

STORY CON

LESSON PLAN

Grades: **6th-12th**

*Adaptation: **3rd-5th**

Dialogue

Common Core Standard(s):CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.B,
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5

Materials Needed: 5 different colors of highlighter, crayon, or colored pencil; a current work in progress or a piece of writing in the revision stage.

Class Objective: I can find problems within the dialogue I write. I can fix dialogue problems.

Lesson Plan

DAY 1

1. Watch **Julie Wright's** class "**Dialogue: You know that thing you said that you will regret until you die?**"
2. Have students get out 5 different colors of highlighters (If highlighters are not available, you can use lighter color crayons or colored pencils in place of a highlighter). Explain that they are going to go through a piece they are revising to check it for the 5 things dialogue is supposed to do in the story.
3. Project the poster included below titled '5 Types of Dialogue Structure.' Tell students they are going to go through their manuscript/WIP and highlight the dialogue according to the part it plays in progressing their story forward. They should highlight it according to the colors on the poster.



STORY CON

4. Give them time to do this. They could work with a partner if needed or just do it individually. Challenge students to change dialogue if needed to have a range of dialogue types used in their story. Model how you could do this.
5. Give students time to fix their dialogue to have a range of dialogue structures used in their stories.

DAY 2

6. Go back to minute 40:35 in Julie's video. . Put up the poster titled, "What to Include in Dialogue." with the 3 questions on it. Do the activity she describes in the video. Pause at 43:23 to do the writing. After writing, listen to the next part and then finish by filling in the details and descriptions between the dialogue. This should get students warmed up for the writing they are going to do today.
7. Julie suggested some common problems often seen in amateur dialogue. (To review you could rewatch this portion of the video starting at minute 25:20) Today students are going to check their work for those things. Have students use the checklist titled, "Dialogue Issues", included below, to go back into their work in progress and find things that need to be fixed. You could print these off and give one to each student, or just project and have them check it off in their mind if they've looked for it.
8. Have students underline any sections they find in their manuscript that have one of these problems. Model how to do this with one or two papers written during the warm up activity at the beginning of the lesson.

DAY 3

9. Have students get out the WIP they marked up during the last couple of lessons. Rewatch video from minute 31:30. In this section of the video Julie gives some excellent suggestions for fixing dialogue. After each suggestion she gives, pause the video and have students look for



STORY CON

places in their WIP where they could use that suggestion to fix their dialogue. Just have students mark the place they want to use that suggestion with the symbol given on the poster titled, "Dialogue FIXED!" (You could project this or print it out for each student.)

10. When done with the section on suggestions for dialogue, give students time to go into their WIP and fix all the dialogue they have marked up. Challenge students to try all of the suggestions at some point within their WIP. But mostly, they just want their dialogue to ring true and be better than it was when they started.
11. When they think they have it fixed, have them read it out loud. This will give them a good indication if it sounds right. Reading dialogue out loud is the best way to find problems to fix. :-)

Printable worksheets/activities on next page



5 Types of Dialogue Structure

★ Move plot forward

★ Reveal character

★ Set the Story Tone

★ Alter Relationships

★ Increase Tension



What to Include in Dialogue

★ What do the characters
want?

★ How are their wants
different?

★ How does the dialogue create
an obstacle for them to
overcome?



DIALOGUE ISSUES!

- ☐ Backstory/ Info dump
- ☐ Using a name in the dialogue
- ☐ Using something other than 'said' in a tag
- ☐ Using description instead of tag

DIALOGUE ISSUES!








- ☐ Backstory/ Info dump
- ☐ Using a name in the dialogue
- ☐ Using something other than 'said' in a tag
- ☐ Using description instead of tag

DIALOGUE ISSUES!

- ☐ Backstory/ Info dump
- ☐ Using a name in the dialogue
- ☐ Using something other than 'said' in a tag
- ☐ Using description instead of tag



Dialogue FIXED!

-  **Use strong verbs**
-  **Show action instead of using a tag**
-  **Weave action, dialogue, and internal thought together**
-  **Change narrated dialogue into real dialogue**
-  **Check speech patterns**
-  **Stay true to the characters voice—fix when don't**
-  **Create tension: Have description or action conflict with dialogue**





STORY CON

SIMPLIFIED: *ALTERNATE ADAPTATION for younger audience:

Tweens (ages 9–12): 3rd– 5th

Common Core Standard(s): CCSS.ELA–LITERACY.W.3.B;

CCSS.ELA–LITERACY.W.5

Materials Needed: The worksheet titled, “Dialogue that POPS” either downloaded into google classroom or printed out for each student.

Class Objective: I can write dialogue like an author.

Students at this age are still learning how to create dialogue. This is a good time to show them the possibilities for how to write dialogue well from the very beginning.

ADAPTED LESSON PLAN:

1. Hand out the worksheet included below titled, “Dialogue that Pops!”
Explain that today they are going to play around with dialogue and see if they create something that sounds like what a true author would say.
2. Using the dialogue below, model how to do each of the suggestions Julie Wright gave for dialogue. After you model one, have the students try doing it with their dialogue. Go through each suggestion, modeling and having students try it.
3. After finishing the worksheet (this may take 1–3 days) have students go into a story they have written and try to fix the dialogue in some of the way Julie described. You could have them work with a partner while fixing their own stories. You could also print out the poster titled, “Dialogue FIXED!”, included above, and hang it up so students can refer to it in later writing sessions.

Teacher model with this passage:

“Let us go to the library,” Gabby said excitedly. .

“I am not going to go to the library,” Hank intoned.



STORY CON

I wonder why Hank doesn't want to come, Gabby thought. "But why, Hank?" Gabby sadly stated.

"Because I can not read." Hank said.

"But you can still go to the library, Hank," Sarah said wistfully.

"No," Hank shouted angrily. Hank was thinking that Sarah didn't understand him.



Dialogue that **POPS!**

Take this section of dialogue.

"Let us go to the beach," Sarah said.

"I'm not wanting to go to the beach," Tom said sadly.

"But why, Tom?" Sarah sadly stated. I wonder why Tom doesn't want to come Sarah thought.

"I have a broken arm, Sarah" Tom said.

"But you can still go to the beach, Tom" Sarah said wistfully.

"No," Tom shouted. Tom was thinking that Sarah didn't understand him.

Fix it in the following ways.

1. **Don't use character names in the dialogue.**
2. **Use strong verbs instead of 'ly' adverbs.**
3. **Show action instead of using a tag**
4. **Weave action, dialogue, and internal thought together**



5. Change narrated dialogue into real dialogue

6. Make speech true to the characters voice

7. Create tension: Have description or action conflict with dialogue



*EXTRA WRITING PRACTICE all ages (optional)

Editing Skills:

For extra writing practice and to reinforce today's topic you may assign students to work, in class or at home, on a [writing prompt](#) or to continue working on a page/chapter of their own novel or short story, applying the key techniques learned today. Set a timer for at least 15-30 minutes and write nonstop.

The papers can then be exchanged with other students for peer review with specific attention focused on the topic of the day. (Independent study students can form online/in person writing clubs for this type of activity or exchange with sibling/parent/tutor) This will enhance editing skills while simultaneously further ingrain the lesson at hand. My Tech High Students can join the MTH Writing Club or start their own with friends they meet at STORY CON or on the moderated TABC discord discussion board or other safe writing community.

Revising Skills:

When the papers are returned, students have the opportunity of fine tuning the skill of taking feedback and applying it to revision and rewrite of their manuscript.

Group Discussion/Reflection:

After rough draft and final draft are returned it may be helpful to share what was most helpful or difficult about the feedback and how it may have helped to improve their writing. (Independent study can do this via online/Zoom chat or live in a writing club setting)

- Encourage students to continue writing on weekends, holiday breaks and over the summer. Help organize after school clubs and extracurricular writing classes involving students who have a personal subscription or who are enrolled in a school licensed with a TABC Classroom Vault Subscription.

Extra Credit Opportunities:

Offer extra credit incentives for students who create & submit entries for the StoryCon Writing Contests to be recognized, awarded and potentially published. in the [TwEEN 1st Paragraph, Teen 1st Line, 1st Chapter, Teen Anthology, Poetry & Photography Cover Contests.](#) Submit at storycon.org contest tab.



STORY CON

**Offer additional make up credits to students who attend live [STORY CON](#) writing conferences. It's the largest teen writing conference in the nation, with master writing classes for Teens, Tweens & Educators taught by award winning authors.*

Educators: Earn relicensure & up to 5 hours graduate credits from SUU by attending Educator Base Camp. Bring a group for a free Educator Pass.*

- ☐ **FOLLOW UP!** Send me an email. I'd love to hear your feedback about how you use Classroom, suggested edits, what you like most about TABC Classroom, the contests & conference experiences & creative ways you incorporate it all into your curriculum.
sarah-noel@operationliteracy.org



- ☐ **Recommend** a friend or school to subscribe to [TABC Classroom](#) or attend [StoryCon.org](#) and "tell the teacher" (email me). sarah-noel@operationliteracy.org If they subscribe to STORYCON's TABC CLASSROOM™ Vault or Register to attend StoryCon you become an official "BOOK HERO!" We'd like to thank you for supporting our cause by gifting you a \$6 StoryCon Promo Code for the merch store or registration to a live event.

THANKS

*Visit [OperationLiteracy.org](#) to find out more about our next [STORYCON™](#) with [Educator Base Camp™](#), [Teen Author Boot Camp™](#) & [Tween Author Boot Camp™](#) the largest teen writing conference in the Nation! Attend our intensive writing conferences in person to learn from the masters, meet favorite authors and to be a part of a supportive writing community that will help students hone their writing skills, get published and boost their confidence. Join the discord server or start your own writing group or do TABC Classroom together with friends.

