



paraphrase:

to state in a shorter, clearer, or different way
what someone else has said or written

Mars Rover Model Celebration – Lesson Plan

Introduction:

One of the new vocabulary words for this unit is “paraphrase”. The word paraphrase means “to state in a shorter, clearer or different way what someone else has said or written”. Paraphrase is made of two root words. Para means “beside” or “alongside”. Phrase is a sentence or a group of words. So when we put the two meanings together, paraphrase is “a group of words alongside another group.” This is very similar to the definition I just told you. So as you can see, knowing word parts can help you understand new vocabulary words.

Knowing how to paraphrase is important for learning new information. When you can restate something you heard or read in your own words, you are demonstrating that you understand it.

Let’s look at some pictures that will help us understand the meaning of the word “paraphrase”. Look at the parrot. Although parrots are able to speak, they do not paraphrase. They can only repeat what they hear without understanding. When people repeat information exactly as they heard it, without understanding, we sometimes say they “parrot” the information. Now, look at the two students at work in school. In these two pictures, the children are paraphrasing—they are explaining what they learned in their own words and showing they understand the information.

Example:

Here is another example: suppose your science class is studying the sun and your teacher reads a short article from your science book. In order to make certain everyone understands the article, your teacher may ask you to tell or write about it. If you understand the article, you should be able to write or talk about the sun in your own words. In the explanation you give, you would paraphrase what the article says. It would have the same information but would be shorter and in different words. If you can paraphrase an article, it demonstrates that you understand what it is about.

Reflection:

I am going to say some sentences. If the person is stating what he or she heard DIFFERENTLY in his or her OWN WORDS, I want you to put your thumb up and say PARAPHRASE. If the person is repeating what he or she has heard or read WORD FOR WORD, I want you to put your thumb down and remain silent.

- Carlos briefly tells his mom what he learned at school today. (thumbs up)
- Ann writes down a poem from a book and reads it as her own work. (thumbs down)
- Carlos finds information on the Internet and writes it report exactly as it is written on the website. (thumbs down)
- On the first day of school, the teacher reads the class rules and then has students explain them to her. (thumbs up)

Make it personal:

Think about a time when you were asked to paraphrase some information. Share this with a friend. Be sure to tell them why it was important for you to understand that information. Then I will ask some of you to share your experience.