HIGHLIGHTER HABIT SHEET™

Train yourself to mark WHO / WHAT / WHEN in every question

Problem:

Kids skim the question, guess, then complain there "wasn't enough time".

Fix:

Force a mini-routine:

Read → Highlight keywords → Then answer.

This sheet makes them physically underline or highlight the keywords in each question – until it becomes a habit.

PART 1 – 3 THINGS TO ALWAYS MARK

For almost every comprehension question, you should mark:

WHO – person, group, character, thing?

WHAT – action, detail, main idea, feeling, reason?

WHEN / WHERE – time or place (if it's mentioned).

Plus any question words that control the task:

- "best"
- "main" / "mainly"
- "most likely"
- "except" / "NOT"

PART 2 – HIGHLIGHTER KEY (PRINT THIS ON TOP)

When you practise, use:

- Circle → WHO

- Underline → WHAT

- Box / [ ] → WHEN / WHERE

- Star ★ → tricky words: best, mainly, most likely, except, NOT

You can colour-code later (yellow for WHAT, blue for WHO, etc.), but even pencil marks are fine.

PART 3 – PRACTICE BOX A (EXAMPLES + HOW THEY SHOULD BE MARKED)

Example 1

Question:
Why did Mia decide to stay behind after school to help Mrs Lee?

Marking (what you want the kid to do):

- Circle WHO: Mia, Mrs Lee
- Box WHEN: after school
- Underline WHAT: why did … decide to stay behind (reason)

So the question becomes visually:

Why did ■Mia■ decide to stay behind ■after school■ to help ■Mrs Lee■?

Now they know they need to find:

- a reason (WHY)
- connected to Mia staying behind after school to help Mrs Lee

Example 2

Question:
According to the article, what is the main reason the city is planting new trees along the streets?

Marking:

- WHO/WHAT: ■article■, ■city■, ■new trees■
- Underline WHAT: main reason
- Box WHERE: along the streets

Result:

According to the ■article■, what is the main reason the ■city■ is planting ■new trees■ ■along the streets■?

Example 3 (trick word)

Question:
Which of the following is NOT a reason Max gives for wanting to move schools?

Marking:

- Circle WHO/WHAT: ■Max■, ■schools■

- Star ★: NOT

- Underline WHAT: reason … gives

Result:

Which of the following is ★NOT★ a reason ■Max■ gives for wanting to move ■schools■?

Now the child knows:

- They're hunting for options Max did NOT say, not just "any true statement".

PART 4 – HIGHLIGHTER HABIT PRACTICE GRID

Print this, and for each question they practise, they must show you their marking inside the grid before choosing an answer.

Name: _____ Date: ___ / ___ / _____

Instructions for student (write these):

1. Read the question once.
2. Mark WHO / WHAT / WHEN/WHERE / tricky words using the key.
3. Only then look back at the passage and answer.

PRACTICE SET – 8 QUESTIONS TO MARK

(You can use these as a warm-up before real comprehension.)

Q1. Who helps Amir in the garden after the other students leave?

Q2. What is the main problem the author describes in the second paragraph?

Q3. When does the library become crowded?

Q4. Which statement best describes how Lily feels when her name is called?

Q5. According to the text, what is one advantage of using tablets instead of books?

Q6. Where does the story mainly take place, and how does that setting affect the characters?

Q7. What is the most likely reason Noah stares at his shoelaces when the coach speaks to him?

Q8. Which of these is NOT something the teacher says about the new rule?

STUDENT MARKING BOX

Have them copy each question into the box and mark it, OR just mark directly on this sheet.

For a first week, your rule is:

"No mark, no answer. Show me your highlighted question first."

Self-Check Table:

Question	Did I mark WHO?	WHAT?	WHEN/ WHERE?	Tricky words (if any)?
Q1	■	■	■	■
Q2	■	■	■	■
Q3	■	■	■	■
Q4	■	■	■	■
Q5	■	■	■	■
Q6	■	■	■	■
Q7	■	■	■	■
Q8	■	■	■	■

PART 5 – TURNING IT INTO A HABIT (PARENT SCRIPT)

For the first 2 weeks of practice, say:

"Before you answer, show me your Highlighter Habit on the question."

If they haven't marked it:

- They must go back and mark WHO / WHAT / WHEN/WHERE / tricky words.
- Only then are they allowed to answer.

After a while, you fade yourself out:

- They still mark questions.
- You only occasionally spot-check that the habit is still there.

One-Sentence Reminder for the Kid

Write this at the bottom of the sheet:

"I never answer a question I haven't marked."

That's how the Highlighter Habit Sheet™ delivers on its promise:
by forcing kids to physically mark every question, it rewires them to actually notice WHO / WHAT / WHEN / tricky words – slashing careless errors and time-wasting rereads.