Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:
- Learn about punctuating dialogue with the speaker identified at the start or in the middle of a sentence.
- Practice punctuating dialogue with the speaker identified at the start or in the middle of a sentence.
- Share sentences with correctly punctuated dialogue.

Preparation

Materials Needed
- Chart paper and markers
- Dialogue, Commas, and Quotation Marks (BLM 10)
- Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text and practice text (without commas or quotation marks) onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson.

If you have English learners, you may also wish to copy the sentence frames used in “Strategies to Support ELs” onto chart paper.

1. Focus

Explain Dialogue with the Speaker Identified in Different Places

Say: 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. Writers use quotation marks—as well as commas and other punctuation—to set what a speaker says apart from the rest of a sentence. Sometimes a speaker is identified before a quotation. A comma and the opening quotation mark appear before what the speaker says. At other times, a speaker is identified in the middle of a sentence, and you need to add a comma and a closing quotation mark before the speaker is identified. You then add a comma and opening quotation mark to continue what is said. Today we will learn about punctuating quotations with speakers identified in different parts of a sentence.

Model Using Dialogue with the Speaker Identified in Different Places

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

1. “We had a great time at the zoo,” said Carlos.
2. “I’m glad,” said Nora, “that you had the chance to go.”
3. Jim said, “I liked the zoo, too.”

Modeling Text

Read sentence 1. Say: In this example of dialogue, I see the quotation marks appear around what Carlos says. He is identified at the end of the sentence, and a comma appears to tell readers there’s a pause before he is identified.

Read sentence 2. Say: In this example, the speaker is Nora. She is identified in the middle of the sentence. There is a comma and a closing quotation to signal that what she says is interrupted, and then there is another comma and an opening quotation mark where the quotation begins again. I also see that I do not capitalize the second part of the quotation because it is just continuing what Nora started to say before she was identified.

Read sentence 3. Say: In this example, the writer identifies the speaker before saying what the speaker says. There is a comma and then the quotation marks around the quotation. From this and the other examples, I can see how a writer uses commas and quotation marks to set apart what is spoken in dialogue.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Dialogue with the Speaker Identified in Different Places

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

1. “Next weekend,” said Jenna, “we are going on a picnic. Can you come with us?”
2. “I’ll have to ask my parents,” said Ana.
3. Steve said, “I hope I can come, too.”

Practice Text

Tell students that the practice text shows dialogue between three speakers, Jenna, Ana, and Steve. Invite partners to work together to insert commas and quotation marks to set what the characters say apart from the identification of the speakers.

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 where they placed the quotation marks and commas in the practice text. Discuss their responses by asking the following questions:

- Who is speaking in this sentence?
- Where do the quotation marks go? Where does the comma or commas go?
- How do commas and quotation marks help readers read dialogue?

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that we use quotation marks to set apart what a character says from the rest of a sentence. We learned that many sentences of dialogue also include a comma before a closing quotation mark to tell readers to pause before saying the name of the speaker. If a speaker is identified in the middle of a sentence, the quotation is closed and then reopened with punctuation marks. A speaker’s identification can also appear before a quotation. We will remember to use commas and quotation marks to help readers read the different parts of our sentences in dialogue.

If you would like to give students additional practice recognizing and using dialogue, ask them to complete BLM 10.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share their answers to BLM 10. Provide feedback as necessary.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Ask a student to tell how old he or she is. Then turn what the student says into dialogue and write it on chart paper, for example: “I am ten,” said Maria. Point out the quotation marks and the comma. Say: This is what Maria said. Maria said this. This is dialogue.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair EL students with fluent English speakers. Invite them to practice simpler dialogue with speakers identified after quotations.

Encourage them to work together to copy the following dialogue sentence frames. Invite them to complete each sentence and put in the quotation marks and commas in the correct places.

I like ______ said ______.
I do too said ______. I like it because ______.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: comma/la coma; dialogue/el diálogo.