

## Mastering the Stage: Writing a Playscript

*Learning objective: To identify and use the features of a playscript, including character names, stage directions, and dialogue.*

Read the scene below involving Max the monkey and Pip the caterpillar. Use the passage to answer the questions, paying close attention to how the layout of a playscript differs from a story.

SCENE 1: The Great Library Tree

[Max is sitting at a wooden desk with a stack of maths books. He is tapping his pencil against his chin, looking frustrated. Pip crawls onto the desk, carrying a tiny magnifying glass.]

MAX: (Sighing loudly) I cannot work out how many acorns we need for the winter festival, Pip. It is a tricky calculation!

PIP: (Smiling and pointing to a book) Have you tried grouping them into tens, Max? It makes the addition much easier.

MAX: (Eyes widening) That is brilliant! You are a genius, Pip! Let us start again.

[Max begins writing quickly in his notebook while Pip watches happily.]

*Word bank: stage directions · dialogue · character · colons · brackets · scene*

**1. Identify two features of a playscript used in the passage above that you would not normally find in a standard storybook. (2 marks)**

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**2. What is the purpose of the information written inside the square brackets? Explain why they are helpful for an actor. (2 marks)**

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**3. Looking at the dialogue, what punctuation mark is used to separate the character's name from the words they are speaking? (1 mark)**

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**4. Imagine Max and Pip find a new challenge. Write one line of dialogue for Max and include a stage direction in brackets to show how he is feeling. (2 marks)**

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**5. Why do you think playscripts use names on the left-hand side instead of using speech marks (inverted commas)? (2 marks)**

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**Draw: Draw a sketch of what the 'Great Library Tree' looks like based on the scene. Include Max at his desk and Pip crawling nearby with his magnifying glass.**



*Extension challenge: Choose a favourite fairy tale or fable you know. Rewrite the opening paragraph of that story as a playscript, remembering to include at least two characters, stage directions for their movements, and clear dialogue.*