



Punctuating Dialogue – Grade Six

Ohio Standards Connection

Writing Applications

Benchmark A

Use narrative strategies (e.g., dialogue and action) to develop characters, plot and setting and maintain a consistent point of view.

Indicator 1

Write narratives that maintain a clear focus and point of view and use sensory details and dialogue to develop plot, characters and a specific setting.

Writing Conventions

Benchmark B

Use conventions of punctuation and capitalization in written work.

Indicators:

2. Use commas, end marks, apostrophes and quotation marks correctly.
4. Use correct capitalization.

Writing Process

Benchmark F

Edit to improve fluency, grammar and usage.

Indicator 15

Proofread writing, edit to improve conventions (e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization) and identify and correct fragments and run-ons.

Lesson Summary:

In this lesson, students create and accurately punctuate dialogue necessary to help the plot progress, reference setting and develop character.

Estimated Duration: Five hours

Commentary:

Using samples of narratives for teaching punctuation as opposed to exercises using worksheets is a strength of this lesson along with the opportunities it affords students to talk with one another about their skill development. Teachers who field tested the lesson also noted they were especially “impressed with the ease by which the lesson accommodated students’ different writing abilities. “

Pre-Assessment:

Using *Dialogue (version one)*, Attachment A:

- Show improperly written dialogue on overhead projector and read it aloud or have a student do so.
- Ask the class questions found on *Suggested Questions/Answers*, Attachment A-2. **Do not** give answers until using *Dialogue (version two)*, Attachment B.
- Invite students to agree or disagree with these statements.
- Discuss why it is so hard to determine the answers, and ask if it should be this confusing.
- Ask students what is missing.

Instructional Tip:

Be sure students correctly note the missing quotation marks and lack of indentation.

Using *Dialogue (version two)*, Attachment B:

- Show properly written dialogue and ask the same questions.
- Discuss the answers found on *Suggested Questions/Answers*, Attachment A-2, and emphasize why it is easier to tell who is speaking and who says what.
- Emphasize that only the indentation and quotation marks have changed.