

# Mastering Dialogue: A Writing Scaffold with Max the Monkey

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

Help Max the Monkey record his mathematical discoveries! Use this scaffold to write a short dialogue between Max and Nova the Owl as they calculate the stars in the night sky. Remember: start new lines for new speakers, use a comma before the closing speech mark, and ensure your reporting clause starts with a lowercase letter if it follows the speech.

"I have calculated exactly forty-two constellations in this sector," Max stated, adjusting his spectacles.

*Word bank: exclaimed · calculated · whispered · inquired · replied · meanwhile · consequently · furthermore · remarked · pondered*

**1. Nova responds to Max's discovery with a scientific observation. Write her response using inverted commas, starting with a reporting clause. How does she justify her scientific curiosity? (3 marks)**

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**2. Max excitedly identifies a pattern in the stars. Write a sentence containing speech that includes an exclamation mark inside the inverted commas. Explain why he uses an exclamation mark here. (3 marks)**

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**3. Compare and contrast how Max and Nova speak about the night sky. Use a paragraph that includes a split quotation where the reporting clause is in the middle of the speech. (4 marks)**

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**4. What might happen if the pair discovered a 'missing' star? Write a dialogue exchange between them, ensuring you use a new line for each speaker. (4 marks)**

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**5. Justify your answer: Why is it important for a writer to use a new line every time a different character speaks in a story? (2 marks)**

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**6. Creative Extension: Imagine they find a star shaped like a price tag that costs £5.50. Write a short, humorous dialogue about who should pay for it. (4 marks)**

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*Extension challenge: Write a short narrative paragraph describing the setting of the observatory. Within your paragraph, embed a conversation between Max and Nova that reveals a complex mathematical problem they are struggling to solve. Challenge yourself to use a variety of reporting verbs instead of just 'said'.*