



RETELLING	
Purpose:	To show understanding and recall of what was read or heard.
How it sounds:	The student restates all the <i>key details</i> in order.
Focus:	Characters, setting, major events, problems, solutions
Length:	Nearly as long as the original.
Example:	"Goldilocks visits the bears' house, tries their porridge, chairs, and beds, and falls asleep in the smallest bed. The bears come home and find her."
Use it when:	• Checking comprehension • Reviewing narrative structure • Building recall and sequencing skills

PARAPHRASING	
Purpose:	To restate a specific <u>section</u> of text in your own words while keeping the same meaning.
How it sounds:	The student changes the wording and structure but keeps the idea.
Focus:	Meaning clarity and accurate rewording.
Length:	About the same as the original.
Example:	Original: "Photosynthesis is the process by which green plants use sunlight to make food." Paraphrase: "Green plants make their own food by using sunlight's energy in a process called photosynthesis."
Use it when:	• Clarifying complex information • Writing research notes • Avoiding plagiarism

SUMMARIZING	
Purpose:	To condense information and express <i>only the main ideas</i> .
How it sounds:	The student gives a brief overview — no extra details.
Focus:	Main ideas, theme, or central message.
Length:	Much shorter than the original.
Example:	"Goldilocks goes into the bears' house, tries their things, and runs away when they return."
Use it when:	• Identifying central ideas or themes • Reviewing informational texts • Writing concise responses

QUICK COMPARISON CHART

Skill	Purpose	Detail Level	Length	Classroom Use
Retell	Recall events/details	High	Long	Comprehension checks, sequencing
Paraphrase	Restate meaning clearly	Moderate	Same	Note-taking, research writing
Summarize	Capture main ideas	Low	Short	Central idea, synthesis

Tip: Model these skills progressively. Have students retell first to ensure understanding, then paraphrase for precision, and finally summarize to synthesize ideas.