



# How to Write Conversations Between Characters Correctly

KS2 ENGLISH

WRITING

GRAMMAR

Ages 10-12 ⌚ 3 min read

## What is Dialogue?

**Dialogue** is a conversation between two or more characters in a story. When you write dialogue, you're showing your reader exactly what the characters are saying to each other. Good dialogue makes your story feel alive and helps readers understand what your characters are thinking and feeling.

## The Golden Rule: New Speaker, New Line

The most important rule is simple: every time a **different character** speaks, you start a **new line**. This makes it easy for readers to see when the speaker changes. Without this rule, conversations become confusing and hard to follow.

Think of it like a tennis match—each player takes a turn hitting the ball. In dialogue, each character takes a turn speaking, and you show that by starting a new line.

## Using Speech Marks Correctly

Put **speech marks** (also called **quotation marks**) around the exact words a character speaks. Everything inside the speech marks is what they actually say. For example: "**I love chocolate,**" **said Maya**. The speech marks show that "I love chocolate" is what Maya said out loud.

Remember: **punctuation marks** like full stops, question marks, and commas go **inside** the speech marks, not outside. This is a very common mistake!

## Saying "Said" Isn't Boring

You don't need fancy words like "exclaimed" or "whispered" every time. Using "**said**" is perfectly fine and actually makes your writing clearer. However, when a character really is shouting, whispering, or asking a question, these words can help show how they're speaking.

Think of it like seasoning food—salt is simple and works well most of the time. You don't need exotic spices in every bite, but sometimes they add something special.

## Add Action and Description

To make dialogue more interesting, show what characters are doing while they talk. This is called **action beats**. For example: **Maya rolled her eyes. "I can't believe you ate my lunch!"** This tells us not just what Maya said, but also how she felt about it.

## Check Your Punctuation

Remember these key rules: put a **comma** after dialogue if more words follow ("Hello," said Tom.), use a **question mark** if it's a question ("Where are you going?" asked Zara.), and use an **exclamation mark** for strong emotions ("Watch out!" shouted Lee.).

Practice writing conversations following these rules, and soon they'll become automatic. Your stories will be easier to read and much more enjoyable!