we had used the correct synonyms and had not changed the meaning of the text)	3-5 mins
Synonyms	Students play Synonym Match as a small group.	5 mins
Text Reading (Shared Reading Strategy)	Read second paragraph of text <i>Different Solids</i> . Colour in each separate sentence in a different colour. As a group re read the first sentence of the paragraph and ask the students to visualise and talk about what they can see. Ask them to identify key terms in the sentence and suggest possible synonyms for the words. Say the sentence using the synonyms and ask "Do we still get the same picture in our mind?"	7 mins
Applying the strategy Suggesting Synonyms	Students read each sentence and suggest synonyms for the key words. They record the key words and write synonyms for the words next to them. They also practice visualisation to check their visual picture – is it the same or different?	10 mins
Reflecting	Students share their sentences and synonyms. Explain to them that by using synonyms when we are reading we can put what we are reading into our own words and this helps us to understand it better. We call this skill paraphrasing. What have we learnt today? Record in your journal.	5 mins

Session Five: Introduction of paraphrasing.

Activity	Task Description	Time
Clarify Terms	We have been learning to make a picture in our mind about what we have been reading. We have also been learning how to change words in sentences to other words that mean the same thing. This is called PARAPHRASING. These are two strategies we can use to help us read and understand what we are reading – visualising and paraphrasing.	3-5 mins
Explain the Strategy	Paraphrasing is when we tell ourselves what we have read. After you have read a sentence you say it to yourself in your own way. You try to change as many words as you can using synonyms so that you are saying it in your own way.	5 mins
Text Reading (Shared Reading Strategy)	Look at the sentences <i>The most common liquid is water. It fills the world's oceans.</i> Here are two sentences. I am going to show you how we can use paraphrasing. First I read the two sentences and think about the picture I have in my mind. Then I think about the key words and synonyms I can use. Then I tell myself to say it in another way. <i>Water is an everyday liquid. Water is found in</i>	5 mins

	<i>places all around the word such as the sea.</i> Discuss the picture we have in our mind...have we changed the meaning?	
Applying the strategy Suggesting Synonyms	Now it is your turn. Here is a sentence I want you to read. You need to tell yourself what you are going to do (I will read and visualise then I will find the key words change them for synonyms and then say it in my own way) Students read <i>Different Liquids</i> and cue themselves to visualise, use synonyms and then paraphrase)	10 mins
Reflecting	Students share their paraphrasing and write what they think paraphrasing means.	5 mins

Session Six: Paraphrasing using RAP.

Activity	Task Description	Time
Clarify Terms	Tell me in your own words what paraphrasing is. What are the steps we use when we paraphrase? We can also use a strategy called RAP.	3-5 mins
Explain the Strategy	Write up RAP on the board. Describe each stage: R ead the text, A sk yourself what are the key words and main ideas and P ut the text in your own words using synonyms.	5 mins
Text Reading (Shared Reading Strategy)	Using text <i>Different Gases.</i> , read a sentence. Model using the Rap strategy with the sentence. Record the paraphrase down. Repeat for next sentence.	8 mins
Applying the strategy Suggesting Synonyms	Now it is your turn. Here is a sentence I want you to read. You need to tell yourself what you are going to do and use the RAP strategy to help you. Continue using the text from <i>Different Gases</i> . Ask students to record the paraphrase onto their page.	10 mins
Reflecting	Students share their paraphrasing. Students write the steps they need to follow when they are paraphrasing.	5 mins

Session Seven: Using RAP to paraphrase

Activity	Task Description	Time
Clarify Terms	Revise the strategy of RAP. How does it help us paraphrase?	3-5 mins
Explain the Strategy	Today we are going to use RAP to paraphrase a paragraph but at the end of the paragraph we are going to answer some questions about it.	5 mins
Text Reading	Ask students to read the text silently to themselves first.	1 mins
Applying the strategy Suggesting Synonyms	Tell the students they are going to read the text again using RAP and telling themselves in their mind what they will do during each step. Students do not record the paraphrase but answer the comprehension questions about the text at the end in their journal.	10 mins
Reflecting	Students share their answers to the questions Students reflect about how the RAP strategy helps them to understand what they are reading.	5 mins

Session Eight and Nine: RAP and paraphrasing for comprehension

Activity	Task Description	Time
Clarify Terms	What did we say about the RAP strategy and how it helps us to comprehend?	3-5 mins
Explain the Strategy	Today we are going to practice using the RAP strategy while we read a book. At the end of the book we are going to think about our paraphrasing and what we have read to answer some questions about the text.	5 mins
Text Reading (Shared Reading Strategy)	Students read text independently as a guided reading session. They paraphrase each sentence to themselves while they are reading.	8 mins
Applying the strategy Suggesting Synonyms	Students think about what they have read and what they told themselves in their own words about the text. They then use this information to answer comprehension questions.	10 mins
Reflecting	Students the answers to their questions.	5 mins

Appendix 2: Teaching Sequence – Whole Class.

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
<p><i>Synonyms: words that share the same meaning as others.</i></p>	<p><i>Synonyms</i> <i>Matching words that are synonyms</i></p>	<p><i>Synonyms</i> <i>Visualising</i> Experiment safety rules</p>	<p><i>Synonyms: pulling words out of a text and matching with synonyms.</i></p>
<p>Ask students to define the word synonym. <i>A word that shares the same meaning as another word.</i> Provide the students with some examples eg: team and individual terms used in previous inquiry unit. Provide some other examples eg: quiet (silent, peaceful, soft, hushed) run (jog, dash, sprint) smelly (pong, stink, stinky, stinking) Synonyms should not change the meaning of the word we are using.</p>	<p>Revise what a synonym is and ask students to provide examples. Blu tack the following words onto the whiteboard and ask students to discuss with a partner which words belong together and why. <i>Smart, clever, noisy, loud, last, end, hot, burning, horrible, awful.</i> Come back as a class and share ideas and suggestions. Invite students to come and group the words.</p>	<p>Warm Up: Students come up with synonyms for the following words; Tired (sleepy, exhausted, drowsy) easy (simple, not hard, no bother), afraid (frightened, nervous, fear, scared). Read to students Scientific Experiment Safety. Model reading one sentence at a time and talking about the picture I get in my head when I read the sentence. Continue with each sentence, inviting students to share the picture they have in their mind. Why might my picture be different to your picture?</p>	<p>Re read text Scientific Experiment Safety. Select three sentences and read each one separately while talking about the picture I have in my head. Circle key words in the sentence and change using synonyms. Re read the sentence using synonyms and tells the students the picture I have in my mind Is this picture similar or the same to the one I got with the first sentence? If it is then I know I have used correct synonyms because the meaning has not changed. Choose a sentence and hand out to each individual student. Ask them to write synonyms for the key words and say the sentence in another way. Did you get the same picture?</p>

Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8
<p><i>Paraphrasing: Saying what you have read in your own way.</i></p>	<p><i>Paraphrasing: Saying what you have read in your own way.</i></p>	<p><i>RAP: Strategy for paraphrasing</i></p>	<p><i>RAP: Strategy for paraphrasing Recording paraphrase in a full sentence.</i></p>
<p>Over the last week we have been learning how to use synonyms when we are reading to help us say what we have read in our own words. We have also been practising to make a picture in our mind about what we have read – this is called visualising. When we use synonyms to change the words in a sentence to say it in our own way we call this paraphrasing. Read a sentence and then model using synonyms to say it in my own way. Ask – did you still get the same picture in your mind? Is the message of the text still the same? Repeat for some more sentences modelling paraphrasing strategy.</p>	<p>Revise what paraphrasing is. Model some more paraphrases of sentences you are reading. Now it is your turn. Display some sentences on strips and read to the class. Ask them to visualise, select key words to change using synonyms and then write down the sentence they come up with. Ask students to share their paraphrase – have we retained the same picture and the meaning of the text?</p> <p>Repeat for two – three other sentences.</p>	<p>Introduce the strategy RAP for paraphrasing – Read the text, Ask yourself what are the main ideas and Put the main idea in your own words using synonyms. Model using this strategy by reading a paragraph. Record my paraphrasing as a full sentence.</p>	<p>Revisit the RAP strategy. Teacher models using the strategy for two sentences then students have a go. They record in their English books.</p>

Appendix 3: Synonym Support Activities

Brennan, M., Giordimaina, K., Roberts, B., & Watt, K. (1997) Section 3: Similarities & Differences *Learning Words 1: A Language Program*. Catholic Education Office.

Matching Words: Match the synonyms from the following list.

Small	powerful
Happy	mad
Close	difficult
Dish	little
Angry	glad
Strong	weep
Hard	shut
Cry	plate

Fill the Gap 1

Large	loud	beside	road
Quick	above	sick	closed

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. The building is _____.
_____.
(big)</p> <p>2. My friend lives down the _____.
(street)</p> <p>3. I can run really _____.
head.
(fast)</p> <p>4. The music was very _____.
(noisy)</p> | <p>5. The door slammed
(shut)</p> <p>6. The baby is _____.
(unwell)</p> <p>7. The boy hit the ball _____ my
head.
(over)</p> <p>8. I sit _____ my friend.
(next to)</p> |
|---|---|

Memory Game 1 – The following table was made into flashcards.

Wet	soaked
Bright	shiny
Scared	frightened
Under	below
Nice	kind

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