

Max's Maths Mystery: Mastering Speech Marks

Learning objective: To use inverted commas (speech marks) correctly to punctuate direct speech in a narrative context.

Max the monkey is investigating a series of missing numbers! Use the template below to draft a dialogue between Max and his friend Leo the lion as they solve the mystery. Remember: start speech with an opening inverted comma, include the spoken words, and place a closing inverted comma after the final piece of punctuation inside the speech. Use a reporting clause (like 'said Max' or 'whispered Leo') to tell us who is speaking.

Word bank: exclaimed · whispered · replied · questioned · interrupted · shouted · explained · inverted commas · reporting clause

1. Max discovers a clue. Write a sentence where Max speaks to Leo about the mystery using opening and closing speech marks. (2 marks)

2. Leo responds with a brave suggestion. Ensure you include a comma or question mark inside your speech marks before the reporting clause. (2 marks)

3. Max finds the missing number. Write a sentence using speech marks to show Max's excitement when he shouts his discovery. (2 marks)

4. Explain why it is important to include a reporting clause after the speech marks in a piece of narrative writing. (3 marks)

5. Compare and contrast the punctuation used when a character asks a question versus when they make a statement inside speech marks. (4 marks)

6. Justify your answer: If the reporting clause comes before the speech, where should the comma be placed? (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine a third character, Pip the bookworm, joins the scene. Write a short paragraph of dialogue featuring three characters speaking, ensuring each new speaker begins a new line and uses correct punctuation for all direct speech.