

Boost Free Lessons - Year 7 English

Lesson 7: Dialogue Punctuation and Formatting

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Worked Example 1

Punctuate this line of dialogue correctly: *where are you going asked Dad*

1. Speech marks go around the **exact** words spoken, and nothing else.
2. The spoken words start with a capital letter: *Where are you going*.
3. It is a question, so it needs a question mark, and that goes **inside** the speech marks.
4. The words **asked Dad** sit outside the speech marks, and Dad keeps its capital because it is a name.

“Where are you going?” asked Dad.

Worked Example 2

Punctuate this correctly: *I already told you she said we are leaving at six*

1. The speech is split into two parts by *she said*, so each part needs its own speech marks.
2. The first part ends with a comma **inside** the speech marks: “I already told you,”
3. *she said*, sits outside, followed by a comma.
4. The second part continues the same sentence, so it does **not** start with a capital.

“I already told you,” she said, “we are leaving at six.”

Remember: Speech marks surround the **exact** words spoken. Punctuation goes **inside** them, usually a comma rather than a full stop when *said* follows. Start a **new line** for each new speaker.



Question 1: Rewrite each line of dialogue with correct punctuation.

1. stop shouted Mia

2. i am nearly ready said Tom

3. are we there yet asked the twins

4. that was amazing whispered Ella

5. put the bag down said the guard firmly

6. do you want mine offered Ben



Question 2: Read the passage below, then answer the questions.

"We should go back." said Aisha.

"not yet" Tom replied.

"It will be dark in an hour," she said.

1. Find one punctuation error in the passage and correct it.

2. Should each new speaker start on a new line? Explain why.

3. Where should the comma go in a line of speech followed by *he said*?

4. Rewrite the second line of dialogue correctly.

5. Why do writers use *said* so often instead of fancier words?



Question 3: Answer the following questions.

1. Write a three line conversation between two characters, punctuated correctly.

2. Write one line of dialogue that is split by *she said* in the middle.

3. Explain the rule about starting a new line for a new speaker.





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Answers and Model Responses: Dialogue Punctuation and Formatting**Question 1**

1. "Stop!" shouted Mia.
2. "I am nearly ready," said Tom.
3. "Are we there yet?" asked the twins.
4. "That was amazing," whispered Ella.
5. "Put the bag down," said the guard firmly.
6. "Do you want mine?" offered Ben.

Question 2

1. The first line has a full stop inside the speech marks. It should be a comma: "We should go back," said Aisha.
2. Yes. A new line each time makes it clear who is speaking, so the reader never has to guess.
3. Inside the speech marks, immediately after the last spoken word.
4. "Not yet," Tom replied.
5. *Said* is almost invisible to a reader, so it keeps the focus on what is actually being said.

Question 3

1. Model response:
"You are late," said Nina.
"The bus never came," Omar replied.
"It never does," she said.
2. Model response: "If you leave now," she said, "you will still make it."
3. Every time a different person speaks, start a new line and indent it. This shows the reader that the speaker has changed without needing to name them every time.

