Max’s Mathematical Word Mysteries: A Verbal Reasoning Challenge

Learning objective: To develop verbal reasoning skills by identifying patterns, relationships between words, and logical deductions.

Read the following passage carefully. Use the clues provided to solve the puzzles. Think logically about how words relate to each other through synonyms, antonyms, and categories.

Max the monkey is busy organising his collection of mystery boxes. He loves to label them with words that describe their contents. He has discovered that some words are opposites, some mean the same thing, and some describe how objects behave or move. Max needs your help to finish his labelling system so he can find his favourite snacks quickly. He reminds you: 'A puzzle is just a story waiting for the right word to finish it!'

Word bank: Ascend · Descending · Gigantic · Minuscule · Velocity · Pace · Sturdy · Fragile

1. If 'Ascend' is to 'Climb', then 'Descending' is to what? Explain the relationship between these word pairs. (2 marks)

2. Max has two boxes. One is 'Gigantic' and the other is 'Minuscule'. If a mountain is gigantic, what is a pebble? Justify your choice using the word bank. (2 marks)

3. Look at the words 'Velocity' and 'Pace'. Are these synonyms (words that mean the same) or antonyms (words that mean the opposite)? Give a reason for your answer. (2 marks)

4. Max finds a glass jar and a stone statue. He labels the statue 'Sturdy'. What word from the bank should he use for the glass jar? Explain why this is the most logical choice. (2 marks)

5. If a squirrel moves with high velocity, how would you describe a snail's movement compared to the squirrel? Use one of the words from the bank to complete the comparison. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw two of Max’s boxes side-by-side: one labelled 'Gigantic' and one labelled 'Minuscule'. Show what might be inside each box to represent those words.

Extension challenge: Challenge: Imagine Max finds a new word: 'Ephemeral'. Research or deduce its meaning. Write a short paragraph explaining what might happen if a 'Sturdy' object was treated as if it were 'Ephemeral'. Justify your reasoning using scientific or logical principles.