

The Master Storyteller's Challenge with Max and Zara

Learning objective: To evaluate and apply advanced creative writing techniques, including figurative language, show-not-tell, and atmospheric description.

Max the monkey has found a series of tricky writing puzzles, while Zara the zebra wants you to paint a picture with your words. Answer the questions to prove your mastery of narrative craft.

Answer Key: 1.C, 2.True, 3.False, 4.Onomatopoeia, 5.B, 6.True, 7.A, 8.Personification, 9.False, 10.Hyperbole.

Word bank: Metaphor · Personification · Alliteration · Onomatopoeia · Hyperbole · Adverbial · Atmosphere · Vocabulary

1. Max asks: Which sentence uses 'show-not-tell' to describe a nervous character? A) He felt very worried. B) He was scared of the test. C) He drummed his fingers rhythmically against the desk, his gaze darting to the clock. D) He was really nervous. (1 mark)

2. True or False: A metaphor states that one thing IS another thing to create a vivid image, rather than saying it is 'like' something. (1 mark)

3. True or False: Using a wide range of synonyms for the word 'said' (e.g., whispered, bellowed, murmured) is a poor way to improve your writing. (1 mark)

4. What is the term for a word that phonetically imitates the sound it describes, such as 'crackle' or 'whoosh'? (1 mark)

5. Zara asks: Which of these is an example of alliteration? A) The bright sun shone. B) Silver stars shimmered silently. C) The cat sat on the mat. D) Fast as a cheetah. (1 mark)

6. True or False: Fronted adverbials are used to describe how, where, or when an action takes place and are usually followed by a comma. (1 mark)

7. Which phrase creates the most effective atmosphere? A) The mist clung to the twisted branches like a spectral blanket. B) It was a foggy day in the woods. C) The trees looked scary in the fog. D) The woods were very misty and dark. (1 mark)

8. Identify the technique in this sentence: 'The wind whistled a lonely tune through the empty hallway.' (1 mark)

9. True or False: Including 'I' or 'me' is always necessary in third-person narrative writing. (1 mark)

10. What technique is used in the sentence: 'I have told you a million times to tidy your desk!'? (1 mark)

Draw: Draw a setting for a fantasy story. Include three hidden 'story clues'—for example, a glowing key, a map tucked into a book, or a mysterious footprint—that a writer could use to start a mystery story.



Extension challenge: 1. Explain why 'show-not-tell' is more effective than simply stating a character's emotions. 2. Compare and contrast a simile and a metaphor; provide an original example of each. 3. Justify why an author might choose to start a paragraph with a fronted adverbial of time. 4. What might happen to the tone of a story if you swapped all the gentle, soft verbs for harsh, aggressive ones? 5. Write a short paragraph (50-70 words) describing a rainy morning using at least one metaphor and one piece of personification. 6. If you were writing a story about a hidden treasure, what sensory details would you include to make the reader feel like they were standing in the room?