



# PAT Teaching Resources Centre

## Reading comprehension

Teaching activity: **Expressing similar meanings**

**Curriculum code:** ACELY1690, ACELY1703

**Skill:** Retrieving directly stated information

**Achievement band:** 120–129

## ACTIVITIES

### Learning intention

For students to be able to recognise and generate phrases and words that mean the same as the text.

### Explain

to students that the main way to demonstrate that you have understood information in a text is to be able to say it in your own words. Repeating the words that are used in the text shows that you have found the correct information, but does not necessarily mean that you understand what you have read. This is why it is important to develop your vocabulary and your skills in saying things in different ways. You also need to recognise when information that you are looking for in a text is really there, but may not be written using the particular words you are looking for.

### Show

#### Mikhala

Every school night students spread out their homework in front of them while they listen to music, channel-surf on the TV and text friends, and constantly check Facebook or Twitter. They argue that all this distraction is helping them to concentrate on their homework. All it is really doing is providing camouflage so they can look like they are doing their homework while they are actually putting all their brain power into socialising. They know what they are doing. They are just more interested in their social lives than school work. It is the parents who are being fooled.

### Read

the text with the students.

### Ask

students to complete the table below by finding the matching words from Mikhala's text for the first column or using their own words to express a similar idea in the second column.

#### Words from the text

Students spread their homework out in front of them

All it is really doing is providing camouflage

They are actually putting all their brain power into socialising

#### Similar meaning but different words

Students look like they are studying

Students are doing everything except their homework

They are aware of their actions

Their parents are being taken for a ride

## Teaching activity: Expressing similar meanings

### Discuss

different ways of rewording the same ideas. If necessary, correct any rewordings that do not reflect the meaning of the original text.

### Show

#### Sebastian

We now know our brains are incredibly plastic and adaptable. We are constantly teaching our brains how to work by the way we use them. Young people, raised in stimulating environments with constant music, TV, phones and texting and books argue that they have learned how to attend to different tasks at the same time. In fact, they say they need this extra stimulation in order to concentrate. They claim that isolating them to one task at a time reduces their brain functionality. But the research does not support their claims. Research shows that swapping from one task to another wastes time as the brain has to work hard to refocus each time. Efficiency and productivity are much higher when you concentrate and complete one task before moving on to the next one.

### Read

the text with the students.

### Ask

students to complete the table below by finding the matching words from Sebastian's text for the first column or using their own words to express a similar idea in the second column.

Words from the text

Similar meaning but different words

Our brains are continually evolving

Constant music, TV, phones and texting and books

They claim distractions help them to focus

They claim one task at a time reduces brain functionality

Research does not support their claims

Multi-tasking

Single-minded attention to one task at a time achieves the best results

### Discuss

different ways of rewording the same ideas. If necessary, correct any rewordings that do not reflect the meaning of the original text.

Find out more  
[www.acer.org/pat-trc](http://www.acer.org/pat-trc)

