

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Punctuating Dialogue - Practice

**DIALOGUE TAGS** → A general guide for professional use of ***“dialogue tags”*** is this:

- Use ***said*** no more than a third of the time.
- Use ***no dialogue tag*** about a third of the time.
- Use an alternate dialogue tag for the remaining third.

**For example:**

“Billy, you’re up to bat next,” Carol said.

“That’s an out for sure,” Derek complained.

“Derek, be nice.”

Billy rubbed the toe of his cleat in the dirt. “I don’t always strike out,” he muttered while stepping up to hit.

### Word Choice - “Dialogue Tags”

**Come up with 3 other ways of saying each of the following commonly used “dialogue tags”**

<i>Said.</i>	<i>Asked?`</i>	<i>Exclaimed!</i>
<i>Replied</i>	<i>Questioned</i>	<i>Screamed</i>

### Dialogue Punctuation Rules:

1. Indent a new paragraph when a different character will speak.
2. Capitalize the beginning of all new sentences and new quoted text (even if the quote appears in the middle of the sentence).
3. Add commas (***or ? or !***) at the end of quoted text before the quotation mark when it is followed by more non-dialogue writing. If the quote starts in the middle of the sentence you always need a comma to lead into the quote.
4. Always include full-stop punctuation ( . or ! or ? ) at the end of sentences (when in dialogue the punctuation should come before the quotation mark).
5. *Italicize* inner monologue to show that you are thinking inside the character’s head.

**Using the dialogue punctuation rules above, edit the following dialogue sentences...**

Only two of these sentences are perfect as they are. Put a star (\*\*\*) next to them.

1. "Run you fools" Gandalf gasped.
2. Bill wondered aloud, "Whose book is this, I found it in the laundry room?"
3. "To be, or not to be, that is the question" Hamlet stated as he paced back and forth .
4. Jim Hopper declared, "we should go fishing."
5. "This is the best day of my life" i screamed while hopping up and down in the middle of the school.
6. "Where are you going?" she asked.
7. "Who are you gonna call?" the ghostbuster questioned.
8. I'll be back! The terminator clarified.
9. Uh-oh. This can't be good. I think I am going to have to make a run for it! I thought in my head. *Before I begin running I am going to think about things in my head for a bit longer.* . Then, with my thoughts still racing I took off at the speed of light.

**Rewrite the following conversation using correct dialogue punctuation and improved "Dialogue Tags."**

Bob whispered "it's only a movie – calm down!" I quietly replied, "im sorry." When the lights came on, Bob said "It's time to go. You shouldn't have screamed. Now **there** leaving" he said. "But I can't help it"! I said while standing up to leave. "From now on," I said, "I'll try to be quiet." "let's just go home," Bob said as we left the theater.

***The Great Garbage Disaster - Example Student Narrative******FIND 3 of each!!!!***

1. Highlight “dialogue” in pink → underlined
2. Highlight simple dialogue tags in yellow → circle
3. \*\*\*Place a STAR next to dialogue with BLOCKING\*\*\*
4. Highlight *inner monologue* in green → :)

**Work on your WRITING FOR JUSTICE hooks or narrative you started yesterday when you finish the above**

“Yikes,” I said while looking at the garbage disaster that Red our dog had caused when he was left alone in our kitchen while rubbing my feet on our doormat.

Matt stated that, “We were all in this clean up together.”

All of us said, “Okay,” except for my little brother Sam who tried to convince us that his stomach hurt as he twirled his hair. *Ha!* I thought, *He wishes.*

”I really need to go sit down in my room,” he pleaded.

“Nope,” my mom said and yanked him toward a couple pieces of trash. Sam complained as usual but he couldn't fish himself out of this one so he started to work on a pile by the couch. We all dove into the fray on all fours and started to shoot the garbage into the trash, basketball style.

"Eww that's disgusting!" Elliot said while pulling out some half eaten fish skin from under Red's gray dog bed. "That was some bad fish skin." I nodded my agreement as he immediately tossed it into the trash can.

"AAAHH!!!! Red's gonna die!!!!" Sam shouted as he held up some empty chocolate wrappers that were on the carpet under the dinner table.

"Sam calm down," Mom begged. "That was Matt and I who ate the chocolate, not Red. Red's not gonna die, now will you please calm down."

"Wait, that means you ate my only Reeses and Hersheys! I HATE YOU!!!" Sam screamed, his face red with frustration. By now nobody was cleaning. We were all watching this unfold or being a part of it. Sam kept yelling and then he stomped upstairs as loud as an elephant. A door slammed, followed by silence. We all went back to trash patrol. As we were finishing up I was thinking about how selfishly Sam had been acting.

He treated our mom really badly, like how some leaders treat people who don't think like them. There were a lot of things that Sam could have done differently that day. *Wow... I never want to do that or be like that,* I said to myself.

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5. *Italicize* inner monologue to show that you are thinking inside the character's head.

**Using the dialogue punctuation rules above, edit the following dialogue sentences...**

Only **3** of these sentences are perfect as they are. Put a star (\*\*\*) next to them. **Edit the rest.**

1. Michael screamed, "Hip, hip, hooray!"
2. "I am the Snow Day Queen" Robin proudly declared.
3. "Please, NO MORE COWBELL!" The class screamed.
4. As he walked into class after a long weekend where he was unable to watch television, Michael looked a few students directly in the eye and sternly stated, "NO SPOILERS!"
5. With a mug of coffee in his hand and a smile on his face, John Mayer proudly announced, "today we will play with a giant parachute like we did in 1st grade!"

6.

“When are we going to get class snack?” whined every single student.

“Never!” Michael mocked, stuffing the last chip in his mouth.

“He is so dang rude!” announced Malian. “I mean what an absolute jerk!”

“Facts,” said Ada.

7. *That teacher of mine is so rude*, he pondered.

8. “I absolutely LOVE practicing dialogue punctuation rules!” said no student ever.

DIALOGUE PRACTICE

***BE MINDFUL OF YOUR DIALOGUE RULES IN YOUR HANDOUT***

**Dialogue Writing Prompt** → Pick any of the following to use as a prompt to practice writing dialogue.

You will write for 15 minutes... *capture a memorable moment (exciting, boring, awful, whatever... ) from core class using dialogue, or a random moment from today using dialogue...*

Include at least...

- two different people talking
- 3 different dialogue tags
- 1 moment of dialogue with blocking
- 1 moment of *inner monologue*

#### Dialogue Writing Moves

- Mix up how you use dialogue tags
- Consider using BLOCKING sometimes to show what the person is doing as they talk to bring your dialogue more alive
- *Inner monologue* → What is the character thinking?

#### Dialogue Punctuation Rules

Indent a new paragraph when a different character will speak.

Capitalize the beginning of all new sentences and the first letter within the "Dialogue."

Add commas (or ? or !) at the end of "quoted text," before the quotation mark. If the dialogue starts in the middle of the sentence, "You always need a comma to lead into dialogue!"

*Italicize* inner monologue to show that you are thinking inside the character's head.

#### Dialogue Punctuation Videos

[Cheesy, not super effective, but definitely attention grabbing basic dialogue rules](#)

[song](#) (2 minutes)

[Really effective, boring, but clear and detailed 5 minute dialogue punctuation rules video](#)

[Khan Academy - Dialogue Punctuation \(3 minutes\)](#)

## Dialogue Writing Practice

Dialogue Writing Moves	Dialogue Punctuation Rules
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mix up how you use dialogue tags</li><li>• Consider using BLOCKING sometimes to show what the person is doing as they talk to bring your dialogue more alive</li><li>• <i>Inner monologue</i> → What is the character thinking?</li></ul>	<p>Indent a new paragraph when a different character will speak.</p> <p>Capitalize the beginning of all new sentences and the first letter within the "Dialogue."</p> <p>Add commas (<b>or ? or !</b>) at the end of "quoted text," before the quotation mark. If the dialogue starts in the middle of the sentence, "You always need a comma to lead into dialogue!"</p> <p><i>Italicize</i> inner monologue to show that you are thinking inside the character's head.</p>

**Dialogue Writing Prompt** → Pick any of the following to use as a prompt to practice writing dialogue. You will write for 15 minutes...

*Re-capture the scene from Shrek using dialogue, create your own scene from Shrek using dialogue, capture a memorable moment (exciting, boring, awful, whatever... ) from core class using dialogue, or a random moment from today using dialogue...*