

UNIT

1

Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Theoretical and Rationale Foundations of the Strategy

According to Axelrod and Cooper (2002, as cited in Nasrollahi et al., 2014), summarizing and paraphrasing are two of the ten essential strategies for improving critical reading. Considering the overlapping concepts and cognitive skills involved in both strategies, they have been integrated into a single unit within this book to favor comprehension and strengthen students' ability to use both effectively.

Regardless of the points previously discussed, it is paramount to present the distinction between summarizing and paraphrasing that Willcutt & Stankey (2018) propose. The authors explain that the former involves condensing the information by focusing on the main ideas and reducing the length of the text. In contrast, paraphrasing requires a reorganization of the text using different structures and words, keeping a similar length to the original version. Additionally, the authors argue that both terms have key similarities as they both require thorough comprehension and analysis of what is being read, not only in terms of language usage but also in terms of content and context. Moreover, in both cases, the use of the reader's wording style is essential, which reflects a deeper level of cognitive involvement and textual engagement.

These similarities are aligned with the perspective of Dole et al. (1991) when they assert that "the ability to summarize requires readers to sift through large units of texts, differentiate important from unimportant ideas, and then synthesize those ideas and create a new coherent text" (p. 244). This view is further supported by Teweles (2001), who notes that paraphrasing contributes to the development of reading and writing skills by helping EFL learners expand their vocabulary, expand their grammatical and syntactic knowledge, and improve their overall comprehension of the text.

The strategies included in this unit were selected purposefully to answer the need for students to progress from simple reproduction of ideas, such as verbatim copying, to achieve higher complexity levels of interpretation, analysis, and reflection, fundamental for synthesizing information and expressing arguments in their own words. Furthermore, the choice of strategies is grounded in Tovani's (2000) view that, before engaging in complex tasks such as analyzing or questioning, students must first achieve a clear interpretation of specific data in the text.

Working on summarizing and paraphrasing initially does not imply that these are easy tasks; conversely, they require a lot of practice and guidance. Authors such as Hirvela & Du (2013), Keck (2006), Willcutt & Stankey (2018), Uribe-Enciso (2015), Tantillo (2016), Khoshnevis & Parvinnejad (2015), and Grellet (2008) agree when arguing that summarizing and paraphrasing are important and complex exercises for first and second language students (L1 and L2, respectively). The writers remark on the value of teaching learners how to accurately summarize and paraphrase and the need to practice these strategies constantly inside and outside the academic context.

The rule-governed approach settles the foundation for developing the strategies included in this unit. According to Duke and Pearson (2002), this approach was originally proposed by McNeil and Donant in the 1980s as a method for teaching summarization. As far as this book is concerned, the approach has been adapted to support the task of teaching paraphrasing. The rule-governed approach encourages learners to repeatedly read a text, focusing all attention on lexical choices and key arguments. During this process, teachers guide students through a sequence of steps aimed at constructing a new version of the original document. For summarizing, these steps involve identifying key ideas, omitting non-essential information, and composing a concise new version of the text (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Thus, for paraphrasing, the steps focus on identifying the author's message and key terms, selecting accurate synonyms and alternative expressions, and creating a version using different wording while preserving the original messages. A structured process that fosters both comprehension and language development by encouraging learners to engage critically with the text.

The main objective for this unit is to help your students analyze the difference between paraphrasing and summarizing and their usefulness for better comprehension and evaluation of a text. Additionally, students will be provided with cognitive tools to synthesize texts and to create their summaries and paraphrases through a scaffolding process, bearing in mind the framework proposed by McLaughlin & Allen (2009), explained previously in the book.

Unit One: Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Lesson 1: What is the Difference?

Explain and Demonstrate Stages

Material: Video beam; markers; fragment from a text; quote; text; worksheet #1; worksheet #2; monolingual dictionary or thesaurus webpage; blackboard.

Time: 70 minutes approximately.

Suggested Procedure

Step 1- Explain the similarities and differences between paraphrasing and summarizing. You can use the previous information to guide you in the process.

Step 2- Project a fragment from a text and explain to students how it could be summarized using the “Rule-governed approach”.

Step 3 - On the board, propose a quote and demonstrate to students how to paraphrase a fragment. Make sure to use diverse synonyms and different linguistic structures.

Step 4 - Give students a text and ask them to thoughtfully examine the ideas presented; then ask them to identify the main idea, key supporting details, and expressions, as well as irrelevant information that could be deleted. Encourage your students to write their responses in the document. As a whole class, write together a first draft of the summary (Worksheet #1).

The purpose of this section in the worksheet is to raise your students’ awareness of the importance of a good comprehension of the text to summarize it; moreover, it aims at helping to get your students get familiar with the rule-governed approach and its steps. A crucial point to successfully developing this material is to remind your students that summarizing, like all the strategies, needs time and practice. Worksheet #1 can be used as many times as necessary, integrated into class activities, or your students’ independent work.



Step 5- Have your students read and critically interpret the following quote: “The power of a story is not to be denied. In prehistoric caves, during Irish famines, in Nazi concentration camps, stories were as important as food” (Hearne, 1999, p. 4); then, ask them to write as many synonyms as possible and word variations of the quote expressions or words in the boxes. You can follow the format presented in the image below.

The worksheet template consists of a central box containing the following text:

“The power of a story is not to be denied. In prehistoric caves, during Irish famines, in Nazi concentration camps, stories were as important as food”
Hearne (1999, p. 4)

Surrounding this central box are eight empty boxes, each with a label at the top and a folded-bottom corner:

- Top-left: Power of a story
- Top-middle: Deny
- Top-right: Prehistoric caves
- Middle-left: Irish Famines
- Middle-right: Nazi concentration camps
- Bottom-left: Stories
- Bottom-middle: Important
- Bottom-right: Food

Step 6- Divide the class into pairs and ask each pair to share their answers. After that, have your students discuss and rewrite the quote using their own words and some of the vocabulary in worksheet #2.

Step 7- (Optional) On the board, write some of the phrases written by students. Integrating the whole class, analyze their strengths and delve into critical improvements.

As with the previous worksheet, the primary purpose is for students to rehearse their cognitive skills to understand, reconstruct, and analyze the authors’ ideas when engaging in critical reading, as well as to highlight the value of paraphrasing in achieving comprehension. Worksheet # 2 provides a specific space for writing quotations and an additional one for students to write synonyms and word variations to rewrite the idea of the author in the students’ words. Although we present a suggested quote, the worksheet can be used to work on other quotes depending on your pedagogical endeavors and your students’ preferences.

Worksheet #1: Summarizing (Photocopiable)

Title: _____

Author(s): _____ Year: _____

The main idea of the text is

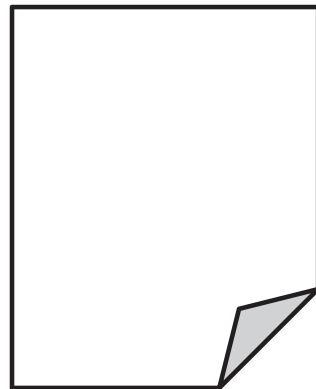
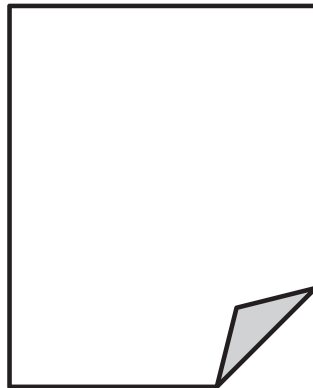
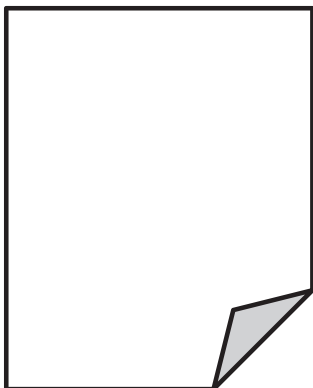
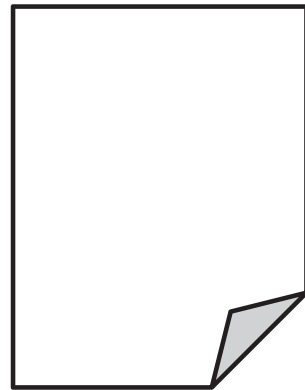
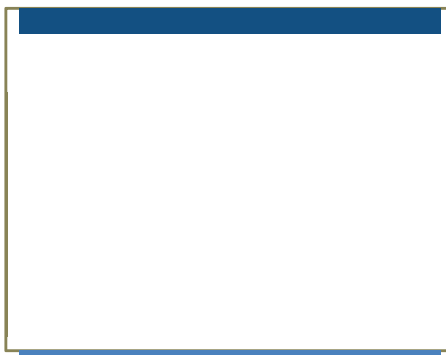
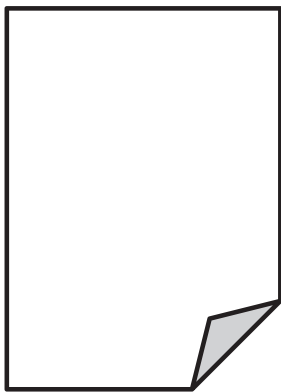
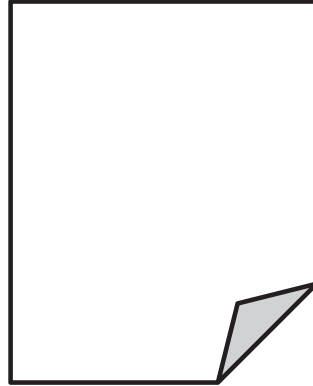
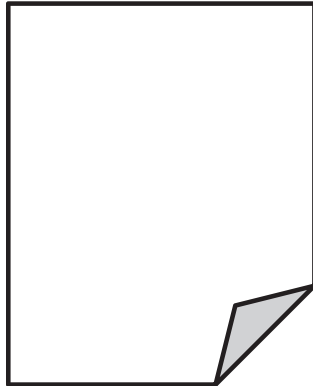
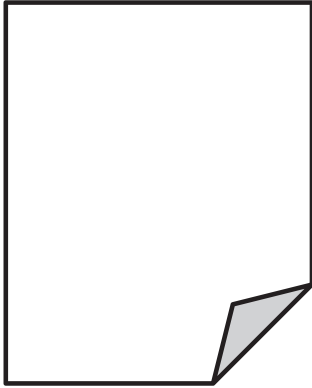
(Take it directly from the text)

Key words (Taken from the text)	Relevant details (Taken from the text)	Reasons for omitting some details
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Summary (use your own words)

Worksheet #2: Paraphrasing (Photocopiable)

Directions: Write as many synonyms or variations of the word(s) as possible.



Unit One: Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Lesson Two: Hands on the Text

Guide Stage

Material: Set of cards - worksheet #3; dice; pencil; paper; transcriptions of the paraphrased sentences; rubric (peer-assessment).

Time: 55 minutes approximately

Suggested Procedure

Preparation: Copy and cut the set of cards with quotations and excerpts from worksheet #3.

Step 1- Explain to your students the rules of the game:

1. The activity is developed by working in pairs.
2. If a student rolls the dice and gets an odd number (1, 3, 5), they are asked to paraphrase a quote (small cards). Two minutes are given to read the quote and construct the necessary notes.
3. If a student rolls the dice and gets an even number (2, 4, 6), they must summarize the excerpt (bigger cards). Three minutes are provided for reading and formulating notes.
4. Once time is up, students paraphrase or summarize the card using their own words. Another partner is then tasked to transcribe what has been said (Adapted from Díaz, 2014)
5. Both members of the group must be actively engaged to transcribe or summarize/paraphrase.

Step 2- (Optional) If necessary, model the acts of speech you expect to mediate the activity.

Step 3- Organize students in pairs and give each a dice and a set of quotation and extract cards respectively. Ask them to start playing while you monitor the exercise



and provide guidance for summarizing and paraphrasing. Discuss actively your feedback for each team of students.

Step 4- Once your students are done playing, ask them to compare the quotes with their paraphrased version in terms of vocabulary and transmission of the corresponding message. (Díaz, 2014)

Step 5- Give students a copy of the rubric and request them to assign a score to each of the paraphrases.

Step 6- Have your students analyze the written summaries, identifying the main idea, the most important details, and the less relevant ones.

Step 7- Provide students with a copy of the rubric and ask them to grade each of the summaries.

Designing Worksheet #3 draws elements of the PAIR-A-PHRASE activity originally proposed by Díaz (2014), tailored to the pedagogical purpose of our unit. The objective of this worksheet is to offer students opportunities to practice summarizing and paraphrasing while enforcing critical thinking, with the guidance and support of both teacher and peers. Furthermore, incorporating time constraints and a scoring component introduces a component of motivation and engagement, encouraging active participation in the activities.

Worksheet #3-A: Paraphrasing Quotes (Photocopiable)

“There is something delicious about writing the first few words of a story. You can never quite tell where they will take you.”



“Who in the world am I? Ah, that's the great puzzle.”

Lewis Carroll (n.d.)



“Life itself is the most wonderful fairy tale”

Hans Christian Andersen (n.d.)



“Books shouldn't be daunting, they should be funny, exciting and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives a terrible advantage.”

Roald Dahl (n.d.)



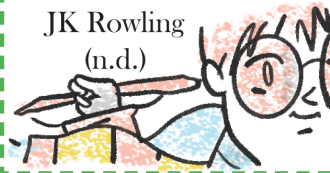
“Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living; it's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope.”

Dr. Seuss (n.d.)



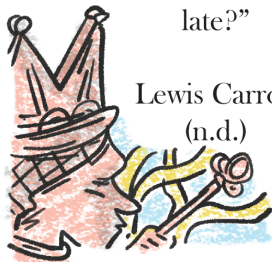
“I don't believe in the kind of magic of my books, but I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a good book.”

JK Rowling (n.d.)



“Which form of proverb do you prefer Better late than never, or Better never than late?”

Lewis Carroll (n.d.)



“Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory.”

Dr. Seuss (n.d.)



“One day you will be old enough to start reading fairytales again.”

CS Lewis (n.d.)



Worksheet #3-B: Summarizing Texts (Photocopiable)



Children's literature plays a crucial role in shaping personality and social development. During their formative years, children are highly impressionable, and literature can help them grow into compassionate, intelligent, and sociable individuals. According to developmental psychologist Jean Piaget, as children transition from the pre-operational to the operational stage of cognitive development, they become less self-centered. While young children in preschool and kindergarten tend to focus primarily on themselves, older students begin to recognize and consider the feelings and perspectives of others. Developing empathy and selflessness is essential, as Norton (2010) emphasizes that strong relationships require an understanding of others' emotions and viewpoints (p. 27). By exposing students to diverse perspectives, children's literature promotes social growth and encourages acceptance of different people and cultures (Crippen, 2012).

Children's literature plays a crucial role in fostering emotional intelligence in students. Stories have the ability to support both emotional and moral growth by presenting characters who face dilemmas, make ethical choices, and reflect on their decisions—an essential skill for children to observe and learn from (Norton, 2010, p. 34). For instance, *Guji Guji* (Chen, 2004) tells the story of a crocodile raised by a family of ducks. When confronted with the choice of betraying his adoptive family to align with his biological kind, he ultimately follows his own values and remains loyal to his family. Similarly, *The Scar* (Moundlic, 2007) helps children process grief through the story of a boy coping with his mother's death, a concept that many young children struggle to understand. By engaging with such literature, students are encouraged to explore and reflect on their own emotions more deeply (Crippen, 2012).



Providing children with access to a wide range of literature is essential for their success. Educators, parents, and community members should encourage a love for reading, as it not only enhances cognitive skills necessary for academic and professional achievement but also offers many additional benefits. Donna Norton (2010), in *Through the Eyes of a Child*, highlights several key advantages of children's literature. It allows students to engage with stories, deepens their appreciation of both their own and other cultures, fosters emotional intelligence and creativity, supports personal and social development, and preserves important literary works and themes across generations (Crippen, 2012).

Children's books are important because they help kids grow socially and emotionally. Young children are very influenced by what they learn, and stories can shape them into kind, smart, and friendly people. Psychologist Jean Piaget explains that as kids grow, they start thinking less about just themselves and more about others. While very young children mostly focus on their own needs, older kids begin to understand the feelings and opinions of those around them. Learning to consider others and not be selfish is a skill that adults should help kids develop. Norton (2010) points out that good relationships depend on understanding other people's feelings and perspectives. Books for children play a key role in teaching kids to accept others and embrace differences. (Crippen, 2012).

Unit One: Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Lesson Three: Time to Practice

Practice Stage

Material: A text; worksheet #4.

Time: 45 minutes approximately.

Suggested Procedure

Step 1- Instruct students to read the text carefully and re-read it to ensure a thorough understanding of its content and structure.

Step 2- Ask students to write a summary of the text in no more than 100 words, applying the principles of the rule-governed approach by identifying key ideas, omitting non-essential information, and synthesizing the main points in their own words.

Worksheet #4 guides students in developing cognitive tools to apply summarizing and paraphrasing strategies independently, without relying on direct teacher guidance. It has been designed with flexible activities, allowing learners to decide the order in which they complete tasks. Additionally, the material's design permits teachers and students to apply independent sections, or all the lessons based on their teaching/learning objectives. Finally, it is crucial to mention that this worksheet can be integrated inside or outside the classroom.



Worksheet #4: Time to Practice (Photocopiable)

Name: _____ Date: _____ Year: _____
Title: _____ Author(s): _____

Directions: Read and re-read the text; then, write a summary and paraphrase the three chosen quotes.

Write a summary

Choose and write 3 direct quotes that called your attention from the text.

Paraphrase the text.

Unit Assessment

Assessment of this unit will be carried out through peer assessment. Students use the rubric below to evaluate the summaries and paraphrases produced by their classmates. According to the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC, 2015), peer assessment offers significant opportunities for learners to give and receive constructive feedback. Although it is commonly acknowledged that peer feedback may not always follow the characteristics of teacher input, evaluating a partner's work is certainly highly beneficial for the reviewer. This task encourages critical comparison, promotes reflection, and helps students identify strengths and areas for improvement in their own work. Along the same lines, the Teaching and Learning Services (2017), remark on peer assessment as a powerful tool for fostering critical reflection and improving students' engagement with the learning process.

Reflection

The reflection stage is a space for students to express their emotions when dialoguing about the values of children's literature, focusing on critical elements of the content, and their points of view regarding the application of each strategy.



Summarizing and Paraphrasing Peer-assessment Rubric (Photocopiable)

Student's name: _____

Reviewed by: _____

Directions: Re-read the transcript of the summaries proposed by your partners and give a score from 0 to 5 to each of the items below. Then, provide some comments to help your partners to improve their texts.

Item	Points			Comments
The text presents clearly the main idea	0	1	2	
	3	4	5	
Relevant details have been identified	0	1	2	
	3	4	5	
Comprehension of ideas is evidenced on the use of own words	0	1	2	
	3	4	5	
Ideas in the summary are properly organized	0	1	2	
	3	4	5	
Strengths / Weaknesses				
Suggestions for improvement				