

Grade 3 Playlist: Commas and Quotations Marks in Dialogue

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.2.C*:

- Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.

Welcome

When writers want to show that the characters in a story are speaking, they show it using dialogue. Two of the most common punctuation marks used in dialogue are quotation marks (“ ”) and commas (,). Knowing how to use these punctuation marks when writing dialogue is a very important skill for a writer.

Watch!

This short video shows the ways quotation marks and commas usually are used in dialogue:

- <https://www.opened.com/video/commas-quotes-he-said-she-said-the-electric-company/63712>

Objective

In this playlist, students will learn and practice how to:

- use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.

Review

Key Terms

- A **comma** (,) is a punctuation mark that separates parts of a sentence.
- **Quotation marks** (“ ”) are punctuation marks that mark the beginning and end of words that someone says.
- **Dialogue** is the conversation characters in a story have. It is shown using quotes.

Exploring the Standard

Dialogue is the part of a story where the characters are talking. To show that a group of words is something a character says, the writer puts that group of words inside quotation marks. If the quote is only part of the sentence, it is usually also separated from the rest of the sentence with a comma.

Here is an example of a typical sentence that uses dialogue:

“I’m finished my homework,” said Susan.

The words between the quotation marks are the words Susan said. The quotation marks, along with a comma, separate these words from the rest of the sentence, which tells the reader that Susan said these words.



A Closer Look: Using Commas with Dialogue

There are a few different ways to use a comma with dialogue. One way is to begin the sentence with the dialogue. The dialogue is followed by a comma and is placed inside quotation marks. Then the sentence ends by telling the reader who is saying the dialogue.

Here is an example:

“Let’s go to the store,” Carlos said.

In this sentence, the words *let’s go to the store* form the dialogue. The quotation marks tell the reader that a character is saying these words. The first quotation mark is called an **opening quotation mark**, and the second is called a **closing quotation mark**. The writer also puts a comma at the end of the dialogue, but before the closing quotation mark, to separate the dialogue from the rest of the sentence. The rest of the sentence, the words *Carlos said*, just tells the reader that a character named Carlos said the words in the quote.

Watch!

This video shows how to use a comma at the end of a quote:

- <https://www.opened.com/video/quotation-marks-captain-cluck-the-electric-company/63716>

Another way of showing dialogue is to start the sentence by telling the reader who is speaking, and then end the sentence with the quote. In that case, the comma goes before the dialogue. For example:

Jessie said, “I’m having a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for lunch.”

In this sentence, the part that tells the reader who is speaking, *Jessie said*, comes first. The dialogue is still in quotation marks, but now the comma comes after *Jessie said* and before the quote. The dialogue ends with a period because it is the end of the sentence. The period comes before the closing quotation mark.

Watch!

This video shows how to use a comma before a quote:

- <https://www.opened.com/video/john-lequizamo-quotes-music-video-the-electric-company/98285>

Sometimes both of these uses of a comma happen in the same sentence. For example:

Brooke said, “I’m not done eating yet,” and then she finished her mashed potatoes.



Teaching Notes: Commas and Quotations Marks in Dialogue

The goal of L.3.2.C is for students to learn how to use quotation marks and commas with dialogue.

The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classrooms as well as additional resources to peruse and integrate into instruction as appropriate.

Activity: Dialogue in Stories

Choose a very short excerpt from an appropriate Grade 3 story that contains dialogue. Go through each example of dialogue in the excerpt, and point out how it follows the rules of using commas and quotation marks with dialogue.

Next, pick four more excerpts that also contain examples of dialogue. Split students into four groups, and assign each excerpt to a different group. Have each group identify all the examples of dialogue in their excerpt and explain how each example follows the rules of using commas and quotation marks with dialogue. Then have each group present their explanations to the class.

Finally, have students write their own short stories that include dialogue. Instruct them to make sure they follow the rules of using commas and quotation marks with dialogue.

Activity: Dialogue in Comic Strips

Find a comic strip or graphic novel that is appropriate for your class. Have students compare and contrast how comic strips and traditional stories show dialogue. (Comic strips show dialogue visually with speech bubbles rather than with punctuation marks.)

Ask students to convert the comic strip to prose, using quotation marks and commas to show the dialogue. Students may add narration to describe the action in the comic strip. Have students compare their answers, and review a possible solution together as a class.

Additional Resources

Here are some additional resources for using commas and quotation marks with dialogue:

- <http://www.k12reader.com/worksheet/add-the-quotation-marks/>
- <https://www.ixl.com/ela/grade-3/punctuating-dialogue>
- http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/writing/worksheet_1.asp?topic=

