

Activity 1 Selective Highlighting



Selective Highlighting to Identify What Is Important

Selective highlighting can be used across the curriculum to help students organize what they are reading and identify what is important. In this activity, students consider main ideas and their supporting details.

Learning Objectives

- Identify and discriminate between main ideas and supporting details
- Use selective highlighting to indicate the key words and phrases that point to the main idea or supporting details

Getting Ready

- Select an eBook
- Connect your laptop or computer to the whiteboard
- Reproduce copies of the "Identifying the Main Idea" worksheet

eBook Learning Activity

1. Have students check out and independently read the selected eBook. Allow time, depending upon how many copies of the eBook title are available. [Reminder – one student can read one copy of a title at a given time; other students would need to wait until the copy is checked in before checking it out to read. If your school has purchased multiple copies of the title, more students can read the same book concurrently.]
2. Project the eBook on the whiteboard. Tell the students they are going to use selective highlighting to focus on the main ideas in the book. Tell them that in selective highlighting, the objective is to highlight only the key words or phrases that indicate the focus of what you are looking for – in this case, main ideas.
3. Model for the students by moving through the first several pages of the book and selectively highlighting words or phrases that are among the main ideas of the book. Explain your choices, discuss them with the students and ask for any questions. [Reminder – be sure to link your highlights to a note if you want to refer to or use them for multiple sessions. If you do not link highlighted text to a note and quit the Reader, when you launch the eBook again, your former highlights will be lost.]
4. For guided practice, continue to move through the next few pages of the book, asking for volunteers to suggest other words and phrases to selectively highlight that reflect main ideas.
5. Have students work individually or in pairs, check out the selected eBook and selectively highlight the main ideas of the book. Remind them that they are to highlight only the key and most important words and phrases that indicate the main ideas of the book. Have them use the Notes feature to indicate the main idea being supported by the word or phrase. [Remind students to link their highlights to a note in order to save them for later reference and use.]
6. Distribute the "Identifying the Main Idea" worksheet. Have students or pairs identify each of the main ideas and then the details to support them.
7. Have students or pairs report back to the whole class.

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Additional Ideas and Alternate Grouping Suggestions

- Selective highlighting can be used across the curriculum. Try this activity with other concepts and topics, e.g. opinions vs. facts, problems and solutions, key vocabulary, etc.
- Use student response systems integrated with a whiteboard to receive immediate feedback regarding whether students are correctly identifying the elements being studied, e.g. main idea versus supporting details. For example, highlight the word or phrase and ask students to respond “yes” or “no” to indicate if it is a main idea. [Alternately, create two sets of flashcards so that each student has one of each color. Label them according to the activity, e.g. YES and NO, FACT or FICTION, etc.
- There are other elements in a book beyond the story that help the reader identify the main idea. Discuss some of these with students — examples are book titles and chapter headings, pictures and captions, charts and graphs, etc. Have students identify some of these elements that point to the main ideas of the book.
- Have students form groups and have each group select or be assigned a different eBook on a shared topic or theme, e.g. historical eras. Have each group identify the main events of the era. Then have them selectively highlight words and phrases to indicate supporting details about each event. Where they highlight supporting details, they should add a note to indicate the key event they describe. Then have each group present to the whole class, using the eBook and a whiteboard, presenting the key events of the era and pointing out selectively highlighted text with supporting details about each.

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Identifying the Main Idea

Name: _____

Supporting Details

