

## Student Tool

### Paraphrasing in Oral Discourse



#### **What is paraphrasing and why is it important?**

Definition: To say what your partner said in different words.

Purpose: To check for a common understanding or to repeat someone else's ideas.

#### **When should you paraphrase in a conversation?**

If someone asks you... (prompt)

- Does that make sense?
- Do you know what I mean?
- Do you understand?
- I'm not sure that was clear.
- What are you hearing?

You can respond using the sentence starters.... (response)

- What I heard you say is....
- So, you are saying that.....
- In other words.....
- Let me see if I understand you....

#### **Example of paraphrasing in oral discourse**

Partner 1: I think it is important to ask for help when I am confused because if I don't, my teacher won't know that I am not understanding what she is saying. Does that make sense?

Partner 2: What I heard you say is that, if your teacher doesn't know that you are confused she will not be able to help you.

Adapted from Jeff Zwiers Conversation Skills Poster retrieved from <http://www.jeffzwiers.org/tools--resources.html> on 3/17/15.

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