

Direct speech

Based on the story *My own special donkey*

We use inverted commas to show you when someone is speaking, for example, Stephanie turned to her father. 'Daddy, you didn't come to read me a story last night. Why not?'

We open the inverted commas just before the person starts to speak and close them just after the person stops speaking. If the words that have been spoken are followed by words about who was speaking, we put a comma and not a full stop at the end of the spoken words. For example, 'I had to go to a meeting about the Donkey Sanctuary,' her dad said.

Activities

1. The section below comes from the story. Fill in all the necessary **inverted comma** signs.
2. Find the sentences with commas when the person stopped speaking and underline the commas. Do not underline all the commas, but only the ones at the end of the spoken words. Check your work with a partner.

What is a sanctuary, Dad? asked Stephanie.

It's a special place where donkeys are loved and looked after and where no-one can harm them, her dad said. The trouble is that they've run out of space at the Sanctuary. They can't take any new donkeys.

We have lots of space on our farm, Stephanie said. Couldn't we keep some?

I know Stephanie, but looking after donkeys takes work. I don't have the time.

But I can look after just one donkey! cried Stephanie.

Her father sighed and put down his coffee cup. It's not just a question of time Stephanie.

A donkey also costs money, her mother said as she gave Stephanie a slice of toast.

You can have all my pocket money, said Stephanie.

3. Fill in **the inverted commas** for the following sentences. Remember that you only use inverted commas when a person is speaking.

One day the dentist came to file Treasure's teeth with a black metal file. It was longer than her school ruler.

Why do you need to do that? Stephanie asked.

When a donkey grows older than twenty years his teeth grow very long, the dentist said. If you don't file his teeth he won't be able to eat. Then he could die. Stephanie was shocked and ran to tell her brother what she had just learnt.

Later Stephanie's dad said, I've booked the farrier for the horses. He might as well do Treasure's feet as well.

What does the farrier do Dad? Stephanie asked.

He'll check Treasure's feet. He'll see if his hooves are too long and if they are, he will file them down.

Oh no, not another file! cried Stephanie.

Don't worry, it doesn't hurt. Treasure's hooves are like your finger nails that keep growing and need to be filed or cut.

But Stephanie made sure she was at Treasure's side when the farrier came, so that she could comfort him if he became frightened.

4. **Writing Exercise:** Make up a conversation between you and your friend about your favourite pets. Remember to put in the inverted commas when you start to speak and at the end of your speaking.