**![C:\Users\Bronwen\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\BVIYTSN7\MC900391022[1].wmf]()Punctuating Dialogue**

**1. Use quotation marks to begin and end a direct quotation. Separate the quoted material from the dialogue tag by commas. Do not use quotation marks to set off an indirect quotation.**

*I said, “The fable by James Thurber will surprise you.”*

*I said that the fable by James Thurber would surprise you.*

**2. If a question mark or an exclamation point occurs where one of the separating commas should be used, omit the comma and use the question mark or exclamation point to separate the quoted material.**

*“Don’t be late!” Bill warned.*

**3. The speaker’s words are set off from the rest of the sentence with quotation marks, and the first word of the quotation is capitalized. When the end of the quotation is also the end of the sentence, the period falls inside the quotation marks.**

*He said,* ***“W****e’ll discuss the fable in one hour.”*

**4. Both parts of a divided quotation are enclosed in quotation marks. The first word of the second part is not capitalized unless it begins a new sentence.**

*“This fable,” our teacher said, “is a twist of an old tale.”*

**5. Quotes within quotes: If you need to have one character directly quoting another character, then use double quotes for your main dialogue and single quotes for the quote-within-a quote.**

*“And then he said, ‘Mind your own business.’ The nerve!” she said.*

**6. When you write dialogue, begin a new paragraph whenever the speaker changes.**

*“Videotape is the wave of the future,” declared Clarissa. “There’s no doubt about it! Not*

*only is it a popular medium for today’s artists, but it has practical applications as well.”*

*“You’re right,” Angela agreed. “Video has been a boon to us on the swimming team—even when we don’t like what we see! When we see ourselves on tape, however, we see immediately where our shortcomings are: a kick that’s uneven or too much time lost at the turn.”*

*“I work with emotionally disturbed children,” mused Carmen, “and, now that you mention it, perhaps videotaping the teachers at work would be helpful. It would give us a chance to study our interaction with the children and see where we might improve or change our approach.”*

*“Well, I guess we have our work cut out for us,” Clarissa said. “If we all become masters of the video camera, we’ll be on the road to success.”*

**7. Use a pair of dashes to indicate an abrupt break in thought or speech or an unfinished**

**statement or question.**

*“First of all,” he said, “if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you’ll get along a lot better*

*with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his*

*point of view—”*

*“Sir?”*

*“—until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.”*