Max’s Roman Numeral Challenge

Learning objective: To read and write Roman numerals up to 100 and understand their value.

Read the information below about how the Romans counted. Use your knowledge to help Max the monkey solve these number puzzles.

Max the monkey has found an old stone tablet in the forest! It uses letters instead of our usual numbers. The Romans used seven main letters to build their numbers. To make a number, they added them together. For example, VI is 5 + 1, which makes 6. If a smaller letter comes before a larger one, you subtract it, like IV, which is 5 - 1 = 4. Max needs your help to translate these ancient codes into our modern numbers so he can finish his maths puzzle.

Word bank: I = 1 · V = 5 · X = 10 · L = 50 · C = 100 · Symbol · Value

1. Max sees the Roman numeral 'VII' on a stone. What is this number in our modern number system? (1 mark)

2. Write the Roman numeral for the number 12. Show your working out. (2 marks)

3. If Max has XX coins and spends V coins, how many does he have left? Write your answer as a Roman numeral. (2 marks)

4. Explain why the Roman numeral 'IV' is not '1 + 5'. (2 marks)

5. Convert these Roman numerals into modern numbers: a) XVI, b) XL, c) XXXV (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a Roman-style stone tablet that shows the number 25 using Roman numerals. Decorate the edges with ivy and leaves.

Extension challenge: Max has £40 in his savings jar. If he receives another £10 for his birthday, how would you write his new total of £50 using a Roman numeral? Can you find out which letter represents 500?