

The Comma (v)

Use commas to set off the explanatory words of a direct quotation. Explanatory words are words like *Joyce said*, *Peter asked*, or *Fred shouted*. These words can be placed before, after, or in the middle of the exact words of the writer or speaker you are quoting.

1. Joyce said, "There is the mayor."
2. "I see him," shouted Fred.
3. "The mayor," stated Peter, "has brown hair."

When the explanatory words come before a **direct quotation**, as in the first example, the comma comes after the last explanatory word. In the second example, the explanatory words come after the direct quote, and the comma is placed after the last word of the direct quote. The third example shows the explanatory words separating the quotation. This is called a *divided quotation*, and commas are placed after the last word of the first part and after the explanatory words.

An **indirect quotation**, in which the words of the speaker are changed into your own words, uses no commas.

Joyce said that she saw the mayor.

Using Commas with Direct Quotations. Add commas wherever necessary in the following sentences. Three sentences are correct.

1. "Well" Debby sighed "the parade is over."
2. The police officer asked us to move our car.
3. "I haven't memorized that poem yet" said Joe.
4. Polly asked "Do you know Steven Haines?"
5. "Polish your shoes" suggested Mom "on the back porch."
6. "Save those trees" cautioned the ranger.
7. Dad asked us to clean the garage.
8. Senator Percy asked "How many votes do I need?"
9. "Put the package down" said Len "or you'll hurt yourself."
10. "That is a great sound" said the composer.
11. Bonnie stated "I promise to tell the whole truth."
12. Bernie recited the Gettysburg Address.
13. "The weather" announced the forecaster "is cold."
14. Several people shouted "There's our home team!"
15. "Wait for us" directed Bobbi "in the lobby."