

Punctuation

What Punctuation Is Taught in Year 3?

In year 3, your child will continue to practise the punctuation they learnt in years 1 and 2. They are expected to be able to use:

- **capital letters** for the start of sentences, proper nouns and the pronoun 'I';
- **full stops, question marks** and **exclamation marks** at the end of sentences;
- **commas** in lists;
- **apostrophes** for contracted words (e.g. I will = I'll);
- and **apostrophes** for possession with singular nouns (e.g. Will's money).

If you feel that your child needs to revise or practise the punctuation that they learnt in year 2, you could try using these **Year 2 SPaG Activity Mats** together at home before beginning work on inverted commas.

Throughout year 3, your child should use the above punctuation with increasing accuracy within their writing. They will also be introduced to:

- **inverted commas** (previously known as speech marks) to show direct speech.

Inverted Commas

In year 3, your child will begin to learn how to use inverted commas for direct speech in their writing. Although it may seem fairly easy to use inverted commas, it often takes children time to master the many rules and conventions for using speech punctuation correctly.

Inverted commas are placed around direct speech in writing to show the reader what the person or character says. Inverted commas are written as "" (double). Please note, some schools may teach the use of single inverted commas (') - please check which version is taught in your child's school to ensure that you are consistent with what they are being taught.

Direct speech is when a writer wishes to show a reader exactly what a character is saying as opposed to summarising or paraphrasing what the person or character says (**reported speech**). For example:

Direct Speech: "Time for break," the teacher said.

Reported Speech: The teacher told the children that it was time for break.

The **reporting clause** is the part of the sentence that tells the reader who is speaking. When writing speech, the reporting clause can be placed before or after direct speech. The reporting clauses are underlined in the following examples:

"What's for dinner?" asked the boy.

Cheryl screamed, "Give me my toy back!"



As well as using the resources in this category and the keyword searches to help your child with this element of punctuation, a few ideas for games and activities to help your child learn how to use inverted commas at home, both in their spoken language and in their writing, are outlined below.

Read, Read, Read!

Sharing books together is the most powerful way for children to learn about language, spelling, grammar and punctuation. As you read together, identify examples of inverted commas and discuss how they are used to show what a character is saying.

Read All About It!

Give your child a highlighter and a newspaper or magazine. Ask them to highlight examples of direct speech used in the stories they read in the newspaper or magazine.

Direct Speech Cards!

Using small cards, write an example of reported speech on each one. For example; the lady said that she had never seen such strange lights before. Ask your child to write the examples of reported speech as direct speech on the other side of the card with the inverted commas. For example; The lady said, "I have never seen such strange lights before."

Comic Book Speech

Ask your child to choose a scene from a comic book with a speech bubble and turn it into direct speech. For instance, if the scene had a picture of a superhero with a speech bubble saying:

I'll rescue you!

They would change this to:

'I'll rescue you!' said the superhero.



Step 1

Understanding and Recognising Direct Speech

Before writing direct speech, it is important for your child to see direct speech being used in stories. When reading at home together, ask your child to identify the direct speech and discuss how it is set out. You could read through these traditional tales together and identify the examples of direct speech used.

Adding Inverted Commas to Direct Speech

The next stage in using inverted commas is to add them to direct speech. In school, children are often provided with a range of sentences with the inverted commas missing and are taught to add them to the sentences. Your child could practise adding the inverted commas to the direct speech in these activities. Top tip: encourage your child to highlight the part of the sentence that shows a character's speech before adding the inverted commas around it.

Step 3

Writing Direct Speech Independently

Once children understand the use of inverted commas for direct speech, they can start to use it in their independent writing by adding what characters say to their work. This booklet contains a variety of activities to support your child with using inverted commas in their writing.