

Max's Market Mystery: Mastering Speech Marks

Learning objective: To use inverted commas (speech marks) accurately to punctuate direct speech, including the use of reporting clauses and appropriate punctuation.

Max the monkey is helping at the local fruit market, but he has forgotten to punctuate his customers' requests! Below are six speech bubbles. Your task is to rewrite each sentence using correct speech marks, a comma before the closing speech mark (unless it ends with a question or exclamation mark), and a capital letter to start the spoken word. Remember to add a reporting clause after the speech to tell us who is speaking.

Word bank: shouted · whispered · exclaimed · muttered · replied · asked · enquired · grumbled

1. 1. i would like three shiny red apples please (Add a reporting clause using 'asked') (2 marks)

2. 2. these bananas are perfectly ripe (Add a reporting clause using 'exclaimed') (2 marks)

3. 3. how much do these oranges cost (Add a reporting clause using 'enquired') (2 marks)

4. 4. i only have two pounds and fifty pence (Add a reporting clause using 'muttered') (2 marks)

5. 5. please can i have a bag for my shopping (Add a reporting clause using 'asked') (2 marks)

6. 6. that is a wonderful selection of fruit (Add a reporting clause using 'replied') (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene at the market showing Max the monkey handing a basket of fruit to a customer. Include a speech bubble for Max that contains a perfectly punctuated sentence using speech marks.



Extension challenge: Greater Depth Challenge: 1. Explain why we use a comma inside the speech marks before the reporting clause. 2. Compare and contrast the effect of using the word 'shouted' versus 'whispered' in a reporting clause. 3. Justify why a question mark must be placed inside the speech marks rather than replacing them. 4. What might happen to the meaning of a sentence if the speech marks were moved or omitted entirely? 5. Write a short paragraph featuring a dialogue between Max and another character (e.g., Pip the caterpillar) where the reporting clause comes before the speech. 6. Construct a complex sentence where the speech is interrupted by the reporting clause (e.g., 'I think,' said Max, 'that we should buy these.') and explain the punctuation rules you applied.