

Max's Punctuation Puzzle: The Case of the Missing Marks

Learning objective: To accurately use and apply apostrophes for possession and contraction, and to demonstrate proficiency in using commas in a list.

Max the monkey has been busy organising his collection of mathematical tools, but he has forgotten to use his punctuation! Read the sentences below. Some need an apostrophe for possession (showing who owns an item), some need an apostrophe for contraction (shortening two words), and others need commas to separate items in a list. Rewrite each sentence correctly using the required punctuation.

Word bank: possession · contraction · comma · apostrophe · plural

1. Max found his friends items: a ruler a protractor a compass and a calculator. (Add the missing commas). (2 marks)

2. The monkeys tail was very long. (Add the apostrophe to show that the tail belongs to the monkey). (1 mark)

3. Max said it is time to solve the puzzle. (Rewrite the sentence using a contraction for 'it is'). (1 mark)

4. Explain why the apostrophe in 'the monkey's tail' is different from the apostrophe in 'it's'. Justify your answer using the terms 'possession' and 'contraction'. (3 marks)

5. Compare and contrast: Why is a comma necessary when writing a list, but an apostrophe is necessary when writing about ownership? (3 marks)

6. What might happen if a writer forgot to include apostrophes in their work? How would this change the reader's understanding of the text? (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Max the monkey in his workshop, surrounded by his mathematical tools. Label three items in your drawing using a list with commas (e.g., 'a shiny compass, a wooden ruler, and a yellow pencil').



Extension challenge: Write a short, three-sentence story about Pip the bookworm using at least one contraction, one possessive apostrophe, and a list of three items separated by commas.