

# PARAPHRASING FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

<b>Focus</b>	To increase the student's ability to communicate effectively.
<b>Group Size</b>	Entire class
<b>Time Required</b>	1 class period
<b>Materials</b>	Ten sheets of 8 x 11 paper, individually numbered 1-10 Student Handouts: <i>Paraphrasing for Effective Communication</i> <i>Poem: Deeply Listening by John Fox</i>
<b>Setting</b>	Standard classroom
<b>Process</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Place the numbered sheets on the walls around the perimeter of the classroom.</li><li>2. Distribute student handout, <i>Paraphrasing for Effective Communication</i>. Explain the value of paraphrasing as an effective tool for enhancing listening. Practice the skill of paraphrasing with a few sample statements.</li><li>3. Ask students to complete the "Qualities of a Good High School" section of the handout that requires them to rank order descriptive qualities of a high school. When the rank ordering is complete, ask the students to stand in the middle of the room.</li><li>4. Call out a characteristic from the "<i>Qualities</i>" list. Students move to the numbers placed around the room that correspond to the number they selected for that quality.</li><li>5. Select a person from each of the two extremes to meet in the center of the room. The first person presents a rationale for her/his ranking. The second person actively listens and then paraphrases what he/she "heard." If necessary the first sender may clarify or restate the original message.</li><li>6. The second person then provides a rationale for his/her ranking. The first person actively listens and then paraphrases what he/she heard.</li><li>7. Continue calling out the other qualities and select different students to come to the center. If necessary vary the extremes so all students have an opportunity to practice. For example, instead of individuals from the 10 and 1 position, take them from position 8 to 3.</li><li>8. To summarize the lesson, read the poem <i>Deeply Listening</i> by John Fox and generate a discussion around its meaning.</li></ol>

## ***Variations***

*Have student rank order any of the following:*

*"Qualities of a Good Friend;" "Qualities of a Good Parent;" "Qualities of a Good Date"*

# Paraphrasing for Effective Communication

- ❖ Paraphrasing is a way of revealing your understanding of another person.
- ❖ Paraphrasing increases the accuracy of communication.
- ❖ Paraphrasing expresses your interest in the other person.

## When paraphrasing

- ❖ Restate the sender's ideas in your own words rather than repeating verbatim.
- ❖ Avoid indicating approval or disapproval.
- ❖ Speak your own thoughts only after you have paraphrased the speaker's thoughts.
- ❖ Have a desire to truly hear what the other person means; it is more than just repeating the words you heard someone else say.
- ❖ Remember these helpful phrases:
  - I hear you saying that...*
  - Let me see if I understand you correctly...*
  - If I heard you correctly...*

## Qualities of a Good High School

Rank order the following qualities of a good high school:

1= most important, 10 = least important.

You will use your rankings to practice the skill of paraphrasing.

- \_\_\_\_\_ High SAT scores
- \_\_\_\_\_ High percentage of students passing the WASL
- \_\_\_\_\_ Winning sport teams
- \_\_\_\_\_ Strong student leadership program
- \_\_\_\_\_ Varied academic offerings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clean, well maintained campus
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supportive, caring teachers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Positive students and few cliques
- \_\_\_\_\_ Little vandalism
- \_\_\_\_\_ Involved, supportive parents

## Deeply Listening

When someone deeply listens to you  
It is like holding out a dented cup you have had since childhood  
And watching it fill up with cold fresh water.

When it balances on the top of the rim  
You are understood.

When it overflows and touches your skins  
You are loved.

When someone deeply listens to you  
The room where you stay starts a new life  
And the place where you wrote your first poem  
Begins to blow in your minds eye.  
It's as if gold has been discovered.

When someone deeply listens to you  
Your bare feet are on the earth  
And the beloved land that seemed distant  
Is now at home within you.

John Fox