



Remixing a Speech

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Multiple Grade Levels/ One-Two Days

Introduction:

Students will be able to summarize the speech in the author's own words, as well as paraphrase the speech using their own words. This structure is appropriate for multiple grade levels, depending on the complexity of the chosen text.

Learning Objectives:

- Paraphrase a historic speech in their own words
- Identify the operative words in a historic speech

Guiding Questions:

- How can we understand a historic speech in today's words and context?

Common Core Standards:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1](#) Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Materials:

- Copies of one or more Historic Speeches
- Remix Guide (Secondary)
- Remix Worksheet (Elementary)

Classroom Activities:

- **Lesson Activity One: Introduction of Speech**
 - o Students learn about the context of a historic speech and define any words that they don't know.
- **Lesson Activity Two: The Remix**
 - o Students paraphrase an assigned speech.
- **Lesson Activity Three: Operative Words**
 - o Using operative words, students summarize the core meaning of the speech.

Note: Any or all of these activities can be done individually, in pairs or in small groups. You could also model the method on the first part of a long speech and then have the students work on the rest of the speech.

Lesson Activity One: Introduction to Speech

Choose one or more historic speeches for your students to study. Have students look at the same speech or give them different speeches to analyze. Begin by looking at the context of the speech:

- Who wrote and delivered the speech?
- Where and when was it given?
- Who was the intended audience?
- Can we infer anything--from the time, date and audience--about what the speaker's goals might have been? What did he or she want to accomplish or convey by giving this speech?

If using a speech from the Ford's historical speech database, the context is included with the speech print-outs. If students are researching this information, they should note the answers on a note sheet. If students are all working with the same speech, this information can be given through a short teacher introduction.

Next students should read over the speech, highlighting any words they don't know, and look up the definitions. They should write the definitions on the speech itself.

Lesson Activity Two: The Remix

Using the Remix Guide or Worksheet, students should remix their assigned speech. After students have paraphrased their speeches, use random calling strategies to have students share several remixes. Next have students discuss the message of the speech. Students should think about what the speaker is trying to accomplish.

Lesson Activity Three: Operative Words

Operative words are the most important words in a sentence or paragraph. They get to the heart of the message.

Once students demonstrate that they fully understand their assigned speech, you'll return to the text of the original speech. Individually, each student chooses an operative word for each sentence in the original speech (or each paragraph, depending on the length of the speech). Students then list all of their operative words and decide on one word that is the most important in the speech. This forces students to evaluate word choice and then justify their choice.

Assessment:

Students can either share their one word and their rationale for choosing that one word in a discussion circle or write it down as an exit card.



Guide to Remixing a Speech (Elementary)

Speech Selection	Remix: In my own words...	Operative Word
	New Vocabulary	Definitions



Guide to Remixing a Speech (*Secondary*)

1. Review the Context of the Speech

Find out what was going on. Who is speaking? Why are they speaking? What is going on in historical context? Think of the five Ws (Who, What, Why, When and Where)

2. Vocabulary Review

Read over the speech and highlight any words you don't know. Look them up or use context clues to figure out their meaning.

3. Remix the Speech

Remixing is another word for *paraphrasing*. Paraphrasing is a technique that you can use to make difficult language more familiar. To paraphrase something means to put it into your own words.

Paraphrase one sentence at a time. If you have a long sentence, make sure you understand its structure: find your main subject and verb, as well as any parenthetical phrases, and go over the syntax (the way in which the words are arranged). If you get stuck, try doing a word-for-word substitute until you understand what the sentence is saying!

Paraphrase Example of Canastego's "We Will Make Men of Them"

Original Text: We know that you highly esteem the kind of learning taught in those colleges, and that the maintenance of our young men, while with you, would be very expensive to you. We are convinced, therefore, that you mean to do us good by your proposal, and we thank you heartily. But you who are wise must know that different nations have different conceptions of things; and you will therefore not take it amiss if our ideas of this kind of education happen not to be the same with yours.

Paraphrase: We get that you really value the type of education taught in these schools, and that the care of our boys, while they are with you, would be really pricey for you. We believe, because of that, that you intend to do us a solid with your offer, and we truly thank you. But, being a smart group of people, you have to understand that different

cultures have different ideas about stuff, and you won't take it as a dis if our thoughts about this type of learning don't line up with yours.

4. Find the Operative Words

For each sentence, pick the operative word. The operative word is the most important word in the sentence. It gets to the heart of the message. As you find the words, keep a running list of them.

Operative Word Example of Canastego's "We Will Make Men of Them"

1. Learning: The entire speech is about how men should be educated.
2. Good: Canastego is trying to focus on the colonists' desire for good for the Native Americans.
3. Different: Here he notes that their definitions of good education are different.

5. Most Important Word

Look at your operative word list. Pick one that you think sums up the entire speech.

Most Important Word Example of Canastego's "We Will Make Men of Them"

Different: The focus of the speech is how Canastego and the colonists see the education differently through their different cultures.