

Detective Max: The Case of the Missing Snack

Learning objective: To use clues from a text to make inferences about a character's feelings and actions.

Read the opening sentence. Use the prompts below to write your own mystery story. Remember, don't tell the reader everything—give them clues so they can infer what is happening!

Max the monkey stared at the empty plate where his banana had been, noticing a trail of small, sticky footprints leading towards the garden gate.

Word bank: suddenly · perhaps · I noticed that · this suggests · carefully · suspiciously · meanwhile · consequently

1. Setting the Scene: Where is Max and how does he feel? (Start with: Max stood in the...)

2. The First Clue: What does Max find next? Describe a clue that tells us who might have taken the snack. (Start with: As he followed the trail, he spotted...)

3. Meeting a Suspect: Max finds a friend. What are they doing that looks suspicious? (Start with: Suddenly, he came across...)

4. The Evidence: What is the character wearing or holding that gives them away? (Start with: Max narrowed his eyes when he saw...)

5. The Reveal: How does Max know for sure who did it? (Start with: 'I know it was you because...')

6. The Resolution: How is the problem solved? (Start with: In the end, Max decided to...)

Extension challenge: Can you add a 'red herring'? This is a clue that misleads the reader into thinking the wrong character is the thief!