

# 22 Quotes

## QUOTATION MARKS FOR SPOKEN WORDS

In order to indicate in your writing the exact words that someone speaks, use quotation marks (" ") around what the person says. This is called a direct quotation.

Some sentences give only a general idea of what a person says and need no quotation marks. These are *indirect* quotations; they do not use a person's exact words but only *indirectly* tell what the person says. **Hint:** The word *that* often indicates an indirect quotation. **Examples:** (1) Barry screamed, "I am innocent!" (2) Barry screamed that he was innocent. (3) Barry screamed he was innocent. Sentences 2 and 3 are indirect quotations since Barry is not actually speaking.

### 1. PUNCTUATING DIRECT QUOTATIONS

There are usually two parts to sentences that tell exactly what a person says. Part A (shown in italics in the following sentences) tells what the person says. Part B (shown in regular type) tells who is talking and may describe something about him. Study these three different ways of writing the same sentence.

- (1) "*Please be quiet*," he whispered.
- (2) He whispered, "*Please be quiet*."
- (3) "*Please*," he whispered, "*be quiet*."

Since Part B (shown in regular type) may appear at the beginning (2) or at the end (1) of the sentence, or it may even interrupt the speaker's words (3), you will need to learn how to write each of these forms. Study the following sentences and hints.

### 2. PUNCTUATING SENTENCE 1

"Please be quiet," he whispered.

"Please be quiet!" he whispered.

- Capitalize the first spoken word.
- Put quotation marks before the first spoken word (*Please*) and after the last (*quiet*).
- Put a comma inside the quotation mark. If a question mark or exclamation point is also used instead of a comma, put them inside also. Do not use a comma along with another mark.
- No capital for *he*.
- Put a period at the end of the sentence.

### 3. PUNCTUATING SENTENCE 2

He whispered, "Please be quiet."

- Put a comma after *whispered*. This separates the part that tells who is talking from the words that are spoken.
- Put quotation marks before the first spoken word (*Please*) and after the last (*quiet*).
- Capitalize the first spoken word (*Please*) even though it appears in the middle of the sentence.
- Put a period at the end of the sentence *inside* the quotation marks.

### 4. PUNCTUATING SENTENCE 3

"Please," he whispered, "be quiet."

- Put a quotation mark before the first spoken word (*Please*).
- Since the words *he whispered* interrupt the speaker, show that his words end after *Please* by using another quotation mark. Put a comma, too, after *please*; put it inside the quotation mark.
- Put a comma after *whispered*: it helps separate the part that tells who is talking from the words that the speaker will continue saying.
- The word *be* continues the speaker's words. Put a quotation mark in front of it. Do not capitalize *be* because it is not the speaker's first spoken word nor does it begin a sentence.
- Put quotation marks after *quiet* because that is the speaker's last word. Put a period after *quiet*—and *inside* the quotation marks—because that is the end of the sentence.

### 5. QUOTES OF SEVERAL SENTENCES

- If the same speaker speaks several sentences without being interrupted, don't use new quotation marks for every sentence. Use one quotation mark before the *first* spoken word and another quotation mark after the last spoken word. **Example:** Mr. Halloway whined, "They stole my cat. It's the only thing I ever loved in this world." Even though a new sentence starts after *cat*, the same speaker is talking. Use a capital for *It's*, but no quotation mark before the word.

### 6. WHERE TO PUT OTHER MARKS

- If there is a question asked somewhere in the quotation sentence, before you put in the question mark think about where it belongs.  
"*Where are you?*" she asked. The speaker is asking the question so the question mark goes inside the quotation marks. A period goes at the end of the sentence.  
*Did she say, "I'll be late"?* Here the whole sentence is a question. The speaker is not asking anything; the spoken words are not a question. Therefore, the question mark goes outside the quotation.  
*He said, "Please be seated"; and we obeyed.* If you use a semicolon or a colon after a quote, the punctuation goes outside.  
"*What?*" she said with surprise. "*Silence!*" he whispered.  
"*Oh my,*" she gasped. Most other punctuation goes inside the quotes.  
*Jane told the police, "He ran up to the bank teller and said, 'Give me all the money.'"* Use single quotation marks to enclose a quotation within a quotation.  
**Reminder:** Commas that come after spoken words go *inside* quotation marks. Periods at the end of a sentence always go *inside* quotation marks.

# Quotes

## EXERCISES

A. On separate paper, rewrite the following sentences adding quotes and punctuation marks where required.

1. If you can't stand the heat said Rico get out of the kitchen.
2. Henry did not dare to say that he believed Meg was lying.
3. Bertha asked Don't we have any cool, iced drinks for our guests.

4. With tears streaming down her cheeks, Henrietta screamed I shall do as I please.

5. Who likes to say I'm sorry?

B. Follow the instructions in writing sentences of your own. Use separate paper.

1. Using *he exclaimed* at the beginning, write a quotation sentence about a new-car owner.
2. Using *she asked* at the end, write a quotation sentence about the price of eggs.
3. Change the following sentence into a direct quotation: She said that she would be late.
4. Put the words *she whispered* after the word *you* in this sentence. Rewrite the sentence with correct punctuation: "I love you because you understand me."

## QUOTATION MARKS FOR WRITTEN WORDS

The above explains how to use quotation marks in sentences that give a speaker's exact words. However, sometimes a writer wishes to use exact words that some other writer has written, words that help support his or her own argument.

Whenever you do use someone else's words as part of your own work, you must make very clear—and punctuation helps you do it—that the material is not your own, that it originated with somebody else.

### 1. SHORT STATEMENTS

If you use a short statement (fewer than a hundred words) from someone else's writing in a book, article, magazine story, or any written source, use quotation marks around the words you have taken and follow your own words in ordinary sequence.

To present the quote in a formal way, use a colon before it. Otherwise, a comma is sufficient. Use a capital letter for the first word in the quote. *Example:*

The presidency is not always a glamorous affair.

Dwight D. Eisenhower once wrote about one aspect of the job: "You know, once in awhile I get to the point, with everybody staring at me, where I want to go back indoors and pull down the curtains."

### 2. LONGER QUOTATIONS

Longer quotations—ten typed lines or more—are set off two lines below the main body of writing. In typing, the

quoted passage is indented five spaces from both sides of the paper; the passage is typed single-spaced. (You need to indent the first line ten spaces if it starts a paragraph in the source from which you have taken it.)

When you set off the longer passage in this way, do *not* use quotation marks around it.

A colon appears before the selection to show a formal quote as in this example:

In his *Los Angeles Times* article, "*Roots Brings Everything Except Time*," Al Martinez had this to say:

Reprinted in 32 languages, the story of Kunta Kinte and his heirs has sold 5 million hardback copies and 15 million paperback copies throughout the world.

Television's *Roots*—translated into 19 languages—was watched by 160 million people, and *Roots 2* by 110 million, making them the first and second most-watched shows in American television history.

In a blur of triumph beyond his wildest dreams, they have made Haley a multimillionaire in 19 months and one of history's most celebrated authors.

### 3. OMITTING WORDS

If you want to leave out any sentences, words, or phrases, use three dots, each with a single space between them. That indicates something has been omitted. If you have omitted something that ends in a period, use four dots—the first dot is a period that shows the end of a sentence and the following three dots show that you have left words out. *Example:*

Television's *Roots* . . . was watched by 160 million people, and *Roots 2* by 110 million. . . .

## EXERCISES

Complete the following assignments on separate paper.

1. From a newspaper, magazine, or book, select a short passage of less than a hundred words. Introduce the passage in your own words (see the Eisenhower example) and write out the quotation, using proper punctuation.
2. From a newspaper, magazine, or book, select a passage of more than a hundred words. Introduce the passage in your own words (see the first Martinez example) and write out the quotation, using proper spacing and punctuation.
3. Copy a portion of the quotation you just used in Exercise 2, omitting at least two sentences or groups of words. Be sure to indicate the places where something has been omitted (reread the second Martinez example).