

**In Their Own Words:  
Reading and Understanding  
Through Paraphrasing**

**Metro ABE Spring Regional  
March 13, 2015**

## **Teacher / Student Commitment**

### **Teacher –**

*“You and I need to form a partnership to create success for you in the area of understanding and remembering what you read. I need to work hard at teaching this strategy to you and you need to work hard at learning. I will commit to you that I will do my very best to teach you the Paraphrasing Strategy. Now I ask you to make a commitment to working through this process and to write a goal for yourself that relates to increasing your comprehension of reading passages.”*

### **Example Student Goals:**

*“I want to learn a strategy for understanding and remembering what I read.”*

*“I want to be a better reader so I can do better on tests.”*

*“I want to understand the main idea of what I am reading.”*

*“I want to be able to read faster and understand better.”*

## **Requirements for Stating a Paraphrase of a Paragraph**

- 1. Must contain a COMPLETE thought**
  - subject**
  - verb**
- 2. Must be totally accurate**
- 3. No repeat sentences**
- 4. Must make sense**
- 5. Must contain useful information**
- 6. Must be in your own words**
- 7. Only one general statement per paragraph is allowed.**

# **RAP STRATEGY**

## **Steps for Paraphrasing**

**Step 1**      **Read a paragraph.**

**Step 2**      **Ask yourself, “What is the main idea of this paragraph? What are the details that support this main idea?”**

**Step 3**      **Put the main idea and details into your own words.**

## **Finding the Topic and Main Idea**

**Ask yourself these questions:**

**What is this paragraph about? What is the subject matter? (Topic)**

***This paragraph is about***

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**What does this paragraph tell me about  
\_\_\_\_(topic)\_\_\_\_\_?**

***It tells me***\_\_\_\_\_

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**Places to look to find the main idea:**

**1. Look in the first or second sentence of the paragraph. Look in the last sentence of the paragraph.**

**2. Look for repetitions of the word or words and related words in the whole paragraph.**

Handout 4  
**Paraphrase Evaluation**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Passage Title \_\_\_\_\_

Paragraph number paraphrased \_\_\_\_\_

To score: mark a 1 or 0

If 0 – check reason in appropriate box(es)

	Main Idea	Detail 1	Detail 2	Detail3
1. Complete thought				
2. Accurate				
3. Repetitive				
4. Not Meaningful				
5. Not in paragraph				
6. Too General				
7. Not a Paraphrase				

1. Student's oral response must be a complete thought.
2. The response must contain entirely accurate information that s/he states correctly.
3. The student's response must not repeat previous information.
4. The response must make sense within context of statements previously made.
5. Information must be covered in paragraph. It may be true but it is not stated in the paragraph.
6. Response is too general or broad – student is making repeat general statements.
7. Student's response must be substantially different from sentences in passage. Must use his/her own words.
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## Handout 5

### **MODEL PASSAGE**

Wandering in the Wilds  
(From: Timed Readings, Book 1)

Backpacking offers freedom found in no other type of wilderness travel. However, you must know what to expect when you hike off into the wilderness. There will be no piped water or shelters to use. There will be no tables to eat from and no grills to hold your pots and pans. There will be few trail signs to guide you. You must know how to follow a map. You will be on your own.

#### Student Paraphrase:

*"This is about what to expect when you're backpacking. This is about things to expect when your hiking. You won't have running water when you hike. They have no tables. You'll be on your own."*

Still, there are countless places you can go. Try an overnight trip to a mountain or stream. Follow an unmarked trail that seems inviting. A trial run will help to tone up muscles and show up mistakes in plans. During a short trip, you will not suffer too badly if something has been left at home.

#### Student Paraphrase:

*"This paragraph is about places to hike to. You can hike to see a mountain and you can hike to see a stream. You can hike to see a sunset."*

Experienced backpackers pride themselves on being able to travel light. With many, weight saving is a gem. Some cut towels in half and saw the handles off toothbrushes to save ounces. They measure out just the right amount of food needed and put it in plastic bags. Plastic bags are lighter the cardboard. There are dozens of tricks to save ounces that add up to pounds.

#### Student Paraphrase:

*"This paragraph talks about how to travel light. Like you can cut off your toothbrush handle. Or put it in plastic."*

### Paraphrase Evaluation

Student Name:         D.D.        

Date: 12-17-14

Passage: Wandering in the Woods

**Paragraph 1**

To score: 1 or 0

If 0 – check reason in appropriate box(es)

	M I	D 1	D 2	D 3	D 4
	1	0	1	0	0
1. Complete thought					
2. Accurate				X	
3. Not from Paragraph					
4. Repetitive		X			
5. Not Meaningful					
6. Not in paragraph					
7. Too General		X			
8. Not a Paraphrase					X

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Student Name:         D.D.        

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**Paragraph 1**

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	1	0	1	0	0
1. Complete thought					
2. Accurate				X	
3. Not from Paragraph					
4. Repetitive		X			
5. Not Meaningful					
6. Not in paragraph					
7. Too General		X			
8. Not a Paraphrase					X

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## **Evaluating Paraphrasing**

### **Words – Phrases – Sentences – Paragraphs**

**Based on whether an item is correct, written in student's own words, and makes sense.**

**1. “Correct” means that an item has same or similar meaning as the original word, phrase, or sentence.**

✓ **Place a checkmark in the “C” box.**

**2. “Written in the student's own words” means that the original word phrase or sentence has been changed into the student's own words as much as possible.**

✓ **Place a checkmark in the “W” box.**

**3. “Makes Sense” means that an item is clearly understood and communicates the original meaning of the word, phrase, or sentence.**

✓ **Place a checkmark in the “M” box.**

## Handout 8

### Seed Plants (#35)

- from Six-Way Paragraphs, Introductory Level (GL 4-5)

What plants do you see in your neighborhood? Trees such as maple and ginkgo and flowers such as geraniums and columbine are possibilities. Fruit crops such as strawberries, pumpkins, and corn may grow in some gardens. You're also likely to see grass and weeds. All these plants, and most others we see, are seed plants. Seed plants – plants grown from seeds – need water, sunlight, and minerals to thrive.

All seed plants have three main parts, roots, stems, and leaves; some seed plants also have flowers. Each part of a plant is essential for its continuing growth. Roots grow downward into the soil or toward water. As the roots branch out throughout the soil, they absorb water and minerals. The roots of some plants also store food to help the plants survive the winter. Roots act as an anchor, holding the plant firmly in the soil.

Most stems grow above ground. Some seed plants, however, have special stems that grow underground. For example, onions and tulips have bulbs, which are stem parts that grow underground. Stems have tubes that carry food, water, and minerals, throughout the plant. Stems also grow leaves and hold them up toward sunlight. Green plants use energy from the sun to make food through photosynthesis, which takes place in the leaves and sometimes in the stems of seed plants.

Seed plants form seeds to reproduce new plants. Some form seeds, such as pinecones and acorns, on branches of leaves. Other plants have flowers that make seeds inside a fruit, such as apples and cucumbers. The seeds of all plants grow into new plants, many of which play important roles in our lives. Most importantly, we depend on seed plants as sources of food for animals and for ourselves.

Handout 9

**Lesson 1 – Paraphrasing Words**

Directions: Paraphrase each word by writing a word or words with similar meaning in the space provided.

Here are some examples of paraphrased words.

Possibilities - examples      Grow – thrive      Water - moisture

**Observe**

essential \_\_\_\_\_  
absorb \_\_\_\_\_  
survive \_\_\_\_\_

**Working Together**

special \_\_\_\_\_ C  
make \_\_\_\_\_ □  
takes place \_\_\_\_\_ □

**On Your Own**

reproduce \_\_\_\_\_ C  
form \_\_\_\_\_ □  
sources \_\_\_\_\_ □

**The Seneca Falls Convention (#74)**  
- from Six-Way Paragraph, Middle Level (GLE 8-9)

In 1848, Seneca Falls was a rural town in a remote corner of upstate New York. One small notice in the local Seneca County Courier announced that public meetings would be held in the Wesleyan Chapel on the subject of women's rights. A few dozen people were expected to attend, but to the astonishment of the organizers, hundred's of women showed up.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902) had never before spoken in public; few women in America had. As Stanton began, however, she discovered that she was a natural-born speaker. "Resolved," she read from the *Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions*, "that it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise." As expected, there was opposition to the resolution, but to Stanton's great relief and joy, it passed. Elizabeth Cady Stanton learned she was not the only one in America who believed women deserved the right to vote.

The public expressed outrage and disgust. Newspapers reacted as if the women had set out to tear down the nation. One paper accused them of trying to "upheave existing institutions and overturn all the social relations of life." The clergy was outraged too. The women were accused of undermining organized religion and blaspheming God.

But something had been set in motion. More women's rights meetings were held, and two years later the first National Women's Rights Convention was held in Wooster, Massachusetts. When women finally gained the right to vote in a national election, in 1920, only one woman who had attended the Seneca Falls convention was still alive to cast her vote – 72 years after Elizabeth Cady Stanton's act of monumental bravery.

## Lesson 2 – Paraphrasing Phrases

- for use with The Seneca Falls Convention (#74) from Six-Way Paragraphs, Middle Level

A phrase is a small group of words that has meaning. Paraphrase each phrase by rewriting it in your own words in the space provided.

Here are some examples of paraphrased phrases.

wandering around town - walking all over the place

an enormous impact – a big impression

### Observe

C W M

in a remote corner \_\_\_\_\_

a few dozen people \_\_\_\_\_

spoken in public \_\_\_\_\_

### Working Together

C W M

natural born speaker \_\_\_\_\_

opposition to the resolution \_\_\_\_\_

expressed outrage and disgust \_\_\_\_\_

### On Your Own

C W M

tear down the nation \_\_\_\_\_

set in motion \_\_\_\_\_

act of monumental bravery \_\_\_\_\_

## Handout 12

### Swim Safely

- from Timed Readings Plus, Book One (GL – 4/5)

Swimming is enjoyed by people of all ages, from the very young to the very old. All over the world, people swim for fun. There are many places where people can enjoy swimming. People swim in lakes, oceans, and rivers. Some swim in pools. Many schools, motels, apartment buildings, and clubs have indoor or outdoor pools. Some families have pools in their yards.

Swimming is one of the best forms of exercise. It can improve heart action. It also helps the blood to circulate. Swimming will develop strong muscles. It will even strengthen the lungs. People who are disabled and can't enjoy other sports can keep their bodies in better condition by swimming.

There are basic rules for water safety that can help save your life. These rules can also help you save the life of a friend. First of all, know how to swim. Many schools give lessons to children as part of their athletic program. Adults can learn to swim at public pools or recreation centers. Another rule to remember is never swim alone. Always swim with a friend and know where that person is in the water at all times. It is best to swim only in places where there is a lifeguard if you swim in the ocean or river; it is good to know about the tides and the currents.

**Lesson 3 – Paraphrasing sentences**

Directions – Paraphrase each sentence by writing it in your own words in the space provided.

Here is an example:

The elderly woman was overjoyed.

The old woman was exceedingly happy.

**Observe:**

1. All over the world, people swim for fun.

---

2. People swim in lakes, oceans, and rivers.

---

**Working Together:**

1. Swimming is one of the best forms of exercise.

---

C  W  M

2. People who are disabled and can't enjoy other sports can keep their bodies in better condition by swimming.

---

C  W  M

**On Your Own:**

1. There are basic rules for water safety that can help save your life.

---

C  W  M

2. Many schools give lessons to children as part of their athletic program.

---

C  W  M

3. Always swim with a friend and know where that person is in the water at all times.

---

C  W  M



Handout 14

**Lesson 4 – Paraphrasing a Paragraph**

**Instructions:**

We will read the following paragraph together. Then identify the topic, main idea, and details.

OBSERVE – Learn by Watching

**Paul Bunyan Clears North Dakota**  
- from Timed Reading Plus, Book One (GL 4)

According to legend, the greatest logger of all was Paul Bunyan. Soon after he dug the St. Lawrence River, Paul got a letter from the king of Sweden asking him to cut down all the trees in North Dakota so that the Swedes could settle there. The king wanted the job done in one month, in time for planting.

<u>Topic:</u> Paul Bunyan		
<u>Main Idea:</u> The folktale of Paul Bunyan claims he was the best lumberjack in history.		
<u>Detail</u> The king of Sweden sent Paul a request to clear the forests of North Dakota so the Swedish people could stay there.	<u>Detail</u> Because the trees needed to be cleared in order to grow crops, the king asked Paul to get the job done in a month.	<u>Detail</u>

## Resources

### Books

- Six-Way Paragraphs (3 Levels) by Walter Pauk, Glencoe/McGraw Hill
- Six-Way Paragraphs in the Content Areas by Walter Pauk, Glencoe McGraw Hill
- Timed Readings Plus (multiple levels) by Edward Spargo, , Glencoe/McGraw Hill
- Text and Lessons for Content-Area Reading by Harvey “Smokey” Daniels & Nancy Steineke, Heinemann
- 
- Flemming, Laraine. *Reading for Thinking*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2011.

### Websites

One page Nonfiction Reading/Thinking passages

[http://teacher.depaul.edu/Nonfiction\\_Readings.htm](http://teacher.depaul.edu/Nonfiction_Readings.htm)

Reading Sage – leveled reading passages with comprehension questions

<http://reading-sage.blogspot.com/2012/11/common-core-reading-passages-authors.html>

Kelly Gallagher Article of the Week

<http://www.kellygallagher.org/article-of-the-week/>

NewsELA (leveled readings) – free membership

<https://newsela.com>

Reading Skills for Today's Adults (leveled readings) - free

<http://marshalladulthoodeducation.org/index.php/reading-skills-for-todays-adult>

### Paraphrasing Lesson plans

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History – free membership

<https://www.gilderlehrman.org>

Themes → Government & Civics → Teaching Resources (show more) → Preamble to the US Constitution

ReadWriteThink

<http://www.readwritethink.org>

I Used My Own Words – Paraphrasing Informational Texts

Purdue OWL Online Writing Lab - Search “paraphrasing” – good for higher level

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

### **More Resources**

**HeLios** *Hemingway Library Information Online Skills Tutorial*". Weber State University Ogden Utah

A series of short, informational PowerPoints designed to help students learn essential library and research skills. The collection includes PPTs on Plagiarism, Paraphrase and Summary, Boolean Terms. The site includes a graphic novel or you can just use the PPTs under "Teaching PowerPoints" tab. They were created under the Creative Commons License so you can cut, paste and use as needed.

<http://helios.weber.edu>

CLASSROOM READY - TRY THEM.

*Scaffold*

**Paraphrase the following paragraph.**

In your initial interview, it is essential to make eye contact. Always be cognizant of the fact that the people interviewing you may have a bias against body art. It's up to you to decode the workplace culture and decide whether or not to disguise or camouflage your tattoos.

**Show each sentence individually and suggest words/phrases to change.**

1. In your initial interview, it is essential to make eye contact.
2. Always be cognizant of the fact that the people interviewing you may have a bias against body art.
3. It's up to you to decode the workplace culture and decide whether or not to disguise or camouflage your tattoos.

**Show each sentence. Indicate words for possible change and model the changes with the group. For example - What are some words we can change? What's another word for initial?**

1. In your initial interview, it is essential to make eye contact.
  - a. In your first interview, it's important to look the person in the eye.
2. Always be cognizant of the fact that the people interviewing you may have a bias against body art.
  - a. Be aware that not everyone loves tattoos and jewelry.
3. It's up to you to decode the workplace culture and decide whether or not to disguise or camouflage your tattoos.
  - a. Do some homework and find out how the company feels about tattoos and then decide if you want to cover your tattoos.

**Show each sentence and then each paraphrase as a sample.**

1. In your initial interview, it is essential to make eye contact.
  - a. In your first interview, it's important to look the person in the eye.
2. Always be cognizant of the fact that the people interviewing you may have a bias against body art.
  - a. Be aware that not everyone loves tattoos and jewelry.
3. It's up to you to decode the workplace culture and decide whether or not to disguise or camouflage your tattoos.
  - a. Do some homework and find out how the company feels

about tattoos and then decide if you want to cover your tattoos.

***Choose the accurate paraphrase.*** (These are taken directly from Laraine Flemming's Reading for Thinking - for workshop use only, please don't copy or distribute.)

1. Most Americans were taken by surprise when the second wave of feminism swept the nation in the 1960s. Women's rights had been considered a dead issue-in the words of *Life* magazine, feminism seemed "as quaint as linen dusters\* and high-button shoes." Supposedly, it lost its relevance once women won the vote. (Davis, *Moving the Mountain*, p. 26.)
  - a. By the 1960s, feminism was again a hot topic, and most people were taken by surprise. Many people thought that the battle for women's rights was over when women won the right to vote.
  - b. In the 1960s, to almost everyone's surprise, the feminist movement reappeared and became a force to be reckoned with. Surprisingly, no one realized at the time what consequences would result from the second wave of feminism.
  
2. Currently around a half million families across the country home school their children. For many of these families, home schooling serves a religious purpose, and two-thirds of those who home school are Evangelical Christians who want their children educated in a Christian atmosphere that emphasizes the importance of religious faith in every aspect of life.
  - a. Among the families who home-school their children are Christians who do not want their children in public schools, where the children will be exposed to teaching that contradicts religious law.
  - b. Of the half million people who home-school their children, two thirds are Evangelical Christians who prefer to teach their children at home rather than giving them a public school education that does not adequately stress the importance of religious faith.
  - c. Two-thirds of the people who home-school their children are Evangelical Christians who don't want their children exposed to the teachings of those who do not believe in God.
  
3. Over the last several decades, manufacturers have learned that they must "automate or evaporate." Companies that make *every-* thing from

automobiles to Oreo Cookies know that adding robots to assembly lines allows the human employees to produce faster and more efficiently. However, robots also allow companies to avoid hiring more workers. When American workers aren't losing their jobs to countries that provide cheaper labor (a practice known as outsourcing), they are losing them to machines as businesses desperately seek to improve productivity. (Source of information: James M. Pethokoukis, "Meet Your New Coworker." *U.S. News & World Report*, March 15, 2004, p. E4.)

- a. American manufacturers have always cared more about their profits than their employees. That's why they have replaced human workers with robots that make assembly lines move faster. Robots have certainly allowed companies to keep their personnel costs low, but they have also increased America's unemployment rate.
  - b. Modern manufacturers know that if they don't use robots on their assembly lines, they will surely go out of business. Robots have increased the productivity of human workers. However, automating manufacturing processes has also reduced the number of jobs available for workers or replaced them altogether.
  - c. American manufacturers are convinced that automation will keep them in business, and they are adding robots to the assembly line. Assembly line robots force human employees to work even faster so that companies don't have to hire more people. At the same time, companies are building more plants overseas, where wages are lower. Between automation and outsourcing jobs are disappearing
  - d. American manufacturers are using robotic technology more than ever before. The automotive industry, in particular, has automated many assembly lines; in the General Motors plants, for example, robots even install parts and weld them together. Robots are faster and more accurate than human workers will ever be, so they are taking jobs away from people. Eventually, machines will do all the hard labor because they are much more productive.
4. One of the most important factors in the formation of friendships and romantic attractions is simply physical proximity.\* As long as you do not form an initial dislike, your liking of a person tends to grow every time you see him or her. This happens because the more contact you have with someone, the more chances you have to get to know the person. Familiarity leads to increased fondness, which is known as the *mere exposure effect*. (Source of information: Bernstein et al., *Psychology*,

6th ed., pp. 662, 672.)

- e. According to the *mere exposure effect*, if you want to have more friends and romantic relationships, you should try to be around other people as much as possible. The more a person sees you, the more he or she will like you. This happens because we all enjoy interacting with the familiar instead of the unknown. So increasing the physical closeness between you and another person will ensure that he or she will develop strong feelings for you.
- f. When it comes to friendships and romantic relationships, the old saying "Out of sight, out of mind" turns out to be very true. Without physical proximity, it's virtually impossible to establish or maintain relationships. We can't get to know people unless we come into contact with them repeatedly, so we use the *mere exposure effect* to ensure that we don't end up alone.
- g. The *mere exposure effect* explains why many friendships and romances are formed between people who come into contact with one another often. Because people tend to like those with whom they're familiar, our fondness for someone is likely to increase every time we interact with the person, unless we had already formed an initial dislike. Thus, physical proximity is important for the establishment of new relationships.
- h. Some people say that "familiarity breeds contempt." In other words, the more you get to know someone, the more his or her faults will irritate you, leading to a breakup. However, the *mere exposure effect* has proved this notion to be false. Familiarity turns out to be responsible for the creation, rather than the destruction, of all relationships.

1. Divorce lawyers all over the country are noticing a new phenomenon: Internet-sparked divorces. In other words, marriages are breaking up when one spouse or the other meets someone online in a chatroom and decides that that someone is a true soulmate. There actually have been cases of spouses abandoning their marriages and running off with people they had met only online and never even seen.

2. University of Tulsa psychologist Judy Berry studied seventy-three Oklahoma eighth graders who had taken a parenting course. For ten days, each student had to care for a ten-pound sack of flour as if it were a baby. Berry's research on her young subjects suggests the course worked: The teenagers in the study had a sounder sense of parental responsibility than they did before they took the course.