ENGLISH, LITERACY, AND COMMUNICATION

Quotation marks

Difficulty level: Intermediate

English, Literacy, and Communication

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Overview of the concept

This is how you show a reader exactly which words someone said, like quoting a friend in a story or a witness in a news report. A story that says Maya said I am coming feels real because the reader hears her exact words, and a news report that quotes a witness is trusted more than one that just summarizes. Quotation marks draw a clear line between what someone said and what the writer added around it. Getting them right is what keeps a quote honest.



Rule

Put quotation marks around the exact words someone says or asks, and only those words.

Keep the punctuation that belongs to the spoken words, like a question mark, inside the quotation marks.

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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Add quotation marks: Sara said I am hungry.

SOLUTION

Find the exact spoken words: I am hungry.

Put quotation marks around those words only.

Fixed: Sara said, 'I am hungry.'

EXAMPLE 2

Q Add quotation marks: He asked Are you coming

SOLUTION

Find the exact spoken words: Are you coming?

Put quotation marks around those words, keeping the question mark inside.

Fixed: He asked, 'Are you coming?'

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Practice questions

1 Add quotation marks: Tom said I will help.

A Tom said, 'I will help.'

B Tom said 'I will help.'

C Tom said, 'I will help'.

D Tom said, "I will help."

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2 Add quotation marks: She asked Where is my book

A She asked 'Where is my book?'

B She asked, 'Where is my book?'

C She asked, 'Where is my book.'

D She asked, "Where is my book?"

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3 Add quotation marks: The game was great Ben said

A 'The game was great,' Ben said.

B Ben said, 'The game was great.'

C 'The game was great' Ben said.

D 'The game was great,' Ben said

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4 Add quotation marks: Tom said I will help I will be there

A Tom said 'I will help. I will be there.'

B Tom said, 'I will help. I will be there.'

C Tom said, 'I will help.' 'I will be there.'

D Tom said, 'I will help. I will be there'.

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5 Add quotation marks: Ana said i am ready

- A Ana said 'I am ready.'
- B Ana said, 'I am ready'.
- C Ana said, 'I am ready.'
- D Ana said, 'i am ready.'

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6 Add quotation marks: Look out Sam said

- A Sam said, 'Look out!'
- B 'Look out,' Sam said.
- C 'Look out!' Sam said
- D 'Look out!' Sam said.

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7 Add quotation marks: Sam said Look out

A Sam said, 'Look out.'

B Sam said, 'Look out!'

C Sam said 'Look out!'

D Sam said, "Look out!"

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8 Add quotation marks: Where is my book she asked

A 'Where is my book?' She asked.

B 'Where is my book?' she asked.

C She asked, 'Where is my book?'

D 'Where is my book,' she asked.

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9 Add quotation marks: Ben said did you see that

- A Ben said 'Did you see that?'
- B Ben said, 'did you see that?'
- C Ben said, 'Did you see that?'
- D Ben said, 'Did you see that.'

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10 Add quotation marks: Did Ana say good morning

- A Did Ana say, 'Good morning?'
- B Did Ana say 'Good morning'?
- C Did Ana say, 'good morning'?
- D Did Ana say, 'Good morning'?

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ANSWER KEY

1. Tom said, 'I will help.'
2. She asked, 'Where is my book?'
3. 'The game was great,' Ben said.
4. Tom said, 'I will help. I will be there.'
5. Ana said, 'I am ready.'
6. 'Look out!' Sam said.
7. Sam said, 'Look out!'
8. 'Where is my book?' she asked.
9. Ben said, 'Did you see that?'
10. Did Ana say, 'Good morning'?

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