

Paraphrasing What You Heard

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

A good PARAPHRASE keeps the speaker's full meaning, in your own words, without adding new ideas or leaving out important ones. Watch out for paraphrases that are too narrow, too broad, add an idea, or change the meaning.

PART 1 — READ

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Read-aloud — Guest speaker visiting the class (transcript)

Ms. Reyes: “Thank you for inviting me. I'm a wildlife biologist, and I study river otters here in our state. River otters live along clean rivers and lakes. They eat fish, frogs, and crayfish. They use logs and old beaver dens for shelter.

When a river is polluted, otters can disappear quickly. They are like an alarm — if they leave, something is wrong with the water. The good news is that when people clean up a river, otters often come back within a few years. That's why our team measures the water and watches for tracks every spring.

If you ever see an otter on a hike, watch quietly from a distance. Don't feed it. Otters are wild animals and they need to keep their fear of humans to stay safe.”

PART 2 — PRACTICE

Imagine an adult reads the transcript aloud. Then answer the items.

- Which is the BEST OVERALL paraphrase of Ms. Reyes's talk?
 - A wildlife biologist explained that otters are dangerous and should be moved out of polluted rivers.
 - A wildlife biologist said otters are her favorite animal and described her best hike with them.
 - A wildlife biologist explained that otters need clean rivers, leave when water is polluted, and should be watched quietly from a distance.
 - A scientist talked about animals in our state and how she became interested in nature.
- Which paraphrase is TOO NARROW — it leaves out important ideas?
 - Otters live along clean rivers, signal water health, and need space from people.
 - Otters disappear from polluted water and return when it is cleaned.
 - Ms. Reyes studies otters and asks people to watch them quietly.
 - River otters eat fish.



3. Which paraphrase is TOO BROAD?
 - A. Otters can vanish from polluted rivers and return when the water is cleaned.
 - B. Animals matter and we should care about them.
 - C. Ms. Reyes's team measures water and watches for otter tracks each spring.
 - D. Otters use logs and old beaver dens for shelter.
4. Which paraphrase ADDS AN IDEA not in the talk?
 - A. Ms. Reyes said you can keep an otter as a pet as long as you feed it regularly.
 - B. River otters eat fish, frogs, and crayfish.
 - C. Otters return to a river within a few years after a cleanup.
 - D. If you see an otter, watch quietly and don't feed it.
5. Which paraphrase CHANGES the meaning of what Ms. Reyes said?
 - A. Otters are an alarm for water health.
 - B. Otters can disappear quickly when a river becomes polluted.
 - C. Otters come back to rivers a few years after a cleanup.
 - D. Otters stay in their river no matter how polluted the water becomes.
6. Which sentence is the SPEAKER'S MAIN IDEA?
 - A. Crayfish are a tasty food for otters.
 - B. Ms. Reyes enjoys hiking near rivers in the spring.
 - C. Otters are dangerous to people who get too close.
 - D. A river's health and its otter population are closely connected.
7. Which DETAIL from the talk BEST supports the main idea?
 - A. "When people clean up a river, otters often come back within a few years."
 - B. "Thank you for inviting me."
 - C. "They use logs and old beaver dens."
 - D. "Don't feed it."
8. Which sentence is a GOOD paraphrase of: *"They are like an alarm — if they leave, something is wrong with the water"*?
 - A. Otters are loud and noisy animals that make warning sounds.
 - B. Otters use real alarm systems built into their dens.
 - C. When otters vanish from a river, it's usually a sign that the water has become polluted.
 - D. Otters dislike rivers and try to leave them every chance they get.
9. Write a 1–2 sentence paraphrase of WHAT Ms. Reyes said about how to act when you see an otter.



10. Why is it IMPORTANT to PARAPHRASE carefully instead of copying word-for-word?



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 A B C D
- 9
- 10

Explanations

1. C	C captures ALL THREE main ideas in Ms. Reyes's talk. A CHANGES the meaning (she didn't say otters are dangerous or should be moved). B ADDS ideas not in the talk. D is TOO BROAD (any nature talk would fit).
2. D	D captures only ONE small diet detail and leaves out the water-health main idea. A, B, and C each capture the speaker's main argument.
3. B	B is so general it loses the topic — it could describe any nature talk. A, C, and D each stay specific to what Ms. Reyes actually said.
4. A	A invents an idea Ms. Reyes never said (otters as pets) and contradicts her warning against feeding. B, C, and D all match the transcript exactly.
5. D	D CONTRADICTS the speaker — she said the OPPOSITE (otters disappear from polluted water). A, B, and C all restate her points without changing them.
6. D	D is the BIG IDEA she returns to (alarm, disappear, return after cleanup). A is a small detail; B isn't claimed; C contradicts her (she said otters need to keep their fear of humans, not that they are dangerous).
7. A	A directly links river cleanup to otter return — supporting the river-health-and-otter idea. B is a greeting, C is a shelter detail (related but doesn't support the main claim), and D is the safety rule (different topic).
8. C	C keeps the META PHOR's meaning (otters = warning sign). A and B take <i>alarm</i> LITERALLY (sounds, devices). D changes the meaning into <i>otters always want to leave rivers</i> .
9.	Answer: Examples: (1) If you see an otter on a hike, watch it quietly from far away and never feed it, because otters need to keep their fear of people to stay safe. (2) Ms. Reyes said to keep your distance, stay quiet, and not feed otters — they have to stay afraid of humans to survive in the wild. Accept any short paraphrase that keeps the KEY IDEAS: (a) watch quietly, (b) keep distance, (c) don't feed, and (d) otters need fear of humans. NOT acceptable: paraphrases that drop the no-feeding rule, or that add new ideas (e.g., <i>you can pet an otter if it comes close</i>).
10.	Answer: Examples: (1) When I paraphrase, I show I really understood the speaker, I make the idea fit my own writing, and I avoid copying her exact words. (2) Paraphrasing forces me to think about the speaker's meaning instead of just remembering wording, which helps me explain it to someone else. Accept any response that mentions (a) showing understanding, (b) original wording in your own voice, and (c) avoiding copying. NOT acceptable: a response that says paraphrasing means making the idea shorter, or that copying is fine if you change one word.



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