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Paraphrasing to Clarify Meaning – Year 5

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Paraphrasing Power

Say it clearly. Keep the meaning.

1

READ

Understand the whole idea.



2

FIND

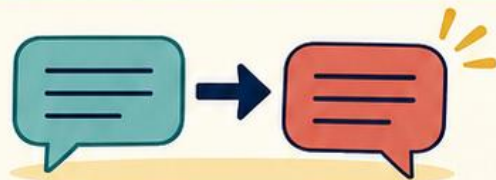
Identify the main meaning and essential details.



3

CHANGE

Replace key words and rephrase the sentence.



4

CHECK

Make sure the meaning still matches.



A strong paraphrase...



uses your own words



changes the sentence structure



keeps all important meaning



sounds natural and clear





Strong or Weak?



Paraphrase Sort

Read each card. Decide whether the paraphrase keeps the meaning, changes the wording and reshapes the sentence.



STRONG PARAPHRASE

- ✓ Same meaning
- ✓ Different wording
- ✓ Changed structure
- ✓ Clear and complete



WEAK PARAPHRASE

- ✗ Meaning changed
- ✗ Too much copied
- ✗ Only one word swapped
- ✗ Important detail missing



Explain your choice using one checklist point.

Strong or Weak? Cards

1

ORIGINAL:

The storm damaged several coastal homes.

PARAPHRASE:

Several houses near the coast were harmed by the storm.

4

ORIGINAL:

The team practised daily before the final.

PARAPHRASE:

The team practised before the final.

7

ORIGINAL:

The creek rose because rain fell overnight.

PARAPHRASE:

The creek rose because it rained overnight.

10

ORIGINAL:

Banksia flowers attract nectar-feeding birds.

PARAPHRASE:

Birds that drink nectar are drawn to banksia blooms.

2

ORIGINAL:

Mia carefully packed the fragile vase.

PARAPHRASE:

Mia carefully packed the fragile vase.

5

ORIGINAL:

Recycling aluminium saves energy.

PARAPHRASE:

Less energy is used when aluminium is recycled.

8

ORIGINAL:

A compass helps travellers find direction.

PARAPHRASE:

Travellers can work out which way to go by using a compass.

11

ORIGINAL:

Luca whispered so the sleeping baby would not wake.

PARAPHRASE:

Luca spoke so the baby could hear him.

3

ORIGINAL:

The lizard warmed itself on a sunny rock.

PARAPHRASE:

On a sunlit stone, the lizard raised its body temperature.

6

ORIGINAL:

The puppy yelped when the gate slammed.

PARAPHRASE:

The puppy cried out after the gate shut loudly.

9

ORIGINAL:

The museum closed early during the power failure.

PARAPHRASE:

The museum opened late because the electricity failed.

12

ORIGINAL:

The hikers rested beside the waterfall.

PARAPHRASE:

Near the waterfall, the walkers stopped for a break.

Strong or Weak? Answer Guide

STRONG

- 1 - Same meaning; wording and structure changed.
- 3 - Same meaning; precise new vocabulary and structure.
- 5 - Same fact expressed in a new structure.
- 6 - Same event restated naturally.
- 8 - Same purpose explained in different words.
- 10 - Same relationship restated clearly.
- 12 - Same action and setting preserved.

WEAK

- 2 - Copied exactly.
- 4 - Important detail 'daily' is missing.
- 7 - Too close to the original.
- 9 - Closed early changed to opened late.
- 11 - The purpose and meaning changed.



Discuss: What single change would improve each weak paraphrase?



Paraphrase Pair-Up



Match each original with the paraphrase that keeps the same meaning.

1. Cut out and shuffle the cards.
2. Place all cards face down.
3. Turn over two cards.
4. Keep the pair if one original and one paraphrase express the same idea.
5. If they do not match, turn them face down again.
6. Justify each match using meaning, wording and structure.



Winning

The player with the most pairs wins.

Paraphrase Pair-Up - Set A

Cut out the cards and Match Originals 1-4 with Paraphrases A-D.

ORIGINAL 1

After the heavy rain, the road
was covered in puddles.

ORIGINAL 2

The exhausted cyclist slowed
near the top of the hill.

ORIGINAL 3

Mangroves protect coastlines
by reducing wave energy.

ORIGINAL 4

Aria reread the instructions before
beginning the experiment.

PARAPHRASE A

By weakening waves, mangroves
help shield the coast.

PARAPHRASE B

Before starting the experiment,
Aria checked the directions again.

PARAPHRASE C

Puddles spread across the oval
after the rain during the downpour.

PARAPHRASE D

Close to the hilltop, the tired rider
reduced her speed.

Paraphrase Pair-Up - Set B

Cut out the cards. Match Originals 5-8 with Paraphrases E-H.

ORIGINAL 5

The kookaburra's call echoed across the quiet reserve.

PARAPHRASE E

At the end of the last scene, the crowd clapped.

ORIGINAL 6

Regular sleep supports concentration and memory.

PARAPHRASE F

Concentration and memory are helped by consistent sleep.

ORIGINAL 7

The audience applauded when the final scene ended.

PARAPHRASE G

Across the silent reserve, the sound of the kookaburra carried.

ORIGINAL 8

Because the track was muddy, the race started late.

PARAPHRASE H

The race began behind schedule due to the muddy track.

Paraphrase Pair-Up Answer Key

1 - C

Heavy rain / downpour;
oval covered in puddles.

5 - G

The kookaburra's sound
carries across the quiet reserve.

2 - D

Exhausted / tired;
slowed / reduced her speed.

6 - F

Consistent sleep helps
concentration and memory.

3 - A

Mangroves protect the coast
by weakening waves.

7 - E

The crowd claps after
the final scene.

4 - B

Aria checks the instructions
before starting.

8 - H

The muddy track
delays the race.



Check every pair: same meaning, different wording, changed structure.





Paraphrase Path - Fiction Cards



Paraphrase each card without changing the meaning.

FICTION

At dusk, Priya heard branches scrape against the window.



FICTION

The old map led the friends to a narrow cave behind the falls.



FICTION

After the bell rang, the empty corridor filled with voices.



FICTION

Mila clutched the letter because she feared its news.



FICTION

Even though Noah was nervous, he stepped onto the stage.



FICTION

Sara hid the muddy shoes before her grandmother entered.



FICTION

The dragon guarded the bridge until the knight solved its riddle.



FICTION

When the lantern went out, the campers moved closer together.



Paraphrase Path - Non-Fiction Cards

Paraphrase each card without changing the facts.

NON-FICTION

Water expands when it freezes.



NON-FICTION

The Moon's gravity contributes to ocean tides.



NON-FICTION

Bushfires can release nutrients into some Australian soils.



NON-FICTION

Reusing materials can reduce waste sent to landfill.



NON-FICTION

Pollinators transfer pollen between flowers.



NON-FICTION

Exercise strengthens the heart and muscles.



NON-FICTION

Evaporation changes liquid water into water vapour.



NON-FICTION

Roots absorb water and minerals from soil.



Name: _____



Paraphrasing Essentials



Page 1 - Paraphrased or Copied?

66

Compare each original with the student response. Write PARAPHRASED or COPIED, then underline the evidence.

99

1

ORIGINAL: The exhausted runner crossed the finish line and collapsed.

STUDENT RESPONSE: After finishing the race, the tired runner fell to the ground.

Your decision: _____

2

ORIGINAL: The teacher explained the directions twice so everyone could begin.

STUDENT RESPONSE: The teacher explained the directions twice so everyone could begin.

Your decision: _____

3

ORIGINAL: In the desert, animals rest during the day to avoid extreme heat.

STUDENT RESPONSE: To escape the hottest conditions, numerous desert animals are inactive in daylight.

Your decision: _____

4

ORIGINAL: The creek overflowed after several hours of heavy rain.

STUDENT RESPONSE: The creek overflowed after several hours of heavy rain.

Your decision: _____



Quick check

99

☐

Did the meaning stay the same?

☐

Did the wording and structure change?



Paraphrasing Essentials



Page 1 - Paraphrased or Copied?

66

Compare each original with the student response. Write PARAPHRASED or COPIED, then underline the evidence.



1

ORIGINAL: The exhausted runner crossed the finish line and collapsed.

STUDENT RESPONSE: After finishing the race, the tired runner fell to the ground.

Your decision: PARAPHRASED

2

ORIGINAL: The teacher explained the directions twice so everyone could begin.

STUDENT RESPONSE: The teacher explained the directions twice so everyone could begin.

Your decision: COPIED

3

ORIGINAL: In hot climates, animals rest during the day to avoid extreme heat.

STUDENT RESPONSE: To escape the hottest conditions, numerous desert animals are inactive in daylight.

Your decision: PARAPHRASED

4

ORIGINAL: The creek overflowed after several hours of heavy rain.

STUDENT RESPONSE: The creek overflowed after several hours of heavy rain.

Your decision: COPIED



Quick check


☐

Did the meaning stay the same?

☐

Did the wording and structure change?



Name: _____

Paraphrasing Essentials

Page 2 - Strong or Weak?



Read each pair. Circle **STRONG** or **WEAK** and explain your decision.

1

ORIGINAL: The small boat drifted silently across the calm lake.

RESPONSE: Across the still lake, the little boat moved without a sound.

STRONG / WEAK

Why? _____

2

ORIGINAL: The council planted trees to create shade in the playground.

RESPONSE: The council planted plants to make shade.

STRONG / WEAK

Why? _____

3

ORIGINAL: The scientist recorded the temperature every ten minutes.

RESPONSE: Every ten minutes, the researcher wrote down the temperature.

STRONG / WEAK

Why? _____

4

ORIGINAL: The hikers carried extra water because the day was unusually hot.

RESPONSE: The hikers carried water because it was hot.

STRONG / WEAK

Why? _____

What makes a strong paraphrase?



Name: **ANSWERS**

Paraphrasing Essentials



Page 2 - Strong or Weak?

Read each pair. Circle **STRONG** or **WEAK** and explain your decision.

1

ORIGINAL: The small boat drifted silently across the calm lake.

RESPONSE: Across the still lake, the little boat moved without a sound.

STRONG / WEAK

Why? **Same meaning; new words and order.**

2

ORIGINAL: The council planted trees to create shade in the playground.

RESPONSE: The council planted plants to make shade.

STRONG / **WEAK**

Why? **The playground details missing and too much wording is copied.**

3

ORIGINAL: The scientist recorded the temperature every ten minutes.

RESPONSE: Every ten minutes, the researcher wrote down the temperature.

STRONG / **WEAK**

Why? **The fact; wording and order changed.**

4

ORIGINAL: The hikers carried extra water because the day was unusually hot.

RESPONSE: The hikers carried water because it was hot.

STRONG / **WEAK**

Why? **The details 'extra' and 'unusually' are missing.**

What makes a strong paraphrase?

A strong paraphrase keeps the meaning, changes the wording and structure, and sounds clear.

Name: _____

Change the Words and Structure

Rewrite each sentence. Change precise vocabulary AND the sentence structure.
Keep every important detail.

1. After the long rehearsal, the nervous actor waited behind the curtain.

2. The ranger closed the walking track because fallen branches blocked the path.

3. A sudden gust scattered the papers across the oval.

4. The students compared two sources before writing their explanation.

5. During winter, some animals reduce their activity to conserve energy.

Final check

☐

Same meaning

☐

New wording

☐

New structure

☐

Natural and clear

Name: ANSWERS

Change the Words and Structure

Rewrite each sentence. Change precise vocabulary AND the sentence structure.
Keep every important detail.

1. After the long rehearsal, the nervous actor waited behind the curtain.

Behind the curtain, the anxious performer waited after the lengthy rehearsal.

2. The ranger closed the walking track because fallen branches blocked the path.

Because fallen branches blocked the path, the ranger shut the walking track.

3. A sudden gust scattered the papers across the oval.

Papers blew across the oval when a sudden burst of wind struck.

4. The students compared two sources before writing their explanation.

Before writing their explanation, the students examined and compared two sources.

5. During winter, some animals reduce their activity to conserve energy.

Some animals remain less active in winter so they can save energy.

Final check



Same meaning



New wording



New structure



Natural and clear



Name: _____

Meaning Detective



For each pair, circle SAME MEANING or CHANGED MEANING.
Explain exactly what stayed or changed.

1

ORIGINAL: The library extended its opening hours during exam week.

RESPONSE: During exam week, the library stayed open for longer.

SAME MEANING / CHANGED MEANING

Why? _____

2

ORIGINAL: The rescue boat reached the island before sunset.

RESPONSE: After sunset, the rescue boat arrived at the island.

SAME MEANING / CHANGED MEANING

Why? _____

3

ORIGINAL: Daily movement can improve mood and sleep quality.

RESPONSE: Regular physical activity may support both mood and the quality of sleep.

SAME MEANING / CHANGED MEANING

Why? _____

4

ORIGINAL: The council will repair the bridge next month.

RESPONSE: The council might replace the bridge next year.

SAME MEANING / CHANGED MEANING

Why? _____



Detective rule

A paraphrase must preserve facts, time, cause, degree and certainty.





Name: **ANSWERS**

Meaning Detective



For each pair, circle SAME MEANING or CHANGED MEANING.
Explain exactly what stayed or changed.

1

ORIGINAL: The library extended its opening hours during exam week.

RESPONSE: During exam week, the library stayed open for longer.

SAME MEANING / CHANGED MEANING

Why? Opening longer during exam week is preserved.

2

ORIGINAL: The rescue boat reached the island before sunset.

RESPONSE: After sunset, the rescue boat arrived at the island.

SAME MEANING / **CHANGED MEANING**

Why? Before sunset became after sunset.

3

ORIGINAL: Daily movement can improve mood and sleep quality.

RESPONSE: Regular physical activity may support both mood and the quality of sleep.

SAME MEANING / CHANGED MEANING

Why? Daily movement and regular physical activity express the same idea.

4

ORIGINAL: The council will repair the bridge next month.

RESPONSE: The council might replace the bridge next year.

SAME MEANING / **CHANGED MEANING**

Why? Repair, will and next month became replace, might and next year.



Detective rule

A paraphrase must preserve facts, time, cause, degree and certainty.





Name: _____

66

Strengthen a Weak Paraphrase

Read the original and weak version. Diagnose the problem, then write a stronger paraphrase.

1

ORIGINAL: The rapid current carried the canoe towards the rocks.

WEAK VERSION: The fast current carried the canoe towards the rocks.

Problem: _____

Stronger paraphrase:

2

ORIGINAL: Although the path was steep, the hikers reached the lookout before noon.

WEAK VERSION: The hikers reached the lookout.

Problem: _____

Stronger paraphrase:

3

ORIGINAL: Scientists monitor coral reefs to identify changes in their health.

WEAK VERSION: Coral reefs watch scientists so their health can change.

Problem: _____

Stronger paraphrase:

4

ORIGINAL: The power outage interrupted the evening concert for twenty minutes.

WEAK VERSION: The concert stopped.

Problem: _____

Stronger paraphrase:

66





Name: ANSWERS

66

Strengthen a Weak Paraphrase

Read the original and weak version. Diagnose the problem, then write a stronger paraphrase.

1

ORIGINAL: The rapid current carried the canoe towards the rocks.

WEAK VERSION: The fast current carried the canoe towards the rocks.

Problem: Too close; only one word changed.

Stronger paraphrase:

Towards the rocks, the canoe was swept by the swiftly moving water.

2

ORIGINAL: Although the path was steep, the hikers reached the lookout before noon.

WEAK VERSION: The hikers reached the lookout.

Problem: Important details removed.

Stronger paraphrase:

Despite the steep path, the walkers arrived at the lookout before midday.

3

ORIGINAL: Scientists monitor coral reefs to identify changes in their health.

WEAK VERSION: Coral reefs watch scientists so their health can change.

Problem: Meaning and roles reversed.

Stronger paraphrase:

To detect changes in reef health, researchers monitor coral reefs.

4

ORIGINAL: The power outage interrupted the evening concert for twenty minutes.

WEAK VERSION: The concert stopped.

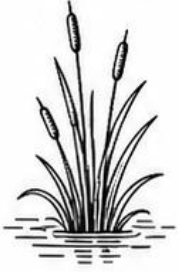
Problem: Cause, time and duration missing.

Stronger paraphrase:

For twenty minutes, the evening concert was disrupted by a loss of electricity.

66





Name: _____

Fiction Passage Practice



Read the passage. Write a paraphrase of the whole passage in 3-4 sentences. Keep the important events and meaning but change the wording and structure.

Keira paused at the old jetty as wind rippled the dark water. Her brother Sam had already stepped into the small rowing boat, but she was unsure about following him. Then she noticed a family of ducks moving calmly between the reeds. Keira took a slow breath, tightened her jacket and climbed aboard. Sam pushed away from the jetty, and the boat glided towards the sheltered bay. By the time they reached the opposite shore, Keira was laughing and asking if they could row back.

Main meaning: _____

Important details to keep:

- _____
- _____

My paraphrase

☐

Same events

☐

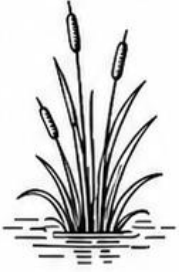
Own words

☐

New structure

☐

Clear and complete



Name: ANSWERS

Fiction Passage Practice



Read the passage. Write a paraphrase of the whole passage in 3-4 sentences. Keep the important events and meaning but change the wording and structure.

Keira paused at the old jetty as wind rippled the dark water. Her brother Sam had already stepped into the small rowing boat, but she was unsure about following him. Then she noticed a family of ducks moving calmly between the reeds. Keira took a slow breath, tightened her life jacket and climbed aboard. Sam pushed away from the jetty, and the boat glided towards the sheltered bay. By the time they reached the opposite shore, Keira was laughing and asking if they could row back.

Main meaning: Keira overcomes her fear and enjoys crossing the bay with Sam.

Important details to keep:

- windy jetty: Keira is unsure; calm ducks; life jacket
- opposite shore: want to row back

My paraphrase:

At the windy jetty, Keira hesitated to join Sam in the rowing boat.
Watching ducks glide peacefully through the reeds helped her feel
calmer, so she secured her life jacket and climbed in. After they
crossed the sheltered bay, her fear had turned into excitement and
she wanted to row back.



Same events



Own words



New structure



Clear and complete



Name: _____

Non-Fiction Passage Practice



Read the passage. Write a paraphrase in 3-4 sentences.
Keep every important fact but change the wording and structure.

Seagrass meadows grow in shallow coastal waters. Their long leaves slow water movement and trap sediment, which helps keep the water clear. These underwater plants also provide food and shelter for turtles, fish and small marine animals. Like plants on land, seagrass uses sunlight to make energy. Damage from boat anchors, pollution and cloudy water can reduce a meadow's ability to grow. Protecting seagrass supports healthy coastlines and the many animals that rely on this habitat.

Main meaning: _____

Important facts to keep:

1. _____

2. _____

My paraphrase:

☐

Same facts

☐

Own words

☐

New structure

☐

Clear and complete





Name: _____

Non-Fiction Passage Practice

ANSWERS



Read the passage. Write a paraphrase in 3-4 sentences.
Keep every important fact but change the wording and structure.

Seagrass meadows grow in shallow coastal waters. Their long leaves slow water movement and trap sediment, which helps keep the water clear. These underwater plants also provide food and shelter for turtles, fish and small marine animals. Like plants on land, seagrass uses sunlight to make energy. Damage from boat anchors, pollution and cloudy water can reduce a meadow's ability to grow. Protecting seagrass supports healthy coastlines and the many animals that rely on this habitat.

Main meaning: Seagrass meadows keep coasts and marine habitats healthy but can be damaged.

Important facts to know:

1. Shallow coastal water; slows water and traps sediment; food and shelter.
2. Uses sunlight for energy; anchors, pollution and cloudy water can damage it.

My paraphrase:

In shallow coastal areas, seagrass forms underwater meadows that help clear the water by slowing it and catching sediment. It feeds and shelters many marine animals and uses sunlight to produce energy. Anchors, pollution and murky water can harm these plants, so conserving them benefits coastlines and wildlife.



Same facts



Own words



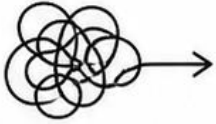
New structure



Clear and complete



Name: _____



Clarify Complex Information



Rewrite each dense sentence so a Year 5 reader can understand it. Keep every fact.

1. The nocturnal behaviour of the sugar glider enables it to avoid daytime heat while searching for food after sunset.

Clear paraphrase:

2. When water vapour cools sufficiently, it condenses into tiny droplets that may gather to form clouds.

Clear paraphrase:

3. The interdependence of flowering plants and pollinators supports reproduction and biodiversity in many ecosystems.

Clear paraphrase:

4. Regular calibration is necessary because measurement tools can gradually become less accurate.

Clear paraphrase:



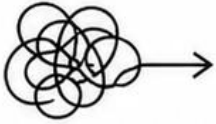
Reflection



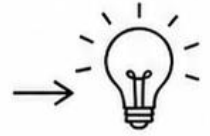
What did you split, reorder or replace?

How did you check the facts stayed the same?

Name: _____



Clarify Complex Information



ANSWERS

Rewrite each dense sentence so a Year 5 reader can understand it. Keep every fact.

1. The nocturnal behaviour of the sugar glider enables it to avoid daytime heat while searching for food after sunset.

Clear paraphrase:

Sugar gliders search for food after sunset. Being active at night helps them avoid daytime heat.

2. When water vapour cools sufficiently, it condenses into tiny droplets that may gather to form clouds.

Clear paraphrase:

As water vapour cools, it changes into tiny water droplets. Groups of droplets may form clouds.

3. The interdependence of flowering plants and pollinators supports reproduction and biodiversity in many ecosystems.

Clear paraphrase:

Flowering plants and pollinators depend on each other. Their relationship helps plants reproduce and supports many kinds of living things.

4. Regular calibration is necessary because measurement tools can gradually become less accurate.

Clear paraphrase:

Measurement tools may lose accuracy over time, so they need to be checked and adjusted regularly.



Reflection



What did you split, reorder or replace?

I split long ideas, reordered details and replaced technical words.

How did you check the facts stayed the same?

I compared each fact with the original.

Name: _____

Date: _____



Paraphrasing Assessment

Part A - Fiction



Read the passage. Paraphrase it in 3-4 sentences. Then complete the self-check.

When the school garden gate would not open, Imogen knelt beside the rusty latch and examined it carefully. She noticed a small stone wedged underneath. After removing the stone, she pushed the latch again, but it still refused to move. Imogen asked Mr Chen for a drop of oil. Together they worked the latch backwards and forwards until it loosened. The gate finally swung open, and the waiting gardeners cheered.

Main meaning: _____

My paraphrase:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

☐ Kept the meaning

☐ Changed the wording

☐ Changed the structure

☐ Checked for clarity

Name: _____

Date: _____



Paraphrasing Assessment **ANSWERS**

Part A - Fiction



Read the passage. Paraphrase it in 3-4 sentences. Then complete the self-check.

When the school garden gate would not open, Imogen knelt beside the rusty latch and examined it carefully. She noticed a small stone wedged underneath. After removing the stone, she pushed the latch again, but it still refused to move. Imogen asked Mr Chen for a drop of oil. Together they worked the latch backwards and forwards until it loosened. The gate finally swung open, and the waiting gardening club cheered.

Main meaning: Imogen cleared a stuck garden gate by removing a stone and oiling the rusty latch.

My paraphrase:

1. When the rusty garden gate latch jammed, Imogen inspected it and found
2. a stone trapped below it. Removing the stone did not solve the problem,
3. so she asked Mr Chen for oil. They moved the latch repeatedly until it
4. loosened, allowing the gardening club to enter.

5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

☒ Kept the meaning

☒ Changed the wording

☒ Changed the structure

☒ Checked for clarity

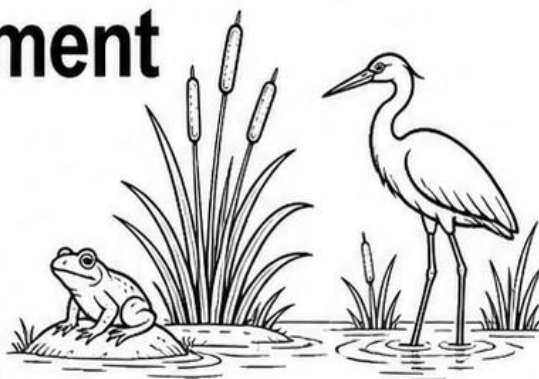
Name: _____

Date: _____

Paraphrasing Assessment

Part B - Non-Fiction

Read the passage. Paraphrase it in 3-4 sentences.
Then complete the self-check.



Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil for all or part of the year. They act like natural filters because plants and soil trap sediment and some pollutants before water reaches rivers or the ocean. Wetlands also provide breeding and feeding places for many birds, frogs, fish, and insects. During heavy rain, they can hold extra water and reduce flooding. Draining, filling or polluting wetlands can damage these valuable habitats.

Main meaning: _____

My paraphrase

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

☐

Kept the meaning

☐

Changed the wording

☐

Changed the structure

☐

Checked for clarity

Name: _____

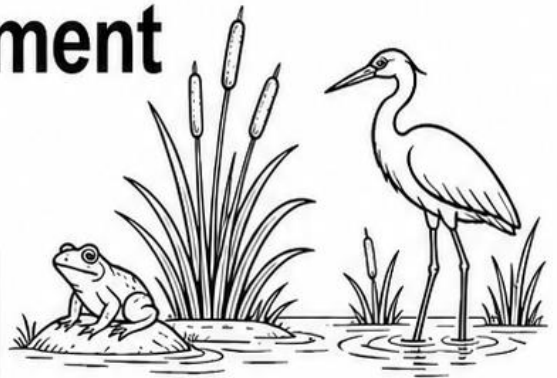
Date: _____

Paraphrasing Assessment

ANSWERS

Part B - Non-Fiction

Read the passage. Paraphrase it in 3-4 sentences.
Then complete the self-check.



Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil for all or part of the year. They act like natural filters because plants and soil trap sediment and some pollutants before water reaches rivers or the ocean. Wetlands also provide breeding and feeding places for many birds, frogs, fish and insects. During heavy rain, they can hold extra water and reduce flooding. Draining, filling or polluting wetlands can damage these valuable habitats.

Main meaning: Wetlands can water, support wildlife and reduce flooding, but human damage threatens them.

My paraphrase:

1. Land that remains wet for some or all of the year is called a wetland. Its
2. plants and soil help clean water, while the habitat provides food and breeding
3. areas for many animals. Wetlands can also store water during heavy rain
4. and lessen floods, so draining or polluting them causes serious harm.
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

☒ Kept the meaning

☒ Changed the wording

☒ Changed the structure

☒ Checked for clarity

Paraphrasing to Clarify Meaning Rubric



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Text / Task: _____

Criteria	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	ACHIEVING	CONFIDENT	EXCEEDING
1. Maintains Original Meaning	Meaning changes or key details are missing.	Keeps the meaning but loses or changes details.	Keeps the main meaning and important details.	Preserves meaning precisely throughout.	Preserves subtle meaning and every essential detail.
2. Selects Precise Vocabulary	Mostly copies words or replaces them inaccurately.	Changes a few words, choices are sometimes suitable.	Uses suitable wording in their own voice.	Chooses precise, natural vocabulary.	Selects nuanced and fluent vocabulary.
3. Changes Sentence Structure	Keeps the original structure with little control.	Attempts to reorder or reshape parts.	Changes structure in a controlled way.	Reshapes sentences smoothly and effectively.	Transforms structure flexibly while retaining logic.
4. Clarifies Ideas	The paraphrase is difficult to follow.	Some sections are clear; others confuse.	Adds a clear and accurate paraphrase.	Clarifies complex ideas without oversimplifying.	Makes dense ideas exceptionally clear and accurate.
5. Independence and Originality	Relies heavily on the original or on support.	Needs frequent prompts; some work is original.	Works independently with occasional checking.	Works independently and avoids copied phrases.	Shows original, assured and self-checking work.

Teacher feedback: _____

Paraphrasing to Clarify Meaning





Learning Goal

Learning goal: Paraphrase a passage so that the meaning stays the same.

Success looks like this:

- Select the essential ideas.

Change the vocabulary and sentence structure.

- Check that the result is clear, accurate and original.



Why Paraphrase?



Readers paraphrase to explain an idea clearly in their own voice.

Writers paraphrase to connect information to a new purpose or audience.

A strong paraphrase shows understanding—not memory or copying.

A good paraphrase is a fresh expression with faithful meaning.



Copy, Summarise or Paraphrase?



COPY: repeats the same wording and structure.

SUMMARISE: shortens down to its central idea.

PARAPHRASE: restates the same meaning in new wording and structure.

Good paraphrases may be about the same length as the original.



Four Non-Negotiables



1. SAME MEANING — the core message stays true.

2. IMPORTANT DETAILS — essential facts remain.

3. NEW EXPRESSION — wording and structure change.

4. CLEAR LANGUAGE — the new version is easy to follow.



Five-Step Strategy



READ — understand the whole text.

FIND — identify the main meaning and essential details.

PLAN — choose precise vocabulary.

SHAPE — order, combine or split ideas.

CHECK — compare both versions for accuracy and originality.





Find the Main Meaning

Ask: What is the author's main point?

Underline facts that the reader must know.

Note the use of cause, effect, contrast, sequence and comparison.

Use examples only when they are not essential.

A paragraph cannot be accurate if its meaning map is incomplete.



Replace Words Precisely



Change words only when the replacement keeps the same meaning.

Choose natural phrases, not single dictionary swaps.

Keep technical terms when replacing them would reduce accuracy.

Example: 'prevent erosion' can become 'limit the loss of soil'.



Reshape the Structure



Change more than individual words

- Move a reason before or after its result.

• Combine closely connected short sentences.

• Split a long sentence into clearer parts.

- Begin with a different idea or clause.



Check Before You Finish



MEANING DRIFT: Did any facts change?
MISSING DETAIL: Did an essential idea disappear?
COPYING: Are long phrases still identical?
CLARITY: Can the reader follow the new version easily?
Read both versions once more before you submit.



Fiction Model: Original



coming
'Asha paused at the edge of the creek. The stepping stones were slick after the rain,
so she tested each one with her foot before crossing.'

rain in mind. Asha crossed carefully because the wet stones may be slippery.



Fiction Model: Reshape



Think: keep Asha, the creek, the wet stones and how careful testing.
Change: combine the reason with the action and reorder the detail.
Paraphrase:

‘Because rain had made the creek stones slippery, Asha checked every step with her foot before moving across.’

Check: same event, same reason, new expression.





Non-Fiction Model: Origin

Origin
'Mangrove roots slow moving water and trap sediment. The sheltered habitat also
provides young fish a place to feed and hide.'

Meaning: Mangroves create coastal water conditions and support young
fish.



Non-Fiction Model: Clarify



Keep every relationship: roots slow water, sediment trapped, young fish gain

water

Paragraph:

‘By reducing the speed of coastal water, mangrove roots collect sediment. The

water also provides food and hiding places for young fish.’

No fact is added, removed or distorted.



Clarify Dense Information



Dense sentence:

‘When water vapour cools sufficiently, it condenses into tiny droplets that may gather to form clouds.’

Clear paraphrase:

‘As water vapour cools it changes into tiny water droplets. Groups of these droplets may form clouds.’

Clarity improves, but the science stays the same.



Diagnose a Weak Paraphrase



Original: 'Owls use silent flight to approach prey without warning.'

Weak: 'Owls use quiet flight to approach prey without warning.'

Problem: Only one word changed; the structure is copied.

Better: 'Because their wings make a little noise, owls can move close to prey before being detected.'



Improve It Step by Step



1. State the main meaning in your own words.

2. Circle details that must remain.

3. Cover the original and explain the idea aloud.

4. Write the idea using a new sentence pattern.

Compare both versions and repair any drift.



Choose the Stronger Paraphrase



Original: The school library opened a quiet reading corner beside the windows.

A. The library created a peaceful reading area next to the windows.

B. The school library opened a quiet reading corner beside the windows.

This is stronger: it preserves the original idea while changing wording and structure.

B copies the original too closely.



Independent Checklist



Before you finish, check:

- ☐ Did I preserve the main meaning?
- ☐ Did I keep every important detail?
- ☐ Did I use precise wording in my own voice?
- ☐ Did I reshape the sentence structure?
- ☐ Is my paraphrase clear, accurate and complete?





Well Done!
You can paraphrase
with precision.

PREVIEW



Paraphrasing to Clarify Meaning Quiz





Question 1: Multiple Choice

What is a paraphrase?

A. A direct copy of every word

B. A shorter version containing only the main idea

C. The same meaning expressed with new wording and structure

D. A personal opinion about a text



Answer 1



Correct answer: C

A paraphrase preserves the original meaning while deliberately changing local words and sentence structure.

is not copy, a summary or a personal opinion.



Question 2: True or False



True or False?

A strong paraphrase changes the wording and structure while keeping the original meaning.



Answer 2



THE

A paragraph should sound newly expressed, but its ideas and
important details must stay faithful to the source.



Question 3: Short Answer



Name two deliberate changes a writer can make when paraphrasing.

Think about both vocabulary and sentence structure.



Answer 3



Possible answers include:

- replace words or phrases with precise alternatives
- re-order ideas or clauses
- combine short sentences
- split a dense sentence

Any two accurate changes earn full credit.



Question 4: Multiple Choice



Original: The council planted native shrubs beside the creek to reduce soil erosion.

Which is the best paraphrase?

A. Native shrubs were planted near the creek by the council to limit soil loss.

B. The council planted native shrubs beside the creek to reduce soil erosion.

C. Native shrubs are useful beside water.

D. The creek caused erosion everywhere.



Answer 4



Correct answer: A

It keeps the council, no new projects, create a plan and erosion purpose while
changing both vocabulary and sentence structure.

Options: C loses details; D changes the meaning.



Question 5: True or False



Changing only words is enough to create a strong paraphrase.
True or False?



Answer 5



FALSE

A one-word swap usually leaves the original expression almost untouched.

A strong paraphrase changes word order and reshapes the sentence while preserving meaning.



Question 6: Explain the Drift



Original: Mina carried an umbrella because dark clouds suggested rain.
Candidate: Mina carried an umbrella because a storm had already begun.
What meaning drift has occurred?



Answer 6



The candidate changes possibility to certainty.

Dark clouds only suggest that rain might come, but the new version claims a

storm has already started.

that original claim is not supported by the original.





Question 7: Multiple Choice

Original: During migration, some shorebirds travel thousands of kilometres between feeding and breeding areas.

Which is correct?

A. Some shorebirds travel very far between places where they feed and reproduce.

B. Shorebirds move.

During migration, some shorebirds travel thousands of kilometres between feeding and breeding areas.

D. Every bird crosses an ocean each year.



Answer 7



Correct answer: A
It retains the birds' long stay and movement between feeding and breeding areas.

B is complete, C copies, and D invents unsupported facts.



Question 8: True or False



True or false?
Paraphrasing and summarising are identical because both use fewer words.



Answer 8



ELSE

A summary condenses a text to its central points.

A paraphrase restores the same meaning and important detail in a new form and may be a similar length.



Question 9: Clarify It



Rewrite this course sentence clearly without losing any fact:

‘Because the insulating layer of blubber slows heat loss, whales can maintain a stable body temperature in cold seas.’



Answer q



Possible answer:

‘Blubber forms an insulating layer that reduces heat loss. This helps whales keep their body temperature stable in cold ocean water.’

The linked facts remain accurate and clear.



Question 10: Too Close?



Original: The museum extended its opening hours so more families could visit after work.

Which response comes too closely?

A. The museum welcomed more families after work, so the museum stayed open longer.

B. The museum extended its opening hours so more families could visit after work.

C. The museum opened earlier to give working families more opportunity to visit.

D. By opening later, the museum made evening visits easier for families.



Answer 10



correct answer: B
It repeats the original wording and sentence structure exactly.
A, C and D reshaped the expression while preserving the purpose and key details.





Well Done!
Quiz Complete

