

PARENT MARKING CHEAT SHEET™

in Use

**FOR SELECTIVE
WRITING**

Give targeted feedback
in under 7 minutes
(no teacher needed)

PARENT MARKING CHEAT SHEET™

How to use this page

- Read once for meaning (no pen).
- Use the checklist (tick or circle).
- Pick 1-2 focus areas only.
- Use 1-2 of the sample comments at the end.

STEP 1 - QUICK MARKING CHECKLIST (5 AREAS, 1 MIN EACH)

1. IDEAS & CONTENT (What they're saying)

- Clear main idea / message?
- Interesting details / examples (not just "it was fun")?
- Stays on topic (doesn't wander off)?
- Has a clear problem & solution (narrative) OR clear position & reasons (persuasive)?

If NO: "Ideas" is one of the focus areas.

2. STRUCTURE & PARAGRAPHS (How it's organised)

- Clear beginning, middle, end?
- Each paragraph has one main idea?
- Easy to follow - not jumping around in time or argument?
- Uses linking words ("because", "however", "for example", "in conclusion")?

If NO: "Structure" is a focus area.

3. SENTENCES (How it sounds)

- Sentences start in different ways (not all "I", "Then", "And")?
- Mix of short and long sentences (not all the same length)?
- Mostly complete sentences (no huge run-ons / fragments)?
- Dialogue (if any) is punctuated sensibly?

If NO: "Sentences" is a focus area.

4. VOCABULARY & DETAIL (Word choice)

- Avoids overusing "good, bad, nice, very, really"?
- Uses some specific verbs ("stomped", "whispered", "rushed") instead of "went / said / did"?
- Uses adjectives and/or 5-senses detail (what things looked / sounded / felt like)?
- Any ambitious words used correctly?

If NO: "Vocab / detail" is a focus area.

5. EDITING (Clean-up)

- Capital letters for names, "I", starts of sentences?
- Full stops / question marks / exclamation marks used?
- Spelling of simple words is mostly correct (there, their, they're / your, you're)?
- Title or heading written?

If NO: "Editing" is a focus area.

PICK YOUR TOP 2

Circle only two to talk about:

■ My focus for this piece:

- IDEAS / CONTENT
- STRUCTURE / PARAGRAPHS
- SENTENCES
- VOCAB / DETAIL
- EDITING

STEP 2 - 5 READY-MADE COMMENT TEMPLATES

Use 1-2 per piece. Fill in the blanks with something specific you saw.

1. Ideas / Content

What you did well:

"Your main idea is clear - you showed that [insert main idea, e.g. 'teamwork is important']."

Next step:

"Next time, add one more specific example of [e.g. when the character showed teamwork / when this problem happens in real life] so your message feels stronger."

2. Structure / Paragraphs

What you did well:

"Your beginning grabbed my attention when you [e.g. started with a question / started in the middle of the action]."

Next step:

"Try to group your ideas so each paragraph has one main point. For example, keep all the ideas about [e.g. 'the problem'] together, and then a new paragraph for [e.g. 'how it was solved']."

3. Sentences

What you did well:

"Some of your sentences flowed really nicely - especially [quote or paraphrase a good one]."

Next step:

"A lot of sentences start with ['I' / 'Then' / 'And']. Try changing 3 of them so they start with a time word / an -ing verb / a feeling (e.g. 'Suddenly...', 'Shaking with fear...', 'After the game...')."

4. Vocabulary & Detail

What you did well:

"I liked your word choice when you wrote [e.g. 'the thunder growled'] - it helped me picture the scene."

Next step:

"Choose 2 sentences and upgrade one word in each. Swap ['nice', 'good', 'very big'] for a more precise word (e.g. 'massive', 'fragile', 'furious')."

5. Editing

What you did well:

"Your writing was easy to read - most of the sentences were punctuated correctly."

Next step:

"Before you say you're finished, do one slow 'edit line': read with your finger and fix capital letters, full stops and one spelling mistake. I've circled a place where you can start."

7-MINUTE MARKING FLOW (FOR PARENTS)

2 min - Read once for meaning (no red pen).

3 min - Checklist: tick each box, circle top 2 focus areas.

2 min - Comments:

Write 3 quick bullets:

1x What worked ("Star")

1-2x Next steps ("Arrow") using the templates above.

That's it. No essays from you - just:

■ "Here's what you did well."

⇒ "Here's 1-2 things to improve next time."

Use the same sheet every time so your child sees the same five areas and starts to self-check their own work.