

Quotation Marks

American style quotation marks have six primary functions:

- 1) When repeating someone's exact words
 - 2) To show irony
 - 3) To show an unusual usage of a word or phrase
 - 4) To refer to a word itself rather than its associated meaning
 - 5) To refer to nicknames and false titles
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1) When repeating someone's exact words

Example: "I feel sleepy," Jim said.

In this example, the speaker is repeating Jim's exact words, "I feel sleepy." Notice that a comma (or a question mark, exclamation point, or period) is used inside the quotation mark where Jim's exact words are interrupted by the speaker.

Example: Jim said, "I feel sleepy."

Again, the speaker is repeating Jim's exact words, "I feel sleepy." Notice that a comma is used before the quotation mark where the speaker's words are interrupted by Jim's exact words. Also notice that the first letter of the quoted speech is capitalized, and that punctuation used at the end of the sentence comes inside the final quotation mark.

Example: "I feel sleepy," Jim said, "But I don't want to go to bed!"

In this example, two of Jim's phrases are repeated. The speaker interrupts the phrases to provide the reader information about them.

Example: "Jim said, 'I feel sleepy,'" recalled Jacob.

In this example, the speaker is repeating Jacob's exact words, who is repeating Jim's exact words. When you have a quotation inside a quotation, use a single quotation mark to offset it.

Note: Quotation marks are unnecessary when paraphrasing someone's exact words.

Example: "Help!" cried Ana.

In this example, we are repeating Ana's exact words. Therefore, we need to use quotation marks.

Example: Ana cried for help.

In this example, we are paraphrasing Ana's exact words. Therefore, we *do not* need to use quotation marks.

Directions: Punctuate the following sentences.

- 1) I got an A on my test said Ko.
- 2) The president said that we should Win the war in six months
- 3) I would like to go with you Jenny said But I don't have enough money
- 4) I hate you she screamed And I never want to see you again
- 5) Tommy told us not to Tell his secret said Billy So we didn't

Directions: Now write two of your own sentences using quotation marks to repeat someone's exact words.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

2) To show irony

Example: My friend energetic claimed that he was "too tired" to help me.

In this example, quotation marks are used to offset the phrase "too tired" because it is ironical. The speaker is trying to show the reader that the friend was not too tired, and that there must have been a better reason for his unwillingness to help.

Directions: Punctuate the following sentences.

- 1) Desoto said that he would be patient for thirty seconds.
- 2) I can't stand it when my brother tries to help me and then asks me a million questions.
- 3) We took a journey to the fourth floor of the building.

Directions: Now write your own sentence using quotation marks to show irony.

- 1) _____

3) To show an unusual usage of a word or phrase

Example: It seems difficult to "know" everything about the human body.

In this example, quotation marks are used to offset the word "know" because it is used in an unusual way. The speaker wants to show that the notion of "knowing" everything about the human body seems somewhat absurd.

Directions: Punctuate the following sentences.

- 1) The judge said that it was time for us to go to jail.

- 2) Street language is not encouraged in the classroom.
- 3) The police arrested some overzealous protesters today.

Directions: Now write your own sentence using quotation marks to show irony.

1) _____

4) To refer to a word itself rather than its associated meaning

Example: The word “cooper” refers to someone who makes barrels.

In this example, quotation marks are used to offset the word “cooper” because the speaker is referring to the word itself rather than its associated meaning.

Directions: Punctuate the following sentences.

- 1) Plantain starts with a P.
- 2) The technical term for car is vehicle.
- 3) The word bee has two E's.

Directions: Now write your own sentence using quotation marks to refer to a word itself, rather than its associated meaning.

1) _____

5) To refer to nicknames and false titles.

Example: Mike “Kid Dynamite” Tyson is a boxer.

In this example, quotation marks are used to offset a nickname.

Directions: Punctuate the following sentences.

- 1) The North Carolina Tarheels are playing the Duke Blue Devils in basketball tonight.
- 2) Nat King Cole is not really a king in the literal sense.
- 3) Richard The Flash Thomas is racing his car tonight.

Directions: Now write your own sentence using quotation marks to refer to nicknames and false titles.

1) _____