

Anne Boleyn Story: Using Dialogue

Dialogue is a conversation or speech that is written down as part of a piece of narrative text.

It is usually
between two or
more people...



...and it can be
really useful
when describing
characters or
advancing a
story's plot.

Punctuating Speech

When writing dialogue, it's important that you punctuate the speech correctly.

“ ”

Use inverted commas to indicate speech.

ABC

Use a capital letter at the beginning of speech.

?!

Punctuate the end of the speech inside the inverted commas.

L
→

Use a new line for each new speaker.

Using Dialogue to Advance the Action

Dialogue can be great when advancing the plot of a story.
Try using your characters to tell the reader what is happening.

“Rosie? What is it? What can you see?” James said, frantically peering around.

Rosie was shaking and pointing to a space just in front of her. “There... there...there’s...a...”

“What? Where? Rosie, there’s nothing there. You’re pointing at an empty space. Stop it, please; you’re scaring me,” James begged.

How has the dialogue helped to advance the action?

Would you still know what was happening if you took away all of the speech?



Using Dialogue to Create Tension

Dialogue can really help to create tension within a text.
Having two or more characters in danger can make
great dialogue for your reader.

“Joyce, run!” Rob screamed, “I can see the cave starting to collapse!”

“We’re not going to make it!” Joyce panicked.
“There’s not enough time to get out!”

“We’ve got to try. If we don’t,
we’ll be trapped in here for sure.”

How has the dialogue helped to create tension?
Would the writing be as tense without any
dialogue?



Using Dialogue to Develop Characters

Dialogue can be an interesting way to develop characters. Think about the way your characters talk and what that might say about their personality.

“Good day sir,” said an older gentleman while waiting for the bus. “What fine weather we appear to be having.”

“You what?” exclaimed a second man, who also happened to be waiting. “What is you on about? It’s well ‘ot and I ain’t likin’ it.”

“I do beg your pardon; it’s just that I rarely manage to leave the house these days and I find a spot of sunshine to be most beneficial. I rather enjoy these rare moments of bliss, riding upon fine transport and sheltering beneath this charming infrastructure.”

What can you tell about the characters from their dialogue? How has the author used different types of speech to develop the characters?



Recap

Dialogue can be really useful when advancing the action and developing characters in your writing.



Using Dialogue to Advance the Action

Use your characters' dialogue to tell the story. Remember to have your characters talk about the events otherwise the plot will not advance.



Using Dialogue to Create Tension

Use the dialogue between your characters to create tension. Try making them shout or stutter to give the impression of urgency or fear.



Using Dialogue to Develop Characters

Use the way that your character speaks and their choice of words to show your reader more about their personality, attitude and viewpoint.