



Paraphrase It! Teaching Guide

Duration: 45 minutes | **Objective:** Students will be able to apply the "Paraphrase It!" strategy to comprehend, summarize, and critically evaluate primary source texts by distinguishing main ideas from supporting details and revising their understanding.

Materials:

- Primary source text (suggestion: excerpt from historical speech, letter, or document)
- Paraphrase It! Student Activity
- Chart paper/whiteboard for modeling

Steps:

Before the Activity

1. Select a primary source text that coordinates with your unit and with which students will need support.
2. Share with students that today they will be learning and practicing a strategy to help them translate a tough-to-understand text into a more user-friendly version to improve comprehension.

During the Activity

1. Display a short primary source excerpt. Read aloud as class follows along. Encourage students to look for the big ideas and not to get weighed down by the details of words they don't understand.
2. Ask students to partner up.
3. Cover the text.
4. Ask students to turn to their partner: "In 2-3 sentences, what was that text about?"
5. Allow partnerships to share out with the whole class. Share a few responses with the class, and choose one example to record on the board.
6. Uncover original text.
7. Go through each sentence of the original text and compare it to the 2-3 sentence summary written on the board. Ask: "Does our summary capture this idea?"
 - a. Model adding missing information and correcting inaccuracies
 - b. Think aloud: "Oh, I see we missed the part about... Let me add that"



8. Read both versions aloud and ask the class: "Does our paraphrase feel complete and accurate?"
9. Now, give students a new primary source and graphic organizer.
10. Have students work through Steps 1-4 independently
11. Teacher circulates, providing support as needed
12. When students are finished, ask them to share their paraphrases with a partner. Partners should help identify anything that might be missing or unclear

After the Activity

1. Have students post revised paraphrases around the room.
2. Invite students to do a quick gallery walk, noting effective translations.
3. As a whole group, debrief: "What made these paraphrases helpful?"
4. Have students complete an exit reflection: "How did translating the language help you understand the primary source better?"