

Paragraph Shrinking: Support at Home

Paragraph Shrinking is a reading comprehension strategy that works well for autistic children to help them find the main idea of the nonfiction text they are reading.

STEPS FOR PARAGRAPH SHRINKING:

1. Name the who or what
2. Find the most important thing
3. Use 10 words to say the main idea


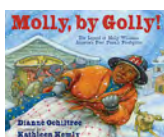

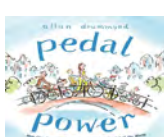


TIPS FOR PARENTS OF AUTISTIC CHILDREN:

- Choose nonfiction texts about topics your child is interested in reading. Harnessing the power of your child's restricted interests can increase engagement.
- If the topic is highly familiar and your child is likely to know all the facts in the book, select topics that are slightly peripheral to your child's interest to ensure they are comprehending what they are reading. For example, if your child likes insects, try to find a book about rare insects your child may not know about (e.g., *World of Insects: Stink Bugs* by Colleen Sexton www.getepic.com/app/read/51201).
- Consider using an audiobook. Listening comprehension can help your child's reading comprehension. Take turns reading a paragraph and having the other person shrink the paragraph.
- Shrink an entire book if necessary. This strategy works great for paragraphs, especially when children are reading long books. If an autistic child is reading an easier book with fewer words, try shrinking the entire book (or multiple pages of a book) instead of only a paragraph.
- Use this strategy with homework. Homework can be a particularly stressful time for families of autistic children. Try this strategy while children are reading their social studies or science textbooks. This is a great way to check to see if your child is comprehending what they're reading.

FINDING TEXT AND BOOKS FOR PARAGRAPH SHRINKING

- ❑ Use Reading Rocket's **Book Finder** to search specifically for nonfiction texts according to your child's interests. readingrockets.org/bookfinder
- ❑ Subscribe to **Reading A-Z** (or do their free trial) to download books your child can read online. Use the filters to choose nonfiction books on your child's reading level. readinga-z.com
- ❑ Use the **Epic** website/app to download free and purchased e-books. Search by reading level and child interests. Filter for nonfiction. getepic.com
- ❑ Ask your librarian about **High/Low books**, which are books with high interest and low readability readingrockets.org/article/highlow-books-children

NONFICTION BOOKS TO USE WITH PARAGRAPH SHRINKING

	Title/Author
	Floating in Space Franklyn Branley
	Molly, by Golly! The Legend of Molly Williams, America's First Female Firefighter Dianne Ochiltree
	Ultimate Trains Peter McMahon
	Pedal Power: How One Community Became the Bicycle Capital of the World Allan Drummond
	Two Men and a Car: Franklin Roosevelt, Al Capone, and a Cadillac V-8 Michael Garland
	Britannica All New Kids' Encyclopedia: What We Know & What We Don't Christopher Lloyd

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PARAGRAPH SHRINKING:

- ❑ TRIAD Learning Module: register for a free account at triad.vkclearning.org then see bit.ly/3V65Kc9
- ❑ IRIS PALS Module: <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/pals26/#content>
- ❑ Reading Rockets Strategy Page: readingrockets.org/strategies/paragraph_shrinking
- ❑ Understood.org Evidence-Based Practice: understood.org/en/articles/evidence-based-literacy-strategy-paragraph-shrinking