

Mastering the Apostrophe: Possession and Contraction

Learning objective: To use apostrophes for singular and plural possession, and to use apostrophes to mark where letters have been omitted in contractions.

Read each task carefully. Ensure your apostrophes are placed correctly to show either ownership or missing letters. Pay close attention to whether the noun is singular or plural.

Max the monkey and his friends are preparing for the grand library opening. Max is organising the books, while Ellie the elephant is checking the historical records. Pip the caterpillar is busy categorising the new arrivals, and Zara the zebra is painting the mural to decorate the walls.

Word bank: Max's · Maxes · children's · childrens' · don't · shouldn't · teachers' · teacher's

1. Rewrite these sentences using an apostrophe for singular possession: 'The tail of the monkey was twitching' and 'The notebook belonging to Pip was full of notes.' (2 marks)

2. Explain why the apostrophe moves in these two phrases: 'The teacher's desk' (one teacher) and 'The teachers' desk' (many teachers). How does the position change the meaning? (3 marks)

3. Change these formal phrases into contractions using an apostrophe: 'do not', 'could not', 'I am', and 'it is'. (2 marks)

4. Identify the error in this sentence and rewrite it correctly: 'The two dogs's bones were buried in the garden.' Justify why your correction is accurate. (3 marks)

5. Write a sentence about Zara the zebra using a plural possessive apostrophe (e.g., the zebra's stripes vs the zebras' habitat). (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene where Max the monkey is labelling items in the library. Include at least three items that belong to different characters, using labels like 'Pip's bookmark' or 'Ellie's glasses' to demonstrate your understanding of possessive apostrophes.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are writing a story about Nova the owl. Write a short paragraph (4-6 sentences) describing her stargazing equipment. You must include at least two examples of contractions and two examples of possessive apostrophes. Afterwards, reflect: what might happen to the meaning of your sentences if you accidentally misplaced the apostrophe?