

30-Minute Sentence Focus Analysis Checklist

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Purpose: This printable checklist helps you analyze the information structure of sentences before, while, and after reading — in under 30 minutes. It's designed for English teachers who want to help learners notice where the focus is, what's new vs. given, and how emphasis shapes meaning.

The 3-Stage Checklist

Stage	Key Action	Guiding Questions	Classroom Tips
Before Reading	Predict possible focus points based on title and first lines.	What is already known? What seems likely to be 'new' information?	Ask learners to underline their prediction and check later while reading.
While Reading	Identify where the energy of meaning lies in each sentence.	Where would you pause naturally when reading aloud? Which word carries the main stress or 'news'?	Highlight focus words; discuss why the writer placed the new idea there.
After Reading	Re-express key sentences with intentional focus shifts.	How does meaning change when you move the focus?	Use pair-work echo practice: students read the same sentence with different emphases.

60-Second Mini-Rubric & Reflection Notes

Criterion	Excellent (2 pts)	Partial (1 pt)	Needs Work (0 pt)
Identifies correct focus word(s)	Yes – clear and justified	Partial – identified but not justified	No – incorrect or missing
Explains 'why' using linguistic cues	Yes – refers to sentence position / stress / logic	Partial – vague explanation	No – missing explanation
Links to paragraph meaning	Yes – shows how focus adds to overall message	Partial – mentions partially	No – off-topic or unclear

Total: ____ / 6 points (Target: 4+ = satisfactory understanding)

Quick Notes:

- Encourage self-reflection after every text: Where did I feel the stress naturally falls? Why?
- Use this sheet as part of a weekly reading-speaking cycle.
- Combine it with the companion article [How Sentence Information Structure Improves Reading Comprehension] on GranTeach Blog for further examples.

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