

Writing Dialogue

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1. Use quotation marks to show a character's exact words.

"I have a dog named Dodger," Tam said.

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2. Use a comma, exclamation point, or question mark at the end of the character's statement. Put the punctuation mark inside the quotation marks.

"I can't find Dodger," Tam said.

"Let's look for him!" Marcella yelled.

Nick asked, "Where do you think he went?"

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3. Begin the character's statement or question with a capital letter.

"He ran away, I think," said Marcella.

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4. If the character's statement is interrupted with a speech tag, use a small letter to start the second part.

"I saw Dodger dash out the door," explained Nick, "and he raced across the yard."

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5. When a character makes two or more statements (complete sentences), use a capital letter to begin each sentence.

"He won't go far," Tam said. "Let's split up and look for him."

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6. Start a new paragraph each time a different character speaks.

"You look next door," Tam suggested, "and I'll search the park across the street."

"OK," Marcella agreed. "Nick, how about if you look for Dodger over at the school playground?"

"Sure thing!" Nick called, and he ran down the sidewalk.
