Where's Your Reporting Clause, Auggie?

Part A

You know the rules: when you are writing speech, you need a reporting clause to tell the reader who is speaking. Missing out the reporting clause is a schoolboy error, but R J Palacio has done just this on page 226 of Wonder. Has she made a mistake? No; she's done it deliberately!

Working from p. 226 line 15 ("Is Via ashamed of me?"), rewrite the speech, including reporting clauses and small insignificant actions. Use what you learned in the **Consolidating Speech and Action Activity Sheet** earlier in this unit and the **Alternative Words for 'Said' Cards**.

Stop at p. 227 line 4 ("Then how do people recognize each other?").

inverted commas reporting clause -ing verb small, insignificant action
"Hold onto me, honey," said Mum, putting one hand on my arm and her arm under mine.
Comma used after speech comma used after reporting clause
Now compare your new version with the original. Which one do you think is best and why? Explain the effect that the lack of reporting clauses in the original has on the mood and pace of the story.



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Part B

You know the rules: when you are writing speech, you need a reporting clause to tell the reader who is speaking. Missing out the reporting clause is a schoolboy error, but R J Palacio has done just this on page 226 of Wonder. Has she made a mistake? No; she's done it deliberately!

Read p. 226-227 to see how Palacio has ensured that the reader can easily follow who is speaking without inserting reporting clauses and interrupting the flow of the speech. She's done this to give the effect of quick, short speech interactions between the two characters and to create a mood of tiredness and intensity.

Your job is to try to do the same in a short piece of writing. Choose a subject where two characters are emotionally close. They don't say a lot at once, but they do have a long conversation. Notice that Palacio on p. 226-227 doesn't remove the reporting clauses and additional actions completely – she uses them at the beginning and end of the scene.
* * * Challenge Task **
Go to the school library and find other examples of books where the same technique is used.
Write down the author, book title and pages where the technique is used.
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