

The Great Forest Debate: Mastering Speech Marks

Learning objective: To use inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech accurately, whilst demonstrating an understanding of dialogue structure in a narrative context.

Max the monkey and Leo the lion are debating how to organise the forest library. Below are six strips of dialogue. Your task is to correctly punctuate each sentence using inverted commas, commas, and appropriate end-of-speech punctuation. Ensure that the reporting clause (e.g., 'said Max') is separated correctly from the spoken words.

Word bank: inverted commas · reporting clause · dialogue · punctuation · speech · narrative

1. 1. max said we should organise the books by colour because it looks beautiful (2 marks)

2. 2. leo replied with a gentle sigh that is a creative idea but it makes finding specific stories very difficult (2 marks)

3. 3. i suggest we use an alphabetical system instead declared the wise lion (2 marks)

4. 4. max scratched his head and asked but will that be boring for the younger animals (2 marks)

5. 5. it might be challenging agreed leo but it is the most efficient way to manage our collection (2 marks)

6. 6. max shouted let us start sorting them right now (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene where Max and Leo are standing in front of a giant, messy bookshelf. Use speech bubbles to show them discussing a compromise between using colours and using the alphabet.



Extension challenge: Explain why it is important to include a reporting clause when writing a story. Compare and contrast how the meaning of a sentence changes if you place the reporting clause at the beginning, middle, or end of the direct speech. Justify your answer by rewriting one of the sentences above in two different ways.