Dialogue - conversation - two or more people talking.

Quote marks

Dialogue is good because what people say and the way they say it can reveal a lot about their character and who they are.

Good dialogue either adds to the story being told, or it reveals something about the people speaking.

I am going to the store.

“I am going to the store,” Mom said. The period after store becomes a comma. The idea is the quotation and the attribution (Mom said) are both part of the same bigger sentence.

This is also how quotation works when you’re quoting a written source.

The new Tom Cruise movie isn’t getting good reviews. “There have been a lot of crocodile tears already shed about the fact that The Mighty Tom Cruise has allowed himself to be used in such dreck,” says one critic, Glenn Kenny of RogerEbert.com.

Mom said, “I am going to the store.” In this case the period goes inside the quotation mark, and then you go on to your next sentence or paragraph. In general, punctuation always goes inside the quotation mark.

“I am going to the store!” Mom yelled. The exclamation point goes inside the quote mark, and there is no comma involved.

“Am I going to the store?” Mom asked. Same with a question mark.

Start a new paragraph each time you switch speakers.

“You stole my doll,” Jane said.

“No, I didn’t,” Jimmy said. “I wouldn’t do that.”

“You did too steal my doll.”

“Did not!”
“Did too!”

“Then why are you holding it behind your back?” Jane asked.