

Mastering Punctuation with Pip the Bookworm

Learning objective: To use brackets, dashes, or commas to indicate parenthesis, and to use semicolons to mark boundaries between independent clauses.

Read the passage about Pip's library adventure carefully. Use your knowledge of Year 5 punctuation rules to identify where commas, dashes, brackets, or semicolons should be placed. Rewrite the sentences or insert the punctuation where required to improve clarity and flow.

Pip the bookworm who is the smallest librarian in the forest spends his days organising scrolls. He loves reading dusty old books because they contain ancient wisdom; his favourite stories are about brave explorers. Pip decided to reorganise the science section—a massive task for such a tiny creature—with great enthusiasm. He carefully placed the heavy encyclopaedias (which were covered in golden dust) on the bottom shelf. The library was silent; Pip felt completely at peace.

Word bank: Parenthesis · Clause · Semicolon · Em-dash · Clarification · Independent

1. Identify the parenthesis in the third sentence. Explain why brackets were used here instead of commas. (2 marks)

2. In the first sentence, 'who is the smallest librarian in the forest' is a relative clause. Add a pair of commas to correctly punctuate this sentence. (2 marks)

3. The author uses a semicolon in the second sentence. Justify why a semicolon is more effective here than a full stop. (2 marks)

4. Look at the phrase: 'a massive task for such a tiny creature'. Rewrite this sentence using a pair of commas to show the parenthesis instead of the dashes. (2 marks)

5. Compare and contrast the effect of using an em-dash versus using brackets. When might an author choose one over the other? (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Pip's magical forest library, including a shelf of ancient books and a cosy reading nook, ensuring you label one item using a sentence that contains a parenthetical phrase.



Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph describing a day in the life of another BookFlik character (e.g., Nova or Max). You must include at least one semicolon to join two independent clauses and a pair of dashes to provide extra information about the character.