

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Backpack Beat Answer Key

Sample Key Word Stress (answers may vary slightly but should preserve meaning):

- **Maya** packed her **backpack** **quickly** because the **school bus** was almost at the **corner**.
- She **zipped** up her **jacket**, grabbed her **lunchbox**, and **ran** out the **door**.
- The **morning air** was **chilly**, and her **breath** made little **clouds** as she **hurried** down the **street**.
- When the **bus** finally **stopped**, she **climbed** on and **smiled** at her **best friend**, who had **saved** her a **seat**.

Comprehension Answers:

1. **A lunchbox and her backpack.**
2. **It made little clouds.**
3. **Her best friend.**

Teacher Notes / Guide

- **Purpose:** Word stress practice trains students to highlight **content words** (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) while softening **function words** (articles, prepositions, pronouns). This creates a natural, conversational rhythm in reading.
- **Implementation Tips:**
  - Model one sentence with flat reading, then model it again with stressed key words. Ask students which sounds more natural.
  - Have students clap or tap while saying stressed words to feel the rhythm.
  - Encourage students to pair up and listen for whether their partner stressed the right words.
- **Differentiation:**
  - Struggling readers can be given pre-underlined passages.
  - Advanced readers can create their own short paragraph and swap with a partner for stress marking.
- **Extension Idea:** Record students reading the passage twice: once flat, once with word stress, and have them compare recordings to notice improvement.