

Punctuating Dialogue

When you write dialogue, be sure to punctuate it correctly so that your readers can see who is talking and where a line of dialogue begins or ends. The rules for using quotation marks, commas, and end marks of punctuation are listed below.

Use quotation marks before and after a dialogue. Place a period inside closing quotation marks.

"Peter and Esteban are joining us."

Place a comma inside the closing quotation marks when the attribution (e.g. *he said*) follows the quotation.

"Let's go," he said.

He said, "Come on, it'll be fun."

Use quotation marks around each part of a divided quotation. The attribution should end with a full stop unless the quotation is a sentence that has been divided in two.

"I'm not sure," she said. "It sounds suspicious."

Place a question mark or an exclamation point inside the quotation marks when it is part of the quotation.

"When will we be back?" she asked.

"Hooray!" said Pablo.

Start a new line when you move from one speaker to another.

"How close are we?" Ray asked.

"I think it's about seven miles to the top," replied Iris.

Practice Punctuating Dialogue

Revise each sentence below, adding quotation marks and other punctuation where necessary.

1. I couldn't wait to get here said Esteban.

2. Wouldn't it be wonderful watch the sunset Peter asked.

3. I'd love that said Gilda but we forgot to bring flashlights

4. Maybe you forgot to bring a flashlight said Carol. I never go hiking without one.

5. Hooray cheered Gilda. Does that mean we can stay?

6. Maybe we should ask Harry said Ray. He's the one with two backpacks.

7. Oh right said Harry. You know that the race was a tie.

8. Did someone say it was a tie?

9. Ray, how can you say that? You were a mile behind me!

10. Tan said I'm starving! Let's eat first and argue later, okay?
