

Name _____

Using Dialogue to Develop Characters and Events

In narrative writing, dialogue is used not only to show what characters say but also to **reveal their personalities, relationships, and move the plot forward**. When characters speak, their words, tone, and the way they interact can help the reader understand what kind of person they are and what's happening in the story.

🎯 Learning Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand how dialogue shows character traits and motivations.
- Use dialogue to reveal relationships between characters.
- Write dialogue that contributes to the development of the plot.
- Use proper punctuation and formatting for dialogue.

📌 Examples:

Example 1 – Dialogue reveals character personality:

"I don't care what they think," Lily said, arms crossed. "I'm doing it my way."

→ Lily is confident and independent.

Example 2 – Dialogue moves the plot forward:

"The bridge is out!" shouted Mark. "We'll have to find another way across!"

→ This creates urgency and moves the characters toward a new decision.

Example 3 – Dialogue shows relationships:

"Don't worry, I've got your back," said Jake.

"I know," replied Maya. "You always do."

→ This reveals a close, trusting friendship.

Test Yourself

Part A: Analyze the Dialogue

Directions: Read each short dialogue and answer the questions that follow.

1.

"I'm not going out there," Sam whispered. "It's too dark."

"You'll be fine," said Ella, handing him a flashlight.

a. What do we learn about Sam's character?

b. What do we learn about Ella's character?

c. How does this dialogue move the story forward?

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1. *"We're lost!" cried Ben.*
"No, we're not. I marked the trail," replied Dana, pulling out a map.
a. What do we learn about Ben's personality?

b. What does Dana's response show about her?

c. What might happen next in the story?

Part B: Write Dialogue

Directions: Write a short conversation (4–6 lines) between two characters. Make sure the dialogue:

- Shows something about each character's personality.
- Moves the story forward.
- Uses correct punctuation and formatting.