1. Focus

Explain Dialogue, Commas, and Quotation Marks

Say: In writing, authors often use dialogue when characters in a story are speaking. Dialogue is a conversation between two or more people or characters in a text. It is useful to realistic fiction writers and other writers as well. Quotation marks show the words that characters speak in the dialogue. Writers tell the names of speakers outside the quotation marks, unless it is already clear who is speaking. They use commas or other punctuation before closing quotation marks. Today we will learn about the use of commas and quotation marks to set quotations apart from the rest of a sentence in dialogue.

Model Using Dialogue, Commas, and Quotation Marks

Display the modeling text (without commas and quotation marks) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

Modeling Text

1. "I will check it out," Linda told Jake.
2. "I don’t think so," I said, taking her hand.

Advanced Preparation

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling and practice texts (without commas and quotation marks) onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. If necessary, copy the sentence frames from “Strategies to Support ELs” on chart paper.
2. Rehearse

Practice Placing Punctuation Around Dialogue

Display the practice text (without commas and quotation marks) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

“My name is Jake,” the boy said as he scooped some sand from the moat.
“I’m Cai,” I told him as I looked around for Tucker.

Practice Text

Say: In this dialogue, there are two people speaking, Jake and Cai. Work together with your partner to read these two sentences. Discuss which part of the text is spoken in each sentence and where each quotation mark and comma belongs.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Sentences with Dialogue

Invite students to share how they punctuated the sentences. Discuss their responses by asking the following questions:
• What is spoken in the sentence?
• Where do the quotation marks belong? Where does the comma go?

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that when we’re writing realistic fiction stories, dialogue can be an important part of the story. Stories are often more interesting when there is dialogue between characters. Remember to use quotation marks and commas when you are writing dialogue so that the reader knows when characters are speaking.

If you would like to give students additional practice recognizing and using dialogue, ask them to complete BLM 9.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share their answers to BLM 9. Provide corrective feedback as necessary.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning
Help beginning ELs learn how to recognize dialogue in the text. Prepare the following sentence frame:
“My name is ______,” said ______.
Help students read the dialogue and fill in their own names. Once students are familiar with the sentence structure, use pieces of macaroni to emphasize where the quotation marks are in the sentence.

Intermediate and Advanced
Pair EL students with fluent English speakers. Encourage students to work together to copy the following sentence two times.
My name is ______, said ______.
Ask each student to complete a sentence frame using their own name and then to put the quotation marks in the correct place in the dialogue.

All Levels
If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share this English/Spanish cognate: dialogue/el diálogo.