

Max's Punctuation Puzzle: Colons and Semicolons

Learning objective: To use colons to introduce a list and semicolons to link closely related independent clauses.

Max the monkey is organising his fruit shop, but he has jumbled up his punctuation! Read the sentences below. For each one, decide if it needs a colon (:) to introduce a list or a semicolon (;) to join two independent clauses. Write the correct punctuation mark in the box and complete the sentence if required.

Word bank: colon · semicolon · independent · list · clause · punctuation

1. Max has three favourite items to sell in his shop [] apples, bananas and juicy pears. Explain why you chose the colon. (2 marks)

2. The sun was setting behind the trees [] Max decided it was time to pack away his fruit crates. Why is a semicolon the best choice here? (2 marks)

3. Create your own sentence using a colon to introduce a list of items you might buy at a market for under £5. (2 marks)

4. The market was very busy today [] many customers wanted to buy the fresh produce. Insert the correct punctuation and explain your choice. (2 marks)

5. Max needs to buy supplies [] a new apron, a wooden sign and a set of scales. Why must we use a colon here instead of a full stop? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Max the monkey standing in his fruit shop. Above his shop sign, draw a large colon and a semicolon to show he has finished his grammar lesson!



Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph about a busy day at the market. You must include at least one colon to introduce a list of items and one semicolon to connect two related sentences.