

Evidence Detectives: Mastering Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing

Materials Needed:

- A short, interesting article (a printed copy of the "The Problem with Fast Fashion" article provided below, or a similar text of 200-300 words).
- Highlighters (at least two different colors).
- Notebook paper and a pen/pencil, or a digital document.
- "Evidence Detective's Case File" worksheet (content provided below).
- Index cards or small pieces of paper (optional).

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Define quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing.
- Explain the difference between these three methods for using textual evidence.
- Correctly use a quote, paraphrase, and summary from a short text.
- Analyze a text to choose the most effective type of evidence to support a specific argument.

Lesson Plan

I. Introduction: The Hook (5 minutes)

Educator: "Imagine you're debating with a friend. You claim that listening to music while studying actually helps you focus. Your friend disagrees and says it's a distraction. You say, 'I'm not just making this up! I read a study that proved it.' Your friend says, 'Oh yeah? Prove it. What did the study say?'"

"In that moment, you need to provide evidence to support your argument. Just saying 'I read it somewhere' isn't very convincing. You need to show what you know. Today, we are going to become **Evidence Detectives**. A detective's job is to find clues and present them clearly to prove a case. Our 'clues' will come from a text, and we're going to learn about the three main tools every detective uses to present their evidence: **Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing**."

Today's Mission: We will learn how and when to use each of these three tools to build strong, convincing arguments based on what we read.

II. Body: The Investigation (25-30 minutes)

Part 1: Meet Your Detective Tools (I Do - 10 minutes)

Educator: "An Evidence Detective has three main tools in their kit. Let's break them down. Think of it like this: Reading a text is like watching a movie. How you talk about it afterwards changes depending on what you need to do."

- **1. QUOTING:** This is like taking a screenshot of the movie.
 - **What it is:** Using the *exact* words from the text. You copy them word-for-word and put them inside "quotation marks."
 - **When to use it:** When the original author's words are especially powerful, memorable, or perfectly stated. Or when you need to be extremely precise, like when citing a rule or a statistic.
 - **Example:** If a character says an amazing line, you'd repeat it exactly: "The hero said, **'Courage is not the absence of fear.'**"
- **2. PARAPHRASING:** This is like describing a specific scene in your own words.
 - **What it is:** Restating a specific sentence or short passage from the text using your *own words and sentence structure*. A paraphrase is usually about the same length as the original piece you're explaining.
 - **When to use it:** When you want to explain a specific point from the text but the original wording is a bit complex or long. It helps you smoothly blend the author's idea into your own writing.
 - **Example:** Instead of quoting the whole fight scene, you'd explain it: **"In that scene, the hero fought the villain on a collapsing bridge to get the key."**
- **3. SUMMARIZING:** This is like telling someone the main plot of the whole movie.
 - **What it is:** Giving the main idea of a large section or even the entire text in your *own words*. A summary is always much shorter than the original text.
 - **When to use it:** When you need to provide general context or the main takeaway of an article without getting into all the little details.
 - **Example:** You wouldn't describe every scene. You'd just say: **"It's a movie about a hero who has to overcome their fears to save the city from a supervillain."**

Part 2: Practice the Tools Together (We Do - 10 minutes)

Educator: "Let's practice with our first piece of evidence." Read the following text together.

Text Sample: "The Problem with Fast Fashion"

The modern clothing industry, often called "fast fashion," has a significant and often unseen environmental cost. Global clothing production has roughly doubled since the year 2000, with over 100 billion new garments produced annually. The problem is that consumers treat these cheap clothes as disposable. In fact, a 2017 report showed that the average person buys 60% more clothing than they did 15 years ago, but keeps each item for only half as long. As a result, an estimated 92 million tons of textiles waste is created each year, with the vast majority ending up in landfills where synthetic fibers like polyester can take centuries to decompose.

Educator: "Let's use our tools on this paragraph. Let's find evidence for the argument: **Fast fashion has created a culture of disposable clothing.**"

1. "First, let's find a short, powerful statistic that proves this point. What's a really shocking fact in here? How should we present it?"
 - **Answer:** A quote is perfect for a powerful statistic. We could pull out the exact words.
 - **Let's write it down together:** To show that people don't keep clothes long, the text states that people keep "each item for only half as long" as they did 15 years ago.
2. "Now, how could we explain the main idea of that middle section—about people buying more and

keeping it less—in our own words?"

- **Answer:** We should paraphrase it. We're focusing on a specific idea, not the whole paragraph.

- **Let's write it down together:** The article explains that people now purchase far more clothes than they used to, but they get rid of them much more quickly.

3. "Finally, what if we just need to give the big-picture problem described in this whole paragraph in one sentence? What tool would we use?"

- **Answer:** A summary. We need the main idea, short and sweet.

- **Let's write it down together:** The fast fashion industry contributes to massive environmental waste because it produces huge amounts of cheap clothing that people throw away quickly.

Part 3: Your First Solo Case (You Do - 5-10 minutes)

Educator: "Alright, Detective. It's your turn. Here is your first case file. Your job is to read the text we just used again and find the best piece of evidence to support the argument. You must choose one tool—quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing—write down the evidence, and explain why you chose that tool."

Evidence Detective's Case File

- **Case Argument:** The sheer volume of clothing produced is an environmental problem.
- **Your Task:**
 1. Find a piece of evidence in the text to support this argument.
 2. Decide if it's best to quote, paraphrase, or summarize it.
 3. Write down the evidence as a quote, paraphrase, or summary.
 4. Write one sentence explaining *why* you chose that method.

(Give the student time to work. Review their answer together, focusing on their reasoning.)

Success Criteria for This Task:

- Did you choose evidence that directly supports the argument?
- Is your chosen method (quote, paraphrase, summary) a good fit?
- Is your quote exact and in quotation marks? Is your paraphrase/summary in your own words?
- Can you explain your choice clearly?

III. Conclusion: Case Closed (5 minutes)

Educator: "Great work today, Detective! Let's put our tools back in the kit and review what we learned."

- "What are our three tools for presenting evidence?" (Elicit: Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing).
- "In your own words, what is the biggest difference between a paraphrase and a summary?" (Elicit: A paraphrase rewords a short, specific part and is about the same length, while a summary gives the main idea of a large part and is much shorter).
- "When is using a direct quote the most powerful choice?" (Elicit: When the words are famous, impactful, or a very specific statistic/fact).

Final Takeaway: "Using evidence correctly is a superpower. It makes your arguments stronger, your writing more convincing, and your ideas clearer. Whether you're writing a school paper, participating in a debate, or just trying to win an argument with a friend, knowing when to quote, paraphrase, or

summarize will help you prove your point like a pro."

Assessment

- **Formative (During the lesson):** Observe the student's answers and reasoning during the "We Do" practice section. Check for understanding of the core definitions.
- **Summative (End of the lesson):** The completed "Evidence Detective's Case File" serves as the primary assessment. Evaluate it based on the success criteria listed in the "You Do" section.

Differentiation

- **For a learner needing more support:**
 - Use a shorter, simpler text with a very obvious main idea.
 - Provide sentence starters like, "The author states that..." for quoting or "In other words, the text explains..." for paraphrasing.
 - In the "You Do" activity, highlight the sentence in the text that contains the best evidence to guide them.
- **For an advanced learner looking for a challenge:**
 - Use a more complex text, like an opinion editorial, where the argument is less direct.
 - Ask them to support a single argument using *two different methods* (e.g., a quote and a paraphrase) and then write a short paragraph explaining which one is more effective and why.
 - Challenge them to write a full paragraph that starts with their own argument and then smoothly integrates at least one quote and one paraphrase from the text to support it.