

## SAMPLE LESSON FOR DIALOGUE TAGS

### Quick Explanation:

Dialogue tags like “he said” and “she explained” have two main purposes in a story or paper.

- They tell the reader who is speaking or the source of the quotation. If you were writing about three people at the beach, you would include dialogue tags so that the reader would know which of the three people were talking.
- They show the reader actions related to the comments. If you were writing about three people sharing a secret, for instance, you might use the dialogue tag whispered to describe who the people were talking.

### Examples:

“He said” and “she said” may be all the story needs. But there are lots of other dialogue tags you can use in your story to add variety.

asked            explained            whispered            cried            admitted            agreed            pleaded  
warned            answered            shouted            demanded

### Guided Practice:

Discuss dialogue with students. Review quotation marks and commas in written dialogue. Read from literature model (*Bedhead* by: Margie Palatini). Identify strong verbs that can be substituted for said (e.g., whispered, shouted, demanded) and dialogue tags with stage direction (e.g., he yelled, as he jumped from the dock). Explain that overuse of any type of tag is distracting.

Other literature models (*Oonawasse Summer*, *Ramona Quimby*). Begin compiling a master list of dialogue tags.

#### Dialogue Tags found in in *Bedhead*:

- shouted Mom, Dad, and Emily as they ran up the stairs and headed for the bathroom door
- she whispered in her calmest calm Mom voice
- Mom said, giving it a try
- they said, sighing a confident, job-well-done sigh
- shouted Dad, taking aim with a squirt
- the three shouted, seeing the boy with bristles poised
- he pointed...the hat, the hat...
- demanded Oliver, holding tightly on to his hat

Pair students to look through literature models-trade books and magazines containing narratives-and list dialogue tags.

Allow pairs to share their dialogue tags. Differentiate between tags that substitute for the word *said* and those that provide additional information. Collect lists and compile a master list of dialogue tags to reproduce and distribute as a resource.

### Independent Practice: Select appropriate verb for the situation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Mom, Dad, and Emily as they ran up the stairs and headed for the bathroom door (shouted)  
she \_\_\_\_\_, in her calmest calm Mom voice (whispered)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Oliver, holding tightly on to his hat (demanded)  
Mom \_\_\_\_\_, giving it a try (said)

Refer students to their storyboards or timelines created during previous week. Have them select an event for which two lines of dialogue can be written. Students will write the dialogue with tags that use a strong verb and/or provide additional information or direction

# SAMPLE LESSON FOR DIALOGUE TAGS



# THE PURPOSE FOR DIALOGUE TAGS?

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- They show the reader actions related to the comments. If you were writing about three people sharing a secret, for instance, you might use the dialogue tag whispered to describe who the people were talking.

# EXAMPLES OF DIALOGUE TAGS.....

“He said” and “she said” may be all the story needs. But there are lots of other dialogue tags you can use in your story to add variety.

asked	admitted	answered
explained	agreed	shouted
whispered	pleaded	demanded
cried	warned	mumbled

# LET'S TRY IT OUT.....

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- she \_\_\_\_\_, in her calmest calm Mom voice
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oliver, holding tightly on to his hat
- Mom \_\_\_\_\_, giving it a try

## APPLY THE SKILL IN YOUR WRITING..

Go to the storyboards or timelines that you created last week. Select an event for which two lines of dialogue can be written. Write the dialogue with tags that use a strong verb and/or provide additional information or direction.





**Interesting:**



**“I don’t want to go” she whimpered**

# “Said” Synonyms

**Z-Z-Z-Z Boring:**

**“I don’t want to go”, she said.**

Agreed	Answered	Argued	Asked	Cried	Explained	Joked
acknowledged conceded concurred consented seconded	reacted remarked replied responded retorted returned	bickered contended contested contradicted countered debated denied disputed	challenged grilled inquired interrogated pried probed queried questioned quizzed requested	bawled bemoaned bewailed blubbered grieved groaned howled lamented moaned mourned	clarified described detailed illustrated interpreted paraphrased summarized translated	bantered jested jived joshed kidded
Laughed	Ordered	Promised	Remembered	Screamed	Suggested	Whispered
cackled chortled chuckled giggled howled roared snickered sniggered snorted	charged commanded decreed demanded directed instructed	agreed assured ensured guaranteed pledge swore vowed	brooded recalled recollected reflected reminisced	bawled bellowed blared blurted cried exclaimed hollered roared shouted shrieked shrilled squealed wailed yelled Yowled	advised hinted implied inferred insinuated intimated offered proposed recommended	breathed buzzed hissed mumbled murmured muttered