



# DIALOGUES

*for the*

# ENGLISH CLASSROOM

A How-To With Examples For Middle and Secondary English and Language Arts Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

**By Craig Berg, Thomas Swieciak, Jonathon Philipp,  
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**Moose Moss Press**

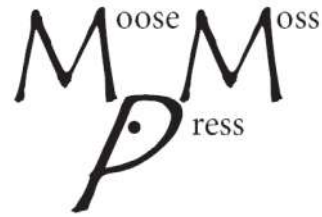
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Cover Graphics by Kyra Kolitsch

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Dialogues for the English Classroom: A How-To With Examples For Middle and Secondary English and Language Arts Teacher Preparation and Professional Development/ Craig Berg. - 1st Edition

ISBN 978-1-936601-15-8

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**Target Audience**

The strategies, activities and professional development materials in this book are consistent with state and national education standards for learning and teaching. This book was written for, and therefore targets, pre-service teachers, in-service teacher professional development, and for teachers pursuing an advanced certification or national board certification, or a Masters degree in teaching.

## Permissions - Read This!

*Dialogues for the English Classroom Volumes 1 and 2* were created only after many, many hours of dedicated, hard work by teachers, who are probably a lot like yourself. You know what it takes to produce a single lesson, so you can probably imagine what it took to fill this book with exceptionally creative and content-specific dialogues. Each of the *Dialogues for the English Classroom* books contain dialogues that will contribute 46-48 lessons to your course. We offer these books to you at a price so that you can incorporate a powerful teaching strategy into your classroom at a very low cost per lesson.

Since using dialogues in the classroom is a relatively new and innovative teaching strategy, we have created this book (*Dialogues for the English Classroom : A How-To With Examples For Middle and Secondary English Teacher Preparation and Professional Development*) so that you may become familiar with how to use dialogues in the classroom, and to see examples of dialogues that will excite and engage your students. After reading about the strategy, and seeing the *Table of Contents* and *Abstracts* of the 46 or 48 dialogues (per book), you will excited try them out and to incorporate many of the dialogues into your units of study.

Note that we are giving this book away for free so future and current English teachers learn about using dialogues in the classroom. Share this book with fellow students in teacher preparation programs, cooperating teachers, and with colleagues - doing so will help spread the word about using dialogues in the classroom. We encourage you to present this strategy at district workshops, or professional conferences. For such purposes the presenter may copy and use the dialogues within this book, or send attendees to [www.moosemosspress.com](http://www.moosemosspress.com) to download this book, or purchase *Dialogues for the English Classroom Volumes 1 and 2*.

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# Authors

## Volume 1

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**Craig Berg** taught middle and high school science before pursuing a M.S. and Ph.D. in Science Education from the University of Iowa. His daily adventures now include directing the science teacher preparation program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, working with undergraduate, postbaccalaureate, and M.S. students in pursuit of exemplary science teaching. Working with other teachers on creating dialogues helps to fulfill his passion for raising the level of student engagement in classrooms.

# Introduction

In my thirty plus years as a teacher and teacher educator, I find that great ideas for teaching stem from researchers studying teaching and learning, and from teachers who have persevered to find ways to reach more children in order to maximize learning in their classroom. Many of these creative and highly effective teaching ideas arise from teachers who are embedded in the most challenging situations, and, as such, are motivated to explore, find, or develop new strategies or materials to use with their students so as to have a greater impact on their learning.

Teachers who embrace these challenges of teaching and learning accumulate a substantial set of teaching tools, when combined with a clear framework and rationale for teaching, are able to utilize *the appropriate tool for the moment at hand*. Dialogues are another teaching tool; a teaching strategy that will help teachers reach children in ways that other strategies might not. Dialogues involve students in speaking and listening, acting and reacting, tapping into emotional and kinesthetic parts of the brain. *State and National Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in Subject Areas* are very clear in that “students must learn to read, write, speak, listen, and use language effectively in a variety of content areas.” The Standards are also very clear in that we must engage our students in learning using strategies that maximize engagement in all aspects of the process. In short, dialogues maximize student’s engagement in the learning process; all students are involved as active participants when dialogues are in play.

Dialogues have been tested from elementary to college levels and in urban, suburban and rural classrooms. You might decide to use them as is, or might modify them and add your own spin or local context to them. You might also craft some from scratch, or have students write dialogues; we have included some suggestions and tips for writing dialogues.

Dialogues engage learners at high levels, so try them! Your students will enjoy the activity, learn something about the content you are trying to teach them, and learn something about themselves. You will witness the power of using dialogues when students ask “When are we going to do another dialogue?”

Editor - Dr. Craig Berg

## Using This Book

There are two major sections to this book:

**Section I - Using Dialogues in the Classroom:** This section details the key aspects of using dialogues in the classroom - the what, when, and how to, of using and writing dialogues. This section provides examples of how dialogues can target content goals, and used to start a debate or discussion, or used to help students grapple with current issues or ethical dilemmas, or used to show how one historical figure might have communicated with another historical figure. They can also be used for practicing communication skills such as speaking, acting and listening, or used as an assessment tool to determine what students learned about the topic or unit. In addition, there are numerous suggestions and tips for implementing dialogues in the classroom, and the benefits thereof, with guidelines on how to write your own dialogues, and how to have students create their own dialogues as a measure of what they learned.

**Section II - Table of Contents, Abstracts and Sample Dialogues:** This section provides the reader with a *Table of Contents* and the *Abstracts* from each of the dialogue volumes. The abstracts provides a quick overview of each dialogue and the social studies concepts or terms embedded within. Scanning the abstracts helps the reader determine which dialogue might be suitable for the upcoming lesson. In addition, there are six example dialogues from each volume for the reader to choose from, and try out with children in classrooms. In order, they include:

*Dialogues for the English Classroom Volume 1:* The section contains the *Table of Contents*, *Abstracts* and six examples from the forty-eight dialogues that cover major components of middle and high school English courses.

*Dialogues for the English Classroom Volume 2:* This section contains the *Table of Contents*, *Abstracts* and six examples from the forty-six dialogues that cover major components of middle and high school English courses.



# Section I - Using Dialogues in the Classroom

## Introduction

Section I details the key aspects of using dialogues in the classroom - the what, when, and how to, of using and writing dialogues. This section provides examples of how dialogues can target content goals, as well as other goals such as communication, reading and listening. In addition, there are numerous suggestions and tips for implementing dialogues in the classroom and the benefits thereof, with guidelines on how to write your own dialogues, and how to have students create their own dialogues as a measure of what they learned.

## What Are Dialogues?

Dialogues are conversations between two or more students regarding a topic being studied in class. One way to use dialogues is to have students pair up, then each person takes on the role of one of the characters by reading that part of the conversation. Built into the conversation is english content students should know, concepts they should understand, or information and ideas that students should think about. For example, in this short excerpt from dialogue 3.6 *False Dilemma*, the characters Zig and Zag met after school in a doughnut shop, when Zig who is focused on notes from english class that highlight logical fallacies, notices that Zag appears to have lost his grip on reality. Zag, holding up a jelly doughnut, sighs reverently, while Zig continues to think.

Zig: *Hmmmmm... false dilemma... flawed logic... aagh, my head hurts –*

Zag: *(adoringly, to the doughnut) Hail to thee, Oh all-powerful, divine and deep-fried god of my taste-buds, oh wonderful digestive divinity. I worship your over-sweet and mystical awesomeness... (noticing Zig is not paying attention) Dude!*

Zig: *Wha—?*

Zag: *Are ya' with me, here?*

Zig: *With ya?*

Zag: *The Nutty Dough of the Jelly speaketh! And I heed the call!*

Zig: *And?*

Zag: *Jelly-Doughnut-ism dude, it's my new religion.*

Zig: *Yeah?*

Zag: *I'm a true believer, man; they're gonna save the world.*

Zig: *Sorry, dude. I'm stuck in Mr. Spooner's logical fallacy notes again: (dramatically) The false dilemma: the mistaken idea that because one statement is wrong, a second must be correct.*

Zag: *The false di-whatsis?*

Zig: *Dilemma. Dilemma. (pause) DI-LEM-MA!*

*(continued on next page)*

Zag: *(hurt)* You don't have to shout, bud.

Zig: *My bad. You were saying? (pause)* Uh, before?

Zag: *Oh! Yeah! The jelly doughnut, man! It's the shizz!*

Zig: *Huh?*

Zag: *Yeah. It has socio-LOG-ical power. No lie.*

Zig: *(skeptical)* Okay, you'd better explain that one.

Zag: *Well, remember what Mr. Spooner was saying about logic?*

Zig: *Some of it.*

Zig: *(Zag looks at Zig)* Okay, ... uh... not much of it. What're you talkin' about?

Zag: *That the purpose of logic is to show that if one statement is true, then another statement is also true.*

Zig: *(consulting notebook)* Uh, yeah, it's right here, next to the frappaccino stain in my notes.

Zag: *Alrighty then. Check this logic: Statement one is that jelly doughnuts are popular. True?*

Zig: *Well, yeah, I'll go with you on that. And?*

Zag: *So, here is the big "therefore" statement: Either you like jelly doughnuts, or you won't have any friends! Logic-o-rama, no?*

Zig: *(pondering)* Um...that does not compute, Master Luke.

Zag: *Why not? It's perfect. This jelly doughnut inspired me. Mr. Spooner will eat it up. It'll be up on the board with the brown-nosers' stuff. It'll go down in history!*

Zig: *Look, Yoda, you don't make sense - there are other possibilities – not just two.*

Zag: *How so?* *(continued on page 94)*

Note that Zig and Zag are having a conversation based on their knowledge of “logical fallacies,” and during the conversation, important information and key aspects are discussed. Often in a dialogue, one character knows a bit more about the subject matter and helps the other character come to a better understanding through statements, questions and responses, and robust conversation.

As mentioned earlier, one way to use dialogues is to have students pair up, each person taking on the role of one of the characters by reading that part of the conversation. Imagine thirty students in class and then picture fifteen pairs of students who are reading/acting the character 1 and character 2 parts of the dialogue. The goal of dialogues is to engage all students in the class in an activity that uses multiple senses, such as seeing, speaking and listening, but at the same time taps into parts of the brain that connect to kinesthetic and emotion, in an interchange centered around learning the content or material designated as important for that particular lesson or unit. There is much more in later pages on how to use dialogues, but for now, read on to *Using Dialogues in the Classroom - What For?*

## Using Dialogues in the Classroom - What For?

It is important to note that dialogues can be used to address a variety of goals, including learning content such as grammar and usage, punctuation, figurative language, literary terms/devices/analysis, close reading, research and composition, presenting and speaking, and also about writing.

**1. Dialogues can be used for learning punctuation** - For example, in the following excerpt from 2.8 *The Way of the Dash*, Nick and Nora are at a costume party, and are strangers with similar costumes, so they are eyeing each other tentatively. Nora is clad entirely in white – white shoes, white skirt, white t-shirt. Nick’s outfit is similar – white shoes, white pants, white t-shirt – except that in the middle of his shirt is a black horizontal line. Nick is pretending not to notice Nora..

*Nora: (Sidling up to Nick) Hi.*

*Nick: Hi, yourself. I’m Nick.*

*Nora: Folks call me Nora. So what are you dressed as? Wait! Lemme guess. A mail slot? Generic packaging?*

*Nick: (proudly) I am a dash!*

*Nora: So like – um – the 40 yard variety? Like – you’re a footrace?*

*Nick: No, not a race. No.*

*Nora: Oh, I know! The cute little thingy in the middle of compound words – like in “self-confidence,” or “ex-boyfriend.” Right? The word-connecting thing!*

*Nick: (slightly impatient) No, no, no-no-no! That’s a hyphen. A hyphen is not a dash. Not even close.*

*Nora: Really?*

*Nick: The dash – the most stylish of punctuation marks – is used to separate parts of sentences and add emphasis to certain ideas.*

*Nora: Really? That’s not a hyphen?*

*Nick: The hyphen is relatively boring compared to the dramatic dash. It’s even more fun to say “dash” than to say “hyphen.” Try it once. Like this: (with dramatic flair) “DASH!”*

*Nora: Okay, here goes: “DASH!”*

*Nick: Yes, yes! That’s it!*

*Nora: How does it work?*

*Nick: Funny you should ask; I’ll tell you.*

*Nora: Do.*

*Nick: A dash can separate a list of things from the main part of a sentence. Like this, for example: “Nora DASH! a charming wit, a clever girl, a raving beauty DASH! stepped into my life at a party one night.”*

*(continued on page 79)*

This dialogue continues on until the characters have conversed about the key aspects of using a dash, coming to a better understanding of this particular grammatical tool.

Other dialogues in Volume 2 that address punctuation include 2.2 *The Ellipsis* and 2.6 *The Semi-colon: The Ultimate Weapon*. Dialogues in Volume 1 that address punctuation include 1.3 *Colon*, 1.9 *Parenthesis*, and 1.12 *Quotation Marks*. Another example of a dialogue targeting punctuation is this excerpt from *Volume 1 - 1.14 Sentence and Period* in which Chip and Dip are camping in the local park. Chip is sitting next to a campfire roasting a marshmallow on a stick. Dip runs in by the campfire breathing heavily. Having just watched a show on Bigfoot, Dip is now paranoid that Bigfoot is there in the park and they need to scam.

Dip: *Bigfoot just ate my sandwich we need to get out of the woods because I think I made him angry I am so tired when you hear the tree branches break, then Bigfoot is coming his smell is also very strong he smells like dog food and peaches Chip help*

Chip: *What did you say Pip? Throw some periods in your speech; I couldn't understand anything.*

Dip: *Periods?*

Chip: *Yeah, periods. Periods mark the end of the sentence, and let the reader know that a thought is done.*

Dip: *But isn't it obvious when a thought is done?*

Chip: *No, when all the words flow together with no punctuation, everything becomes confusing. You need to use a period to show the reader that a full stop or long pause is necessary.*

Dip: *But Chip, what if, hypothetically speaking, a person doesn't have time to take a long pause because an angry BIGFOOT is chasing after me!!!CHIP: If you would have made more sense when you first came running in here, we wouldn't be wasting this time to correct your grammar.*

Dip: *That's true, Chip. I never thought about that.*

Chip: *Okay, lets break down what you just said. What was your first sentence?*

Dip: *I don't know. What is a sentence?*

Chip: *A sentence is a complete thought that has a subject and a verb. The subject is what the sentence is about, and the verb describes what the subject is doing or how or what the subject is.*

Dip: *Well, my first sentence was about Bigfoot, so he must be the subject. What did Bigfoot do? Oh, yeah, he ATE my sandwich. Ate is a verb.*

Chip: *That's right. "Bigfoot just ate my sandwich" is a complete sentence because it has a subject and a verb and it completes a thought. You need to put a period after ...*

*(continued)*

**2. Dialogues can be used to help teach grammar** - in dialogue 2.1 *Appositives and Appositive Phrases*, Nick and Nora are on a bowling adventure, with Nora poised to cast the bowling ball.

Nick: *(pretending to be a sports announcer)* Nora – a fierce competitor – prepares for her next shot.

Nora: *(still focused on the game)* Nice. I like the appositive phrase.

Nick: Yes. I thought I was being very positive.

Nora: *(letting the bowling ball drop to arms length)* No no. I said Uh-positive, not positive.

Nick: What's that, sweetie?

Nora: You said, "...a fierce competitor..." in between your subject and your verb.

Nick: Really? Are you sure?

Nora: Baby-cakes, I'm positive. It was an appositive.

Nick: Did you just repeat yourself?

Nora: No. I'm talking about your noun phrase – "a fierce competitor" – which you placed after another noun – "Nora." *(She rolls the ball confidently down the lane.)*

Nick: Ah. I renamed the noun, "Nora," with a – what did you call it?

Nora: An appositive. Yes. Your turn.

Nick: *(Picking up a ball)* Okay. In order to catch up to you, I need to roll a strike – all ten pins.

Nora: You did it again.

Nick: *(Quizzically)* I did it again?

Nora: Yes, you did.

Nick: *(A bit sarcastic)* Excellent. I'm so proud.

Nora: You said, "a strike," and then you said "all ten pins." An appositive phrase.

*(continued on page 61)*

Other dialogues in Volume 2 used to teach grammar include 2.5 *Pronouns and Their Antecedents*, 2.3 *Misplaced Modifier*, and 2.7 *Verb-Tense Agreement*. Dialogues in Volume 1 used to teach grammar and target areas where students have difficulties in learning the material, include 1.1 *Adjective*, 1.8 *Noun*, 1.10 *Pronoun*, and 1.15 *Verb*.

**3. Dialogues can be used to learn about literary analysis and close reading.** In this excerpt from dialogue *1.12 Oxymoron and Paradox*, Pip and Pep are getting ready to go out to dinner. They are arguing about where they should go.

*Pep: I don't want to go to dinner there.*

*Pip: Why?*

*Pep: Because the food is horrible and it is too expensive.*

*Pip: Well, how about Luigi's? I've heard that their pizza is awful good.*

*Pep: I don't know, I've heard nobody goes there because it's too busy.*

*Pip: Well that makes no sense.*

*Pep: What makes no sense?*

*Pip: "Nobody goes there because it is too busy"...That makes no sense. If no one goes there then it is empty, not busy.*

*Pep: Well, you know what I mean. Wait....you said something that makes no sense, too.*

*Pip: I did?*

*Pep: Yes you did. You said, "the pizza is awful good". How is that possible? How can something be awful and good at the same time?*

*Pip: Wow, I guess you're right. What is that called?*

*Pep: I don't know. Let me google it on my phone. Just a sec.*

*Pip: Ok*

*Pep: So, I typed in "awful good" and it says that it is an oxymoron.*

*Pip: A what?*

*Pep: An oxymoron, it says that it is a part of speech that happens when you contradict something...oh, look at this, it says that it come from a Greek word meaning "sharp dull".*

*Pip: Ahahaha! That is too funny. I had a cousin once who was a sharp dull.*

*Pep: What happened to him?*

*Pip: He turned up missing.*

*Pep: He what?*

*Pip: He...ahh, got it, another oxymoron. How could he turn up and be missing at the same time?*

*(continued on page 52)*

Other examples in Volume 2 include *1.7 Literal versus Figurative*, *1.8 Motifs in Literature*, *1.3 Allusions* and many more. Examples from Volume 1 include *2.1 Alliteration*, *2.6 Euphony and Cacophony*, *2.7 Hyperbole*, *2.9 Metaphor and Simile* and many others.

**4. Dialogues can be used when learning about writing terms.** In this excerpt from dialogue 3.8 *Logical Fallacies: Circular Reasoning*, Zig and Zag are standing around in gym class. Zig practices lightly hitting a volleyball up in the air. Zag also has a volleyball; he is trying to balance it on top of his head.

Zag: *Dude! Look at this! (the ball falls off of his head) Whoa! 'Almost had it!*  
Zig: *It's almost your turn.*  
Zag: *Huh?*  
Zig: *For the volleyball skills test.*  
Zag: *Aw man! I cannot do volleyball.*  
Zig: *How come?*  
Zag: *'Cause I stink at it. Duh!*  
Zig: *That makes, like, no sense.*  
Zag: *What?*  
Zig: *You "cannot do volleyball" because you "stink at it"?*  
Zag: *Yeah, exactomundo, Perfesser McLogical. Why does it not make sense to you?*  
Zig: *You just repeated yourself. It's like saying you can't do volleyball because you can't do volleyball.*  
Zag: *Wha – ?*  
Zig: *Or saying you stink at it because you stink at it. You're just going around in circles.*  
Zag: *Wait! This reminds me of something.*  
Zig: *Oh?*  
Zag: *Something tells me that you are about to talk about Mr. Spooner's class. (resigned) So go ahead; get it over with.*  
Zig: *'Kay. Spooner said that if you just repeat yourself in an explanation, it's called circular reasoning. It's a logical fallacy.*  
Zag: *I'll just bet you memorized Spooner's definition, too.*  
Zig: *(eyes closed in concentration) Um... repetition offered as proof of the initial assertion.*  
Zag: *The amazing Zig does it again, but I understood your way better.*  
Zig: *Me too.*

*(continued on page 99)*

Other examples of dialogues from Volume 2 targeting writing include 3.2 *Drafting and Editing*, 3.14 *Using Sentence Variety*, 3.4 *Embedding Quotes*, 3.1 *Beyond the Five Paragraph Essay*, and more. Dialogues from Volume 1 that target writing include 4.1 *Audience*, 4.2 *Objective versus Subjective*, 4.4 *Point of View*, 4.6 *Slang*, and 4.7 *Transitional Words*.



**5. Dialogues can be used for learning about doing research and obtaining background information for papers in english.** For example, in this excerpt from *4.6 Plagiarism*, Pip and Pep are walking out of school at the end of the day. Pep is visibly angry.

*Pep: I can't believe it!*  
*Pip: What's the matter?*  
*Pep: Someone stole my iPod yesterday.*  
*Pip: What? Do you know who did it?*  
*Pep: No, and to make things worse, Mr. Smith said it was my fault for telling so many people what my locker combination was.*  
*Pip: Pep, I'm so sorry. Didn't you just get that iPod for your birthday?*  
*Pep: Yeah, but that isn't the worst part. I spent all of my birthday money on downloads and I had just created the greatest playlist ever. It was the best. Not too long, not too short, with a mix of songs perfect for working out, studying, or just walking to school.*  
*Pip: Well did you write the list down so you can re-create it?*  
*Pep: I don't have to. I checked my Facebook, and this person I have never met before posted MY playlist as his finest creation. Other people posted about how awesome he was. They made comments like "you're a genius" and "this is the best playlist ever".*  
*Pip: Wow, that must have been some playlist.*  
*Pep: It was...it is! But he just took it from me without saying a word about who REALLY created it! HE is taking all the credit! That's what hurts the most.*  
*Pip: Uuugh....Pep? I hate to break it to you, but that's exactly what you did with your poetry analysis.*  
*Pep: What?*  
*Pip: You said that you found this amazing site that gave you all this great information about that Robert Frost poem. You said that you took information from that site and put it in your paper.*  
*Pep: So? Ms. Phillips said we were allowed to paraphrase information we found on the internet.*  
*Pip: Yes, but you didn't say where your paraphrased information came from. You just wrote it and made it sound like you were the one creating all that great information.*  
*Pep: What's the big deal? People do that all the time. It's not like it's a crime.*  
*Pip: So then you don't care about your playlist getting tons of attention without any credit to you?*

*(continued on page 132)*

Other dialogues in Volume 2 that target research include *4.1 Citing Sources*, *4.2 Effective Presentations*, *4.3 Evaluating Credible Sources*, *4.4 In-text Citations*, and *4.5 Note Taking*.



**6. Dialogues can be used for practicing communication skills, such as speaking, acting and listening.** Teachers know that in an ever competitive job market, communication skills are as important as any aspect with regard to securing and retaining a job. Outside of a job, communication skills are integral to many aspects of daily life. So a major goal of English education is to develop and refine students' communication skills. Integral to the very strategy of using dialogues is communication skill development. As many students in school are masters in adopting a passive role and avoid engagement in the lesson (other than as an observer), it is critical to use strategies such as dialogues that will place them in an active role, a role that gives them an opportunity to develop their communication skills, and lessen their fear of communicating with others. Dialogues place students into an active role and thus receive practice in speaking, listening, and acting. But this occurs in a low risk environment, as all other students in class are in a similar position, so it is easier to join in, sheltered by the cacophony of voices in the room. Students who would never speak in front of the class will readily speak the character's lines in a dialogue.

**7. Dialogues can be used to help students understand a new learning activity that will be used in the classroom.** Dialogue 5.2 *Pip and Pep Begin English: An Introduction to Dialogues* can be used to introduce students to dialogues and what to expect when doing a dialogue. At the same time this particular dialogue introduces students to the English class, as well as introduce them to the teacher and times s/he is available to provide extra help on assignments.

**8. Dialogues can be used to help other teachers learn about dialogues and how to use this teaching tool in their classroom.** Dialogue 5.1 *Pip and Pep Discuss the Finer Points of Dialogues* can be used to introduce dialogues to other English teachers or staff in the building. The key features of dialogues are noted when teachers read and act out this particular dialogue. This can be followed with a second and third example to show how content and activities are embedded into the dialogues. Dialogues can also be written to teach professional development content to staff.

**9. Dialogues can be used as an assessment tool to determine what students learned about the topic or unit -** Dialogue 1.2 *Alliteration* is an example from a student who developed a dialogue based on what she/he learned about alliteration. See more regarding assessing students using dialogues on page 18.

## How To Implement Dialogues in Your Classroom

As with most strategies, there are options for implementing dialogues, and they can be used in a variety of ways, depending on your goals for the lesson, including:

1. Read and Act Out In Class - students pair up, then each person takes on the role of one of the characters by reading that part of the conversation.
2. Assign Reading As Homework - the dialogue is assigned as homework reading so that students come to class with an introduction to the topic being studied in class.
3. Assisting Language Learners or Poor Readers - students listen to the audio version of the dialogue while reading along with the written copy.
4. Assessing Learning - students write their own dialogues to demonstrate what they know, don't know, or have learned from the lesson or unit of instruction.

### Method 1 - Read and Act Out In Class

The teacher starts by asking the students to pair-up, and having each student take on the role of one of the characters by reading that part of the conversation. Let's imagine thirty students in class: picture fifteen pairs of students reading-acting the Pip and Pep parts of the dialogue. The goal of dialogues is to engage all students in the class in an activity that uses multiple senses, such as seeing, speaking and listening, but at the same time taps into parts of the brain that connect to kinesthetic and emotion, in an interchange centered around learning the content or material designated as important for that particular lesson or unit.

**IMPORTANT! Modeling Expectations** - When doing dialogues with students for the first time, the teacher should stress what to expect from students in terms of putting some energy into acting and reading the parts. As an example, the teacher might pair up with a student and read a few lines, using voice inflection, facial expressions, body motion, and gestures to bring life to the character. Students will then realize it is OK, and expected, to put some energy and fun into reading and acting out the character's role. Tell the students that they will get out of it what they put into it. Once they put some energy into being the character, they then realize it is so much more fun to portray the character and their actions, rather than simply reading the lines in a monotonous manner.

1. Choose a dialogue that targets the content or process goals, and targets the objectives for learning. Does it meet the exact needs, or does it need to be modified to meet the needs and goals for the lesson?
2. Have students first read the dialogue silently. If students are reading below their grade level, give them the dialogue the day before so they can practice reading the dialogue.
3. Put students in pairs, and have them stand up, away from the other groups as much as possible.

4. Have students decide which character they will be first, and then act and speak their part of the dialogue.
5. Students should switch roles and act out the dialogue one more time.
6. When it has been acted out twice, then students can return to their seats.
7. Students should then go through one more time on their own and underline or highlight all of the “facts” or key points about the English topic.
8. The dialogue can then serve as a study or review sheet!
9. The teacher then might consider posing some questions that delve into the targets of the exercise.

*Summary of the above steps:*

1. Students read the dialogue silently.
2. Students read the dialogue aloud with partner and act out the parts.
3. Switch roles, read and act out again.
4. Highlight all the facts or key points.

### **Method 2 - Assign Reading As Homework**

The dialogue is assigned as homework reading so that students come to class with an introduction to the topic being studied in class. After students have read the dialogue, teachers have a number of options including: 1) pair up the students to help each other clarify the content within the dialogue, 2) have students underline key points in the dialogue to focus their attention what was important content, or 3) have students respond to teacher questions related to the dialogue in order to determine what students learned from reading the dialogue.

### **Method 3 - Assisting Language Learners or Poor Readers - Reading & Listening Along With mp3's**

For students who are reading below their grade level, or for students who may be in bilingual or ESL classrooms, give students a copy of the dialogue, then play the audio version of the dialogue so the students can listen to the dialogue while reading along. Now teachers have a number of options that include: 1) pairing up the students and having them read the dialogue with a partner and without benefit of the audio support - doing so gives students more practice reading, 2) pair up the students to help each other clarify the content within the dialogue, 3) have students underline key points in the dialogue to focus their attention what was important content, or 4) have students respond to teacher questions related to the dialogue in order to determine what students learned from reading the dialogue.

#### **Method 4 - Assessing Learning By Having Students Write Dialogues**

Having students write their own dialogues allows them to demonstrate their knowledge level, and is an indicator of what they know, don't know, or learned from the lesson or unit of instruction. For an example of a student-written dialogue, see 2.1 Alliteration.

#### **Why?**

- When students are writing a dialogue, they have to build the conversation using accurate notions of the English concepts and ideas; student-written dialogue reveals misconceptions and what the learner knows, or doesn't know.
- Creating dialogues promotes writing skills, as drafting a story line is something students rarely get an opportunity to do.
- Crafting a dialogue promotes creativity and fosters the use of imagination to develop a narrative between two characters.
- Students must learn something about the content in order to write an accurate dialogue. Their writing has to make sense and be an accurate reflection of the topic.
- Writing dialogues requires crafting a conversation and attempting to create a logical interchange using two different perspectives - a difficult, but a valuable thing for students to attempt. Many students function from an egocentric viewpoint. Therefore, writing a dialogue from two perspectives helps them break away from one viewpoint.



#### **How?**

- Assign specific topics and content to embed into the dialogue. For example,
- Give students parameters for length, number of characters, and a tips sheet for writing a good dialogue.
- Provide students with a scoring matrix that is going to be used to score the dialogues (see the following page for an example).
- Ask students to create a video of their dialogue exchange and submit it to the teacher.

### For Students Writing Dialogues – Have you included?

Desired Qualities	Point Value	Score
Is clearly written		
Addresses the targeted goals and intended outcomes		
Clearly identifies the setting		
Identifies the intended audience		
Targets desired content		
Written level appropriate for the intended audience		
The content knowledge is accurate		
Length of the dialogue – about two pages		
Uses humor (appropriate humor)		
Incorporates local, regional or state settings, issues or people		
Incorporates national or international settings, issues or people		
Deals with a significant issue or important topic		
Includes prompts for gestures or voice inflection		
Includes suggestions for props (when appropriate)		
Creatively written, interesting to read		
Other -		
Total Points		

## Teacher Tips for Using Dialogues

Like every teaching strategy, there are things to do that will make the activity more effective and useful. For example:

- ☐ Be selective about which dialogues to do and how often to use them. Anything gets dull if overused.
- ☐ Encourage students to follow the prompts and act out the motions.
- ☐ Stress to students that this activity is entirely what they make of it – they can make it fun or boring – it’s up to them.
- ☐ Provide props when appropriate; wearing a historically relevant hat helps the student assume the role of the character. Physical props that help to explain position or to give concreteness to ideas can be useful and often necessary in terms of the learner being able to understand the positioning or context of the situation. For example, using a sphere of some sort, representing the moon, allows the student to move the “moon” and show the other student what they are talking about as they act out their part.
- ☐ Expand the dialogue to be more than verbal: 1) Have characters conducting mini-experiments that provide data. 2) Give a picture or photo for making the words in the dialogue more concrete. 3) Use motion to provide a concrete link to the conversation, phrase or word in the dialogue.
- ☐ Perform a dialogue for younger students. A teacher and parent-helper, or older students can perform a dialogue for another class.

## The Benefits of Using Dialogues In Your Classroom

Along with maximizing student engagement, there are a multitude of positive reasons for using *Dialogues*. For example, *Dialogues*:

- can be used at all levels of instruction, and in most subject areas.
- actively involve all of the students in the class.
- connect learning with social-emotional parts of the brain, therefore increasing the chances that the material will be retained by the learner.
- are a productive and energetic break from the normal routine of class.
- give students a chance to shine, when otherwise they do not.
- connect oral and written language to the use of objects, action and activities; students do something along with the dialogue, thereby magnifying the learning effect.
- encourage students to read material they might otherwise just skim.
- engage students in a fun and enjoyable way.
- provide an outlet for energy release by getting students up and moving.
- reduce the risk of participating because there is no whole-class audience.
- promote social interaction between reluctant students.
- put the material into the context of a story - it is often easier for students to remember material in the context of a story.
- can be used as an introduction to new material, or as a review of previously covered material.
- provide students with another source of information for studying and review.
- reach students via auditory, kinesthetic and visual learning modes.

## Guidelines and Suggestions for Writing Your Own Dialogues

After experience with using dialogues in the classroom, you may find that you have a need for a particular dialogue that is tailored to your specific topic or students. Here are some suggestions for writing a dialogue on your own.

1. Clearly define the purpose of the dialogue. What is it that will be accomplished by using the dialogue? It might be a content goal, a process goal, a social skill development goal, or any other potentially desirable outcome found in typical lessons. The goal might be as simple, but valuable, as giving students an opportunity to develop better listening skills or oral communication skills.
2. Set the context of the interaction – where and why is it taking place. Notice how some of the dialogues in this book begin with a narrative that sets the context for the conversation.
3. Consider putting a local or regional context to the dialogue. Developing a story line that takes place in the bayous of Louisiana may be more discrepant to students who live in Montana than a setting in which they already have some familiarity. On the other hand, one may have written the dialogue in that manner because it is the goal to develop an awareness of the geography, people, flora or fauna of the southern coastal wetlands.
4. Consider making it personal to the school or the town where the students live. Include local parks, stores, names of people such as the teacher. In the original form, the dialogues included in this book contained names of teachers or local places that made the dialogues more relevant to the classroom or local area. For example, instead of just “the doughnut shop,” the original dialogue had the name of the local doughnut shop that all students knew of, and instead of just “the teacher,” dialogues referred to Mr. Spooner or Ms. Phillips. It is worth the time to modify dialogues to personalize them to the local area or local personnel. In some dialogues there has been a space left to insert the teacher’s name.

Perhaps poke light-hearted fun at the teacher (but not at students) and before inserting another person’s name, obtain their permission and blessing. When using their name, then let them read the dialogue and get their stamp of approval prior to using the dialogue.



5. Use fictional characters, historical figures, real or imaginary people, animals or plants.



6. Use appropriate word choices for the targeted grade level.
7. Tailor the dialogue to fit the needs (vocabulary, use of props, use of objects and animated gestures and motions).
8. Pick one topic and stick to it – all of chapter three will not fit into one dialogue.
9. Write the dialogue so that what one person says impacts what the other person says.
10. Consider from whose point of view the conversation takes place (might use a giraffe, human, plant, fish, etc.).
11. Total length is important – don't make it too long so that it becomes a chapter; consider one to two pages of dialogue maximum.
12. Limit the length of one particular interchange, or one person's statement. One character's turn to speak should not be too long.
13. Use shorter sentences for young children.
14. Some teachers write these at a level slightly higher than the verbal levels of their students, and pair up with another teacher to act these out in front of their class.
15. Incorporate pictures as deemed useful or necessary.
16. Use clues and prompts for acting to help the interchange proceed, and for the characters to develop a colorful demeanor.
17. Double-check the content knowledge embedded into the dialogue – is it correct or not?
18. Incorporate a sense of humor, or a sense of seriousness, when appropriate.
19. Dialogues often work best when involving two people, but for some scenarios one might choose to use three or four people.

## **For Teachers Writing Dialogues – Have you Included?**

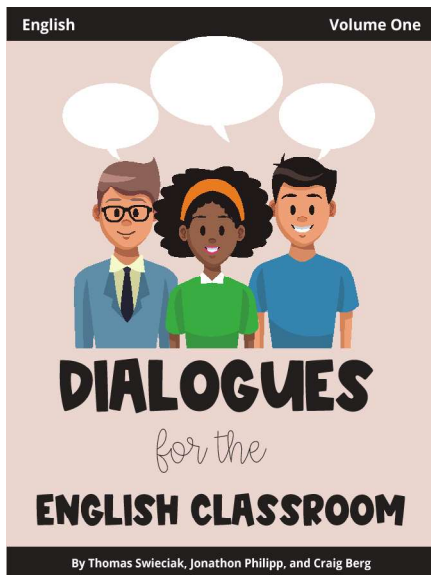
Choose and use the criteria pertaining to the desired outcomes for the students.

- ☐ Clearly identifies the setting
- ☐ Targets desired content
- ☐ Targets desired social skill
- ☐ The content knowledge is accurate
- ☐ Uses humor (appropriate humor)
- ☐ Length of dialogue – not too long, not too short
- ☐ Describes the intended audience and contains a suggestion for grade level use
- ☐ Is clearly written to address the targeted goals and intended outcomes
- ☐ Written at an age-appropriate level for the intended audience
- ☐ Incorporates local, regional or state settings, issues or people
- ☐ Incorporates national or international settings, issues or people
- ☐ Deals with a significant issue or important topic
- ☐ Includes prompts for gestures or voice inflection
- ☐ Includes suggestions for props (when appropriate)
- ☐ Creatively written, interesting to read

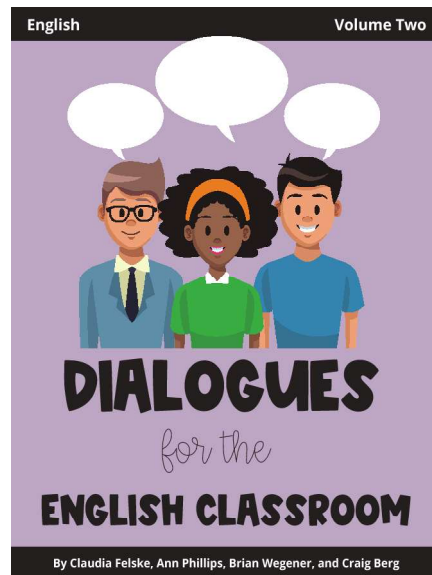
## Section II - Book Contents & Example Dialogues

This section contains the *Table of Contents*, *Abstracts* and sample dialogues for the two volumes of English dialogues. Looking through the *Table of Contents* and the *Abstracts* will help to uncover the multitude of dialogues that can be incorporated into your social studies instruction. The samples provided will make it easy to test out and witness the effectiveness of dialogues, and see first-hand the student enthusiasm for wanting to do more of them.

### English Volume 1



### English Volume II





# DIALOGUES

*for the*

# ENGLISH CLASSROOM

By Thomas Swieczak, Jonathon Philipp, and Craig Berg

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## English Dialogues - The Cast of Characters

**Pip and Pep** are two regular teenagers, living their daily lives and doing their business, often hanging together or studying together. They share the same classes at school and often find themselves talking about class or assignments.

Pip and Pep are also cast members in the school play and have landed the roles of Sheffield and Carruthers. In a couple dialogues, while discussing English assignments and concepts, Pip and Pep practice their characters by speaking and acting as if they were Sheffield and Carruthers. Sheffield is an older gentleman, wealthy and lord of the manor, somewhat stuffy and reliant on his man servant, Carruthers. Carruthers, having served Sheffield for decades is used to the grumpy, demanding, disposition of Sheffield and pokes back in a playful fun manner.

**Chip and Dip** are teenage siblings that often find themselves discussing assignments for their English class. Chip is a little more responsible than younger sibling Dip, which usually leads to Chip informing Dip in the standard use of the English language. Dip is not as knowledgeable, nor interested in proper use of the English language as Chip, and would prefer to watch TV; however, Dip sometimes surprises Chip with a lesson or two, despite Dip's more wild personality.

**Hip and Hop** are two teenagers who decided to go on a cruise ship to Central America where they hoped to enjoy a jungle excursion and a hike through the jungle. Hip stopped to take pictures and Hop became distracted by a marching line of leaf-cutter ants - soon they both got separated from the group and were left behind in the jungle. The cruise ship departed without realizing two people were missing. Hip and Hop found each other on the beach and watched the cruise ship sail away in the distance. Now, they must find their way back to civilization by hiking through the jungle and hopefully getting out in one piece.

Hip and Hop are quite different characters, which often leads to them being at odds with each other. Hip is a smart, scientific type of person, interested in bugs, plants and, of course, the Language Arts. Hop is not comfortable in the wild jungles of Costa Rica, and would much rather be relaxing next to the cruise ship's swimming pool reading a good book. Hop desperately wants to get out of the jungle, but Hip seems to think being lost is more fun than scary.



# Section I - Dialogue Abstracts

## Unit 1 - Grammar and Punctuation

**1.1 Adjective** - Pip walks into the classroom and sees Pep devouring a grilled cheese sandwich, smearing cheese all over Pip's desk. Pip attempts to clean up the mess and attempts to teach Pep about adjectives. Pep is being difficult to the point where Pip's head almost explodes.

**1.2 Apostrophe** - Pep is wearing a very nice hat that Pip recognizes as belonging to a friend. Pip's use of an apostrophe confuses Pep so Pip attempts to help Pep understand how and why to use an apostrophe.

**1.3 Colon** - Hip and Hop are packing their backpacks while cleaning up last night's campsite when Hip explains the finer points of using a colon to Hop.

**1.4 Comma Used in a Series** - Resting by a stream, Hip and Hop are commenting on the pluses and minuses of the jungle when Hip explains how to appropriately use a comma in a sentence that contains a series of items.

**1.5 Comma With Introductory Phrase** – Walking through the jungle, Hip and Hop notice a very oddly-shaped rock that turns out to be the entrance to a cave system. Thinking about going in, but worrying about what creatures may reside, Hip explains a second rule of using commas to Hop.

**1.6 Comma and Conjunction** – Hop is swimming in a jungle stream to cool off while Hip is on the shore making a fishing pole in an attempt to catch them some dinner. Hip begins a discussion that involves another rule of using commas in a sentence.

**1.7 Exclamation Point** - Pip and Pep have roles in the upcoming school play and are practicing their characters and voices of Sheffield and Carruthers, who are two elderly British gentlemen. Carruthers begins to get annoyed by the loud, almost shouting, voice of Sheffield, which prompts a discussion about use of the exclamation point.

**1.8 Noun** – Pip and Pep are sitting on a park bench, when they discuss the definition and finer points of a grammatical term, the noun. Pip helps Pep understand the difference between proper and common nouns.

**1.9 Parenthesis** – Once more, Pip and Pep are practicing for the upcoming school play, and morph into their characters, Sheffield and Carruthers. They forget their lines and extemporaneously converse about the subject they are studying in English class, which is use of parentheses in sentences.

**1.10 Pronoun** – Pep is frantic after having lost his/her fish Sir-Swims-A-Lot. Pip tries to calm Pep down with a discussion of grammatical terms and focuses on the what and how of pronouns.

**1.11 Question Mark** – Pep, perhaps on the brink of insanity, bravely tries to protect Pip from a fearsome monster that is trying to devour Pip’s sentences. Fortunately, Pip saves the day with punctuation knowledge.

**1.12 Quotation Mark** – Pep has been forced to get a part-time job, which he explains to Pip while trying to protect him from “flies” which in reality are quotation marks.

**1.13 Semicolon** - Hip and Hop are walking through the jungle, with Hop dragging his/her feet and moving very slowly. Even though they are very hungry, Hip is thinking about punctuation. As Hop tries to communicate his/her desire for food, Hip points out the importance and use of the semicolon.

**1.14 Sentence and Period** – Chip and Dip are camping in the local park. Having just watched a show on Bigfoot, Dip is now paranoid that Bigfoot is there in the park and they need to scam. Dip is frightened to the point where he/she is talking in one continuous stream of words. Chip unable to understand, communicates to Dip about the necessity of using periods in a sentence.

**1.15 Verb** – Pep finds Pip feeling a bit “under the weather” and tries to cheer Pip up. Pip uses the opportunity to teach Pep about regular and irregular verbs.

## Unit 2 - Figurative Language

**2.1 Alliteration** - Pip and Pep are at an all-you-can-eat buffet when Pep wonders about “heaving the helping of ham,” which causes Pip to try to explain the concept of alliteration to Pep.

**2.2 Alliteration (student written example)** - In this dialogue, students Chris and Cole are having a conversation with their Coach, who is explaining alliteration to them.

**2.3 Allusion** - Still lost in the Jungle Hip is cooking breakfast consisting of toasted Costa Rican turkey-bird meat, while Hop is still asleep on the ground. Hip shakes Hop awake so they can eat and continue hiking out of the jungle. Hip calls Hop “Sleeping Beauty” which initiates a discussion around the concept of allusions.

**2.4 Assonance** – Pep walks into the classroom and hears Pip continually repeating a phrase that contains a repetition of vowel sounds that creates internal rhyming. Pip attempts to explain the concept of “assonance” with mixed results.

**2.5 Consonance** - Following their discussion on assonance, Pip and Pep strike up a conversation about consonance, in contrast to assonance. (Note – use after doing the assonance dialogue.)

**2.6 Euphony and Cacophony** - Pip and Pep are practicing their roles for the school play. As they discuss the finer points and differences of euphony and cacophony, they slip into the characters and voices of Carruthers and Sheffield and leave with a better understanding of this writers tool.

**2.7 Hyperbole** – Chip is working at the computer when Dip walks in eating a large sandwich with mustard spilling out and onto the carpet. Dip explains how hyperbole is a type of figurative language in which writers exaggerate to make descriptions more interesting.

**2.8 Irony** – Pep comes home after letting Pip baby-sit the pet goldfish, Sir Swims-A-Lot, and Pep makes a grim discovery. They trade barbs and in the process use irony, a figurative language concept that Pep is not familiar with.

**2.9 Metaphor and Simile** - Pep walks into Pips bedroom and finds Pip slithering on the floor and acting like a snake. This situation sets up a discussion about how similes and metaphors are used to illustrate a point.

**2.10 Motif** – Pep walks into the house and hears Pip repeating a famous phrase from Edgar Allen Poe’s poem, “The Raven.” Pip explains to Pep how motif has symbolic significance and creates theme or mood as well.

**2.11 Onomatopoeia** – Pep has had a terrible time at the after-school job. Pip tries to calm Pep down by helping with the homework and teaching Pep some grammar and onomatopoeia sounds.

**2.12 Parallelism** – Pep is tired from all of his/her responsibilities and complains to Pip, which initiates a discussion about using parallelism when writing or speaking to make a point. Pip points out that the authors of the Declaration of Independence, Martin Luther King Jr., and George W. Bush used parallelism to persuade, convince and get points across.

**2.13 Personification** - Chip and Dip are in the local city park, wading in the stream, when Chip uses personification to describe the situation. Dip gets annoyed when Chip begins to give non-human things, human qualities.

### Unit 3 - Literary Terms

**3.1 Dynamic Versus Static Characters** - Hip and Hop are still fighting their way through the jungle. Hop looks exhausted and wants to rest, while Hip begins to wonder if Hop is a static or dynamic character in this jungle tale.

**3.2 Fiction and Non-Fiction** – Pip walks in on Pep who is having an imaginary war between pens and pencils. Pip is wondering about Pep’s grip on reality, which prompts a discussion about fiction versus non-fiction.

**3.3 Flashback** - Chip is sitting at a desk in his/her room, supposedly doing homework, but also listening to an mp3 player. Dip walks in and taps Chip on the shoulder hoping to borrow the mp3 player which reminds Chip of the last time Dip borrowed the mp3 player and the disaster that occurred.

**3.4 Foreshadowing** - Chip and Dip are walking down the sidewalk near their house when Chip notices Dip’s odd behavior, and begins to realize something is amiss. Chip explains how foreshadowing is an important literary tool for writers to give readers a sense of suspense and provide indications that something is about to occur.

**3.5 Mood** - Chip is putting decorations on tables, preparing for a Halloween party, when Dip comes into the room, obviously stressed out, and very worried that they haven’t created the proper mood for the “scary” Halloween part. Dip explains how authors create mood in stories.

**3.6 Symbolism** - Chip is laying on the bed doing homework when Dip enters and begins to pester and distract Chip. Dip wants to help Chip on the homework assignment, but doesn’t know what symbolism is, so Chip explains what symbolism is, how it is used, and how symbolism makes writing more interesting to the reader.

**3.7 Tone** - Chip is sitting on the living room couch, once again glued to the phone, when Dip enters and wants some attention. Not getting any Dip returns with a vacuum cleaner and a noise level that prevents Chip from talking, which sets up a confrontational discussion that highlights Chip and Dip’s underlying tone in their comments to each other.

**3.8 Plot and Conflict** – Dip is watching TV, when Chip calls to Dip for help undertaking an adventure. Dip resists helping, but Chip desperately uses this opportunity to discuss plot and conflict.

**3.9 Dramatic Structure** – Dip is sprawled out on the living room couch, coughing and blowing his/her nose. Chip enters the room, listens to Dip whine and begins to relate Dip's cold and behavior to dramatic structure.

**3.10 Exposition and Inciting Incident** – Dip is in the living room watching TV when Chip compares Dip's unchanging, zombie-like behavior to a Sci-Fi movie with a lack of dramatic structure.

**3.11 Rising Action and Climax** – While riding their bikes to the top of Freytag's Hill, Chip and Dip related the obstacles in their way to Rising Action and Climax in Dramatic Structure.

**3.12 Falling Action and Resolution** – Hip and Hop limp out of the jungle, onto the beach, and see a ship passing by. As they swim towards the ship, they discuss their adventure in the jungle in terms of falling action and resolution.

## Unit 4 - Writing Terms

**4.1 Audience** – Pip and Pep are home trying to hook up a new video game system. Pip is in a tangle of cords and clearly frustrated, while Pep is using the manual to help and explaining how the manual is written for a particular audience of readers.

**4.2 Objective Versus Subjective** - Hip and Hop are running through the jungle, looking back over their shoulders every few seconds for the giant, jungle mouse chasing them, when they almost run off a cliff. Thinking about jumping into the river to escape their pursuer, they discuss objective versus subjective in terms of their surviving the jump.

**4.3 Paraphrase** - Hip and Hop are trapped in a large jungle tree, with several creatures that look like llamas circling below. Hip is checking the jungle manual and reading descriptions, trying to determine if the llamas are dangerous, when Hop suggests that given they are in a precarious situation, perhaps paraphrasing might be best, instead of reading the whole thing.

**4.4 Point of View** - Hip and Hop are climbing a mountain, attempting to get high enough to see which direction they should head to reach civilization. Hop is tired and begins to use 1st person narration. This initiates a discussion about writers using various points of view to convey a story and the differences and benefits of such.

**4.5 Setting** – Pip and Pep decide to use their imagination to change the setting of the school to something more interesting. They discuss various factors such as time and location which contribute to the key concept called setting.

**4.6 Slang** – Pep walks into the house acting like a teenager from the 1950's using words and phrases from that time period. Pip uses the opportunity to discuss slang and how slang changes over time.

**4.7 Transitional Words** – Pip is in the process of repairing a broken desk. Pip takes the opportunity to talk to Pep about transitional words and how it allows a writer to put things into chronological order, as well as help organize thoughts and writing, and in this instance gets Pep the tools in the proper order needed.

**4.8 Voice** - Hip and Hop are walking through the jungle, when they encounter a swamp. Thinking about crossing the swamp where jungle alligators reside, Hip pulls out a journal to write their story, so in case they are consumed by jungle alligators, someone might locate their journal and figure out what happened to them. As Hip writes and shares what is written, Hop wonders about the manner in which Hip is writing and listens to Hip describe how literary voice is an author's style of writing.

## 1.4 Comma Used In A Series

*Hop and Hip are relaxing by a stream.*

Hop: Hip, why are you so happy? Don't you remember that we're stuck in the jungle?

Hip: Well, Hop, the jungle has so many wonderful things in it.

Hop: Like what?

Hip: The jungle has peaceful streams COMMA, green leaves COMMA, and interesting creatures.

Hop: What are peaceful streams comma? (*realizing*) Oh, you're going to do something with grammar again aren't you? (*begging*) Come on, Hip. I'm not in a good mood.

Hip: Sorry, Hop, but it's my duty to inform you.

Hop: No, your duty is to inform me about poisonous reptiles, man-eating birds, and aggressive fish.

Hip: Good job.

Hop: Good job at what?

Hip: You just created a list sentence, and in a list sentence you use commas to separate the items in the list.

Hop: I thought you didn't have to put a comma right before "and."

Hip: You don't. You'd only use a comma there if the list was more complex, and if leaving out the comma made the sentence confusing.

Hop: Okay, so let's get this over with. The list sentence that I created should sound like this; "Your duty is to inform me about poisonous reptiles COMMA, man-eating birds and aggressive fish."

Hip: Yup. Now, you're successfully using a comma.

Hop: But didn't you say that sometimes you need the comma before the "and?"

Hip: I did.

Hop: But what kind of sentence would that be?

Hip: Here's an example: "On this adventure we've eaten franks and beans (COMMA), shrimp and grits (COMMA), and beans and rice." If we left the comma out at the end, it may be confusing. Someone might think that we ate beans and then we ate rice, instead of beans and rice together.

Hop: Okay, so we use a comma when separating items in a list sentence, but not before the final "and." However, if the sentence is complicated, we may want to put the comma before the "and" just to make sure the sentence is not confusing.

Hip: You got it.

Hop: I knew if I wanted any chance at enjoying the sun, the stream and the quiet, I'd have to wrap this one up quick.

*Author – Jonathon Philipp*

### **Post-Reading Activity**

A.) Punctuate the following sentences using commas.

1. Hop enjoys complaining sleeping and eating.
2. Hip has lived in Costa Rica Brazil and Alaska.
3. Hop's favorite foods are nachos pizza and cake.
4. Hip eats vanilla chocolate and cookies and cream ice cream.

B.) Create your own list sentences using commas. Use the following questions to help you.

1. What are your three favorite foods?
2. What are your three favorite movies or books?
3. What are three things that you do when you get home after school?
4. What kind of music do you listen to?



## 1.10 Pronoun

*Pep is frantic after having lost his fish Sir-Swims-A-Lot. Pip tries to calm Pep down with a discussion of grammar terms and pronouns.*

Pep: *(Shouting)* Pip! Pip!

Pip: *(Comes running and is out of breath)* Geez! What is it, Pep?

Pep: *(In a panicked voice)* It's Sir Swims-A-Lot! I can't find Sir Swims-A-Lot anywhere. I set Sir Swims-A-Lot down on the table, and then I walked away from Sir Swims-A-Lot, and now Sir Swims-A-Lot is gone!

Pip: Well, isn't the problem obvious?

Pep: *(Frantic)* No! What's the problem?!

Pip: The problem is that you're not using any pronouns.

Pep: *(Talking fast)* Pronouns? What is that, some kind of super fish food? Will that bring Sir Swims-A-Lot back?

Pip: No. You should have asked, "Will that bring him back?"

Pep: But I'm not looking for him, I'm looking for Sir Swims-A-Lot!

Pip: Sir Swims-A-Lot is him.

Pep: How do you know who him is?

Pip: Him, a pronoun, is Sir Swims-A-Lot.

Pep: Wait – I thought pronouns was the super fish food.

Pip: No, Pep. Pronouns being a fish food is something you made up just now.

Pep: Oh.

Pip: A pronoun, Pep, is a type of grammatical word that substitutes for a noun. The pronoun is *him*. The noun that the pronoun substitutes for is Sir Swims-A-Lot.

Pep: Is a pronoun a fish too?

Pip: No, Pep. It's just a grammatical term. Think back to when you told me about losing Sir Swims-A-Lot when I first walked in.

Pep: Yeah *(sniffs and speaks like starting to cry)* and he's gone.

Pip: Yes, Pep. But you said, and I quote, "It's Sir Swims-A-Lot! I can't find Sir Swims-A-Lot anywhere. I set Sir Swims-A-Lot down on the table, and then I walked away from Sir Swims-A-Lot, and now Sir Swims-A-Lot is gone!"

Pep: *(Laughs)* Hey, you sound just like me!

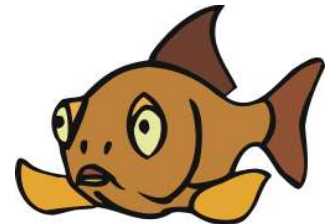
Pip: Yes, but think about how much time and energy you could have saved if you had used a pronoun for Sir Swims-A-Lot.

Pep: You mean leave Sir Swims-A-Lot out?

Pip: No. Think. If you said the whole sentence again, but use the pronouns "him" and "he" in place of Sir Swims-A-Lot's name after you mention his name once.

Pep: Whoa! Slow down, Einstein!

Pip: It's a simple concept, really. You do it all the time, probably without even noticing it. Imagine, if I rephrased what you said with a pronoun, and I quote, "It's Sir Swims-A-Lot! I can't find him anywhere. I set him down on the table, and then I walked away from him, and now he is gone!"



Pep: Oh, you mean like if I say, "Sir Swims-A-Lot is my best friend. He likes when I spend time with him."

Pip: Right! The words he and him are pronouns. Wait, I thought I was your best friend, Pep.

Pep: Yeah, you're totally my best friend... after Sir Swims-A-Lot.

Pip: Yeah, but he's a fish.

Pep: Well, aside from your excellent use of the pronoun just now, you have a tendency to waste time with silly English terms when we should be doing more important things.

Pip: Like what?

Pep: Like searching for him!

Pip: Oh yeah, right. *(Both look under the desk. Pip picks an imaginary bowl up and sets it on the desk)* Here he is.

Pep: Oh, thank goodness! *(Talking to the fish)* There's my widdle Sir fishy-wishy.

Pip: You're weird, Pep. Well, at least you know what a pronoun is.

Pep: Yeah. That's that super fish food.

Pip: Wait. Were you even listening to anything I said just now.

Pep: Yeah, you said, "Let's find him with some pronoun fish food," and then I found him under the desk.

Pip: Wait, what? None of that even happened! Plus, I was the one who found him.

Pep: Who's him?

Pip: Sir Swims-A-Lot.

Pep: Yeah, what about Sir Swims-A-Lot?

Pip: Wait. I don't know if you're just messing with me, or if you really don't get it.

Pep: Don't get what?

Pip: Pronouns!

Pep: Oh, you mean the super fish food?

Pip: Stop saying that, that's not right at all. A pronoun is...

Pep: *(interrupts)* ...a type of grammatical word that substitutes for a noun. Yeah, Pip, you're very smart. Now keep an eye on Sir Swims-A-Lot while I go make a grilled cheese sandwich.

Pip: *(Mumbling to self)* S/he does this all the time.

Pep: S/he. You mean me. That's excellent use of the pronoun Pip.

Pip: B-but you said it was...

Pep: *(interrupts)* fish food. It is. Also, it is a pronoun for fish food.

Pip: I wonder what it looks like inside your head.

Pep: It looks like I've been eating super fish food my whole life!

Pip: I'm sure it does.

*Author – Thomas Swieciak*

## 2.1 Alliteration

*Pip and Pep are at an all-you-can-eat buffet. Both Pip and Pep are piling food on their plates and the conversation turns towards a discussion of alliteration.*

Pep: Hey, how in the heck did you heave that helping of ham onto your plate?

Pip: Alliteration.

Pep: Alliteration? How does alliteration help heave ham?

Pip: No, Pep - you're using alliteration.

Pep: I am? I thought I was using the English language.

Pip: *(Talking with a mouthful of imaginary food)* No, Pep. You see, alliteration is another type figurative language.

Pep: *(Slaps palm to forehead)* Oh, no... not that stuff again.

Pip: Hey, don't blame me, Pep. You're the one who keeps using it.

Pep: OK... well what did I do this time?

Pip: You "heaved a helping of ham."

Pep: *(Points to Pip's plate)* Hold on... you're the one heaving ham, ham-heaver.

Pip: No – that phrase "heaving ham" uses the "H" sound in an alliterate way.

Pep: An illiterate way? Are you saying I can't read? How dare you, Pip!

Pip: No, listen Pep. Alliteration is the repetition of the same letter sound in the first syllables in a set of words or phrases. It gets used a lot in poetry.

Pep: How do you mean?

Pip: Well, you said "how in the heck did you heave that helping of ham onto your plate?"

Pep: I said that because that meat slice is as big as your head, and you'll choke if you...

Pip: *(Interrupts)* When you said that phrase, you used the letter "H" to begin 5 different words in the same sentence.

Pep: *(Counting on fingers and whispering)* How, heck, heave, helping and ham.

*(Looks up at Pip with a large smile).*

Pip: Right. Now if I wanted to use alliteration, I could say something like, ummmm... perfect way to point out my preference for pork, Pep.

Pep: What is the alliteration in that sentence?

Pip: Well, isn't it obvious? It's the "P" sound.

Pep: *(Counting on fingers again)* Perfect, point, preference and pork.

Pip: Right, I started four different words with the same sound.

Pep: So, after arguing about alliteration, I've instantly imagined indefinitely integrating it into my many methods of commanding conversations.

Pip: Now, Pep, let's not go overboard with the alliteration. You used the "A," "I," "M," and "C" all in one sentence. That's overkill.

Pep: Good point, Pip. I would rather observe your optimistic opportunism concerning horribly heavy helpings of ham.

Pip: *(Shoves an imaginary ham hock into Pep's mouth)* Put a hock in it!

*Author – Thomas Swieciak*

### **Post-Reading Activity**

How many different ways can you use alliteration? Pick three letters from the alphabet and try to write sentences that use those letters in an alliterate way.

## 2.9 Simile and Metaphor

*Pep walks in and finds Pip slithering on the floor and acting like a snake.*

Pep: What are you doing down there on the ground, Pip?

Pip: What does it look like, Pep? I'm slithering.

Pep: You call *that* slithering?

Pip: You think *you* can do better, Pep?

Pep: No, Pip... that's cool. I don't want to be like a snake. Everyone can say that Pip is like a snake.

Pip: Simile!

Pep: What's that?

Pip: Simile!

Pep: Is that the name of the snake you're pretending to be?

Pip: No, it's the name of a comparison between two unlike things using the words "like" or "as."

Pep: Wait... I thought you were doing the slithering thing. Now you're similithering?

Pip: No, Pep. You used a simile.

Pep: When?

Pip: Just now.

Pep: How?

Pip: You said, Pep, and I quote, "everyone can say that Pip is like a snake."

Pep: I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, Pip.

Pip: No, no – listen. You compared me to a snake. You said, "Pip is like a snake."

Pep: (*Sarcastically*) Oh, Pip... (*pretending to cry*) can you ever forgive me?

Pip: Sure. Now listen. You compared me, a person, to something that is not like me at all, a snake.

Pep: A reptile, in fact.

Pip: Right. But my point is that the comparison, between me and a snake, is a technique that writers use. It's a figure of speech – also called figurative language.

Pep: You mean they compare everyone to snakes?

Pip: *(Sighs)* No, Pep. *(Pip uncovers an imaginary plate with a donut on it)* Hey, Pep... it's your favorite.

Pep: It sure is! *(Grabs the imaginary donut and gobbles it up – then burps loudly)* That was de-licious.

Pip: I would say that you were as hungry as a bear.

Pep: Are you saying I'm like a hungry bear? *(Stops and thinks for a moment)* But I'm not a bear at all! I'm a person.

Pip: Precisely. I made a simile about you. I compared you, a person, to something not like you at all, a bear.

Pep: But I'm kind of like a bear. We both like donuts.

Pip: You know what I mean. A bear is an animal. You're a human being. They are two unlike things... a person and a bear.

Pep: *(Growls)* You've made me angry, Pip. Now I'm an angry bear.

Pip: No, Pep. Now you're using a metaphor.

Pep: *(Confused)* Who's-it-for?

Pip: You made a comparison between two unlike things directly – that is you did *not* use the words "like" or "as."

Pep: Wait, I thought we were talking about simile.

Pip: Well, you see Pep, they're very similar.

Pep: How so?

Pip: Well, a simile compares two unlike things and uses the words "like" or "as." For example, I said "Pep is as hungry as a bear," and you said, "Pip is *like* a snake."

Pep: *(Laughs)* I'm bigger than you because I'm a bear and you're a snake.

Pip: See, now you're using metaphor.

Pep: *(Stamps foot)* No, now you're confusing me!

Pip: No, Pep. See, a simile compares unlike things *indirectly*. So, even though you're as hungry as a bear, you're still a person.

Pep: Then how did I use a metaphor just now?

Pip: Because, Pep. You said, "I'm a bear." You didn't use the words "like" or "as." You compared yourself *directly* to a bear – as if you actually *are* a bear.

Pep: So a simile would be, "Pip was like a slithering snake in the grass."

Pip: Right! And a metaphor would be, "Pep was a hungry bear, eating the delicious donut."

Pep: Are there any more donuts?

Pip: Well, no. I only brought one donut to illustrate the point that...

Pep: (*Growls*) Bear no like only one donut! Bear want more donuts!

Pip: Pep, you're being ridiculous.

Pep: (*Keeps growling*) Bear still hungry! Bear going to eat snake!

Pip: (*Growing impatient*) You know what, Pip? This conversation is a disaster area. How about that metaphor?

Pep: (*Loudly*) Little snake better slither like the wind! How's about that for a simile?!

Pip: Surely you don't mean to actually try to...

Pep: (*Shouts*) *Eat you?!*

Pip: (*Hides slightly under desk*) Lesson over!

*Author – Thomas Swieciak*



### **Post-Reading Activity**

What are some similes you could write using the following words:

Rain - Needles

Clouds – Cotton

Snow - Diamonds

Sun - Furnace

Now, rewrite your similes as metaphors.

### 3.12 Falling Action and Resolution

*Hip and Hop limp out of the jungle and on to the beach. In the distance, a ship sails by.*

Hop: A ship!!! A ship!!!! Hip, do something!!!!

Hip: I love this part of the story.

Hop: What part?

Hip: FALLING ACTION and RESOLUTION.

Hop: Me too. (*panicking*) Now can you please do something so we can get out of this horrible jungle!!!

Hip: (*lost in thought*) Yes... the falling action. The point where we know that the worst is behind us. We're just sort of coasting until we get to the resolution.

Hop: Stop coasting and get us out of here!!

Hip: Do you remember how the fanged jungle-frog bit you, and injected you with that toxin, and for a moment, you thought you were a jungle parrot?

Hop: Of course.

Hip: And at the same time your hallucinations caused you to climb that tree so that you could fly away, I was fighting the saber-toothed jungle kangaroos in order to get you the antidote for the fanged jungle-frog's venom?

Hop: Yes, I remember it was the worst thing I ever had to go through.

Hip: Of course it was the worst thing... it was the climax of our story. But once I was able to karate kick all of the saber-toothed jungle-kangaroos, and steal the anti-venom from their nest, I was then able to fashion a dart-gun, which I used to shoot the anti-venom into your neck just before you jumped out of the tree.

Hop: Only problem was that the dart hurt so much that I still fell out of the tree ANYWAY!!!

Hip: Yes, but it was during your fall that you spotted the ocean, where we stand now. So, it was the ending of the climax that led to the falling action that we're in now.

Hop: But we won't have a good resolution if you don't do something to let that ship know we're here.

Hip: (*snapping out of his thoughts*) Oh! Right! (*digging through his/her bag*) Where is it?

*Hip removes a flare-gun from his/her backpack, points it into the air, and fires a shell that explodes in the sky.*

Hop: Do you think they saw us?

Hip: I'm not sure, Hip. During the falling action, the outcome or the "resolution" is usually obvious, but it's just a matter of getting there. (*pause*) Look! The ship is going to round that peninsula, maybe if we take that shortcut through the jungle, we can cut it off.

Hop: I'm not going into that jungle anymore!

Hip: It's the only way.

Hop: *(crosses his/her arms for a moment to be stubborn, but gives in)* Fine. Last time, though!

Hip: Let's go.

*Hip and Hop run through the jungle and reach the other side of the peninsula.*

Hop: Now what?

*Hip pulls out the flare gun and shoots it just in front of the passing ship.*

Hop: Please, please see us.

*A HORN sounds on the ship.*

Hop: *(excited)* That means they saw us right?

Hip: Yes, it does.

*The ship starts to turn and heads directly toward Hop and Hip. Hop runs toward the ocean and jumps in, and then he/she swims toward the boat. Hip follows Hop's lead, and jumps in the water, also.*

Hop: We're saved. We're saved.

Hip: Be careful for the jungle sharks, I mean sharks.

Hop: *(scared)* Sharks?

Hip: *(laughing)* Just kidding. Like I said before, during the falling action, the worst is behind us. So if anything, the sharks might just nibble us, but they probably won't eat us... unless of course that's the resolution. *(pauses to think)* SWIM FASTER!!!

*Hop and Hip swim quickly toward the boat and are pulled in by some sailors. Hop and Hip lay on the deck exhausted.*

Hop: I can't believe we've made it.

Hip: The resolution is clear – we've made it safely out of the jungle and will now get to go back to our homes. The story is complete; the outcome is certain – all things ended happily.

Hop: How do you know that this is the resolution?

Hip: The resolution is when the major conflicts are resolved. In our case, the major conflict was us against nature. The question that we had to ask at the very beginning of our story was, "will we make it out of the jungle safely?" Now that that question has been resolved, the story is over, and we are going to go home. The only thing that could prevent this from being the resolution is if a new INCITING INCIDENT throws us back into the dramatic structure again.

*Offstage mumbling is heard.*

Hop: What did that guy say?

Hip: It appears we've been picked up by pirates who plan to hold us for ransom, so I'm afraid that we have another adventure in store for us.

Hop: I hate cruise ships.

*Author – Jonathon Philipp*

## **Post-Reading Activity**

A. Define the following terms.

Falling Action:

Resolution:

B. Think about the ending of your favorite book or movie.

1. What do you think was the falling action?

2. What do you think was the resolution?

## 4.4 Point of View

*Hip and Hop are climbing a mountain. Hop is exhausted.*



Hop: Hop is tired. Hop wants to go to sleep now.

Hip: *(Looking down at Hop)*. What are you doing?

Hop: Hop is using the 3<sup>rd</sup> person.

Hip: Why?

Hop: Hip wants to forget about this bad situation.

Hip: Well, if you're going to use 3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view, you should probably understand 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view.

Hop: Point of view?

Hip: Point of view is basically the perspective of who's telling the story.

Hop: You mean the narrator?

Hip: Exactly. If we have a 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view, our narrator is the main character in the story, and we know its 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view because we read pronouns like "I" and "me." When an author chooses to use 1<sup>st</sup> person, the reader is able to get inside the main character's head and know what he or she is thinking.

Hop: Yeah. I know what kind of books you're talking about. I like those kinds of stories because it feels like I'm in the story. It's almost like when I read "I" and "me," I think the story is really happening to me.

Hip: Sometimes that's why an author chooses to write using a 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view.

Hop: Now that I know there is a 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view and a 3<sup>rd</sup> person, is there a 2<sup>nd</sup> person point of view?

Hip: There is, but it isn't used very much.

Hop: Why?

Hip: Because the 2<sup>nd</sup> person point of view uses the "you" pronoun. It's like the narrator is talking to the reader.

Hop: Weird.

Hip: It's kind of like when you're watching a movie, and a character in the movie looks into the camera and talks to you.

Hop: Okay, so 2<sup>nd</sup> person point of view is when the narrator is talking directly towards the reader, but it isn't used much

Hip: It's kind of a weird feeling when you see 2<sup>nd</sup> person.

Hip: *(turns to face and talks to audience)* It would feel strange if I just started talking to you all wouldn't it?

Hip: *(faces Hop again)* I usually like writing in 3<sup>rd</sup> person because I want a more objective voice; I just want to describe the actions without adding my personal opinion.

Hop: Using 3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view can be pretty fun.

- Hip: 3<sup>rd</sup> person means that someone outside of the main character is telling the story. You can tell that an author is using 3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view when you see the pronouns “he,” “she,” “they,” “their;” or when the characters are all referred to by name. If someone was reading what you were saying before, they would identify it as 3<sup>rd</sup> person, because they would read, “Hop is tired. Hop wants to go to sleep now.” The narrator is speaking like he or she is outside of the situation.
- Hop: I just thought of something. If the main character isn’t telling the story, who is the narrator in 3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view?
- Hip: That depends. There are two types of **3<sup>rd</sup> person narration: 3<sup>rd</sup> person limited and 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient**. 3<sup>rd</sup> person limited is usually when a character in the story is the narrator, so we only know what that character knows. Think of it as if there was someone following us around this jungle, writing about everything that we do and say. The narrator would only be able to describe what he or she could observe. A person running around in the jungle couldn’t see into our minds, right?
- Hop: That’s true. So 3<sup>rd</sup> person limited is when the narrator describes what’s happening to the main character, but is limited because the narrator doesn’t know what that character is thinking.
- Hip: It can be a lot of fun to read these types of stories because we have to use the descriptions to figure out how the characters are feeling; there’s a little bit of mystery in these stories because we don’t know everything.
- Hop: But Hip, I’ve read a bunch of stories where the narrator seems to know everything.
- Hip: Those stories are written from 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient point of view. In omniscient, the narrator knows everything: the past, the future, and what characters are thinking. A lot of people call this the god point of view because the narrator seems to know everything about everything.
- Hop: Why do authors use this point of view?
- Hip: Sometimes an author wants to be able to jump inside the heads of all the characters and directly reveal information to the reader that 1<sup>st</sup> person and 3<sup>rd</sup> person limited wouldn’t be able to.
- Hop: Okay. In 1st person narration, the reader only knows what the main character reveals or knows. In 3<sup>rd</sup> person limited narration, the reader only knows what one of the characters in the story witnesses or discovers. However, in 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient, the reader can learn anything about any characters; including what they are thinking.
- Hip: You’ve got it.
- Hop: I’m kind of like the 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient narrator, because I know everything.
- Hip: Do you know that you’re about to step in a hole and fall down the mountain?
- Hop: Wha....

*Hop slips and starts to roll down the mountain.*

*Author – Jonathon Philipp*

## Post-Reading Activity

A. Define the following point of views: 1<sup>ST</sup> Person, 2<sup>ND</sup> Person, 3<sup>RD</sup> Person Limited, or 3<sup>RD</sup> Person OMNISCIENT.

B. Label the following sentences as either 1<sup>ST</sup> Person, 2<sup>ND</sup> Person, 3<sup>RD</sup> Person LIMITED, or 3<sup>RD</sup> Person OMNISCIENT.

1. A smile formed as she delicately removed the book from the shelf.
2. When she removed the book from the shelf, she was very happy because she finally found the book her mother gave her.
3. I removed the book from the shelf as quickly as I could.
4. Could you shut this book, please?



# DIALOGUES

*for the*

# ENGLISH CLASSROOM

By Claudia Felske, Ann Phillips, Brian Wegener, and Craig Berg



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# Section I - Dialogue Abstracts

## Unit 1 - Literary Analysis and Close Reading

**1.1 Abusing Literature Aids** - Pip and Pep meet each other outside of their school. Pip walks up to Pep who is sitting at a picnic table and begin to discuss the book *To Kill a Mockingbird* and how literature aids can be abused when attempting to understand the book.

*Concepts:* *To Kill a Mockingbird*, online literature sites, getting behind in reading, using literature aids.

**1.2 Alliteration** (student written example) - Chris and Cole are talking to their coach when they accidentally use alliteration and think they have just gotten into trouble by using inappropriate language. Their coach proceeds to explain alliteration.

*Concepts:* poetic devices, descriptive writing.

**1.3 Allusions** - Hop and Hip are hanging out in Hip's back yard, keeping an eye on Hagar, Hip's exceptionally curious and mischievous 5-year-old cousin.

*Concepts:* allusions, literary analysis, literary interpretation, symbolism.

**1.4 Annotating Texts** - Hip is eavesdropping outside his older sister Holly's room. Intrigued by what he is hearing, he wants to find out who she is talking to. Holly's speech is intermittent, as if she's talking on the phone with long pauses between replies. Hip squirms in anticipation.

*Concepts:* annotations, reading comprehension, imagery, symbolism, theme, style.

**1.5 Hyperbole** - Zig sits at a table in a school library. He is puzzling over a sheet of paper, when Zag comes racing in.

*Concepts:* hyperbole, poetic devices, exaggeration, descriptive writing.

**1.6 Imagery** - Pip and Pep are lying on a beautiful white sand beach. They are taking a break from work to relax for a little while.

*Concepts:* imagery, descriptive writing, elaboration.

**1.7 Literal versus Figurative** - Hip and Hop are walking to McDonald's after school. Hop is starving, and Hip is in one of his argumentative moods.

*Concepts:* figurative language, metaphorical language, figurative vs. literal language.

**1.8 Motifs in Literature** - Hop and Hip are listening to music in Hop's room. It's filled wall-to-wall with Green Bay Packer football memorabilia.

*Concepts:* motif, symbol, style, theme.

**1.9 Multiple Interpretations** - Pip and Pep are eating lunch after English class.

*Concepts:* literary analysis, metaphors, allegory, multiple meanings, supporting arguments.

**1.10 Shakespeare Part I: Why Read Shakespeare?** - Hop is sitting in his room, trying to slug through *Romeo and Juliet*, talking to himself.

*Concepts:* Shakespeare, literary analysis, allusions.

**1.11 Shakespeare Part II: How to Read Shakespeare** - Hop is back in his room the following day. Having met the ghost of Shakespeare, he is motivated to read *Romeo and Juliet*, but is struggling to understand what he's reading. He attempts to conjure the ghost of Shakespeare for help.

*Concepts:* Shakespeare, literary analysis, close reading.

**1.12 Oxymoron and Paradox** - Pip and Pep are getting ready to go out to dinner. They are arguing about where they should go.

*Concepts:* oxymoron, paradox, ironic phrases.

**1.13 Prose** - Pip and Pep are wandering around their local "mega bookstore." They are getting more and more frustrated.

*Concepts:* defining prose, genres of literature.

**1.14 Reading Aloud** - Pip and Pep are walking in the hall after leaving their English class. Pep looks stunned and Pip is totally embarrassed.

*Concepts:* reading aloud, class preparation, presentation skills, small group preparation, reading with feeling.

**1.15 Structure as an Interpretive Clue** - Hop and Hip are trying to do their homework at Hip's house but are being interrupted by loud chatter from a baby shower taking place in the next room.

*Concepts:* structure, form, literary interpretation.

## Unit 2 - Punctuation and Grammar

**2.1 Appositives and Appositive Phrases** - Nick and Nora are bowling – another interesting date. It’s Nora’s turn, so she stands, bowling ball poised in front of her face, focusing on the lane in front of her.

*Concepts:* appositives, grammar, sentence variety.

**2.2 The Ellipsis** - Nick and Nora are browsing through racks in a retail store. Nick looks a bit confused, but Nora appears confident.

*Concepts:* punctuation, editing, proofreading.

**2.3 Misplaced Modifiers** - Nick and Nora are playing ping-pong. It is apparent that Nora can play very well. Nick is impressed. Nora aces Nick with a quickly efficient serve across the table.

*Concepts:* grammar, usage, adjectives, descriptive writing, clarity, editing.

**2.4 Parentheses** - Pip and Pep meet up at a coffee shop.

*Concepts:* sentence combining, sentence variety, use of parentheses, parenthetical statements.

**2.5 Pronouns and Their Antecedents** - Nick and Nora – out on their first date – are miniature-golfing. They are currently attempting the ubiquitous and dreaded “windmill” hole. Nick is standing near the hole, having successfully putted through the windmill. Nora is lining up her first shot through the windmill.

*Concepts:* grammar, usage, clarity, agreement.

**2.6 Semi Colon: The Ultimate Weapon** - It’s 6:00 a.m. on a crisp Saturday morning in October. Hip and Hop are waiting in line outside an electronics store for the highly-anticipated release of the video game, World Demolition IV.

*Concepts:* semi-colons, sentence combining, sentence variety.

**2.7 Verb Tense Agreement** - Zig and Zag sit on the floor in a corner of a desolate hallway. The door to a classroom is just to the right of them; an emergency exit is to the left. They appear confused.

*Concepts:* grammar, usage, verb agreement, clarity, editing.

**2.8 The Way of the Dash** - The scene is a costume party. Nick and Nora are strangers, but their costumes are similar, so they are eyeing each other tentatively. Nora is clad entirely in white – white shoes, white skirt, white t-shirt. Nick’s outfit is similar – white shoes, white pants, white t-shirt – except that in the middle of his shirt is a black horizontal line.

*Concepts:* punctuation, sentence variety, style, editing.

## Unit 3 - Writing

**3.1 Beyond the Five-Paragraph Essay** - Hip and Hop meet at Hop's house to peer edit their poetry analysis essays. It's Hip's first time at his new friend's house.

*Concept:* essay structure.

**3.2 Drafting and Editing** - Two female English teachers, Ann and Claudia, are sitting on Ann's orange outdoor sectional with a beautiful view of a lake.

*Concepts:* rough drafts, editing, drafting, writing process.

**3.3 Elaboration and Focus** - Hop and Hip are in Home Economics class. They are pulling their unsuccessful creations out of the oven, putting them on the cooling rack.

*Concepts:* writing, the writing process, support, elaboration, focus.

**3.4 Embedding Quotes** - Hip and Hop are in the computer lab at school, working on their research papers. Hop, big grin on face, grabs his paper out of the printer and heads over to Hip.

*Concepts:* embedding quotes, using sources, supporting assertions, literary analysis, research papers, the writing process, plagiarism.

**3.5 How to Read a Poem** - Hop and Hip cruise through the park in search of Genius Bob, an eccentric musician and vagabond sage. As usual, he is singing and strumming his guitar. He stops as they approach.

*Concepts:* poetry, literary analysis.

**3.6 Logical Fallacies: False Dilemma** - The scene is late afternoon in a doughnut shop. Zag and Zig sit at a table after school with a box of doughnuts between them. Their backpacks are open and resting on seats beside them, and both have notebooks out on the table. Zig is staring at his, a look of intense concentration on his face. Zag, holding up a jelly doughnut, sighs reverently. Zig continues to think...

*Concepts:* logical fallacies, composition, rhetoric, argument, false dichotomy.

**3.7 Logical Fallacies: Argumentum ad Hominem** - Zag and Zig sit in the bleachers of the high school gym. Zag is mesmerized by something he sees in front of them on the gym floor. Zig is also riveted, but by something on the screen of his laptop computer, which is open on his lap.

*Concepts:* logical fallacies, composition, rhetoric, argument, personal attacks.

**3.8 Logical Fallacies: Circular Reasoning** - Zig and Zag are standing around in gym class. Zig practices lightly hitting a volleyball up in the air. Zag also has a volleyball; he is trying to balance it on top of his head.

*Concepts:* logical fallacies, composition, rhetoric, argument.

**3.9 Logical Fallacies: Hasty Generalization** - Zig and Zag sit across from each other at a lunch table, a box of jelly doughnuts on the table between them. Zag is holding one up and staring at it. Zig is poring over a page in his notebook, clearly puzzled.

*Concepts:* logical fallacies, composition, rhetoric, argument.

**3.10 Rhetorical Appeals** - Pip and Pep are eating lunch on a bench outside of their school.

*Concepts:* ethos, pathos, logos, persuasion, credibility, speech, arguments.

**3.11 Significant Closings** - Two teachers are sitting at a restaurant after seeing a movie. They are having dessert and coffee.

*Concepts:* conclusions, big picture ideas, essay format, writing conclusions, the reader's perspective.

**3.12 Subject versus Title of a Paper** - Hop is in the library computer lab, head on the table in frustration. He drops his phone into his backpack and bangs the table with his fists.

*Concepts:* style, voice, writing an effective title.

**3.13 The Thesis Statement** - The scene is a high school hallway, lockers extending as far as you can see. Zag and Zig sit on the floor in front of what we assume are their lockers. Zig pores intently over a page of text; Zag, equally intent, searches a page of a children's book.

*Concepts:* composition, rhetoric, argument.

**3.14 Using Sentence Variety** - Pep walks up to Pip at a table in a common area of their high school. Pip is feverishly working on some homework and failing miserably.

*Concepts:* sentence variety, simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, editing.

**3.15 The Writing Process: Time Management, Calendars, and Wood** - Jimmy, a sophomore boy, comes into Ms. F's room. His tone is dejected. He's holding a beautifully-crafted wooden shelf.

*Concepts:* writing, the writing process, time management, organization.

## Unit 4 - Research

**4.1 Citing Sources** - Zig and Zag sit at their local library. Both have their laptop computers open in front of them. Zag looks confused, but enthused.

*Concepts:* research, credibility, works cited, plagiarism, MLA format.



**4.2 Effective Presentations** - Pip and Pep are slowly being lulled into sleep by Mr. Green's presentation.

*Concepts:* PowerPoint, presentations, speaking, presenting.

**4.3 Evaluating Credible Sources** - Zig and Zag sit side by side at two computers. Both are focused intently on the screens in front of them.

*Concepts:* research, credibility, biased sources.

**4.4 In-text Citations:** What Goes in the Parentheses? - Zag and Zig – still working on a research project – sit at a table in the school cafeteria. Zig pores over a few stapled pages. Zag tosses three crumpled wads of paper in the air in front of him.

*Concepts:* research, MLA format, citations, punctuation.

**4.5 Note Taking** - A girl is sitting at a table in the school library working feverishly. She has a huge stack of cards next to her in various colors with lots of post-it style tabs on them. She is very stylish and preppy looking. She looks like a “popular girl.” A boy is sitting next to her with three cards in front of him. The cards look to be long on information and short on numbers. He has his head down on the table and he looks to be sleeping. He is dressed in all black and has a lot of piercings on his face. He is the typical “counter culture” type. A teacher is circling the room checking on student progress. She approaches the girl.

*Concepts:* note taking, being succinct, researching your topic, notecards.

**4.6 Plagiarism** - Pip and Pep are walking out of school at the end of the day. Pep is visibly angry.

*Concepts:* academic integrity, plagiarism, using your own ideas, giving credit, citations.

## Unit 5 - Miscellaneous

**5.1 Pip and Pep Discuss the Finer Points of Dialogues** - Two high school teachers discuss the benefits of using dialogues in their english classes.

**5.2 Pip and Pep Begin English: An Introduction to Dialogues** - Pip and Pep are excited about their english class and discuss some of the positive things english class will do for them.

## 1.12 Oxymoron and Paradox

*Pip and Pep are getting ready to go out to dinner. They are arguing about where they should go.*

Pep: I don't want to go to dinner there.

Pip: Why?

Pep: Because the food is horrible and it is too expensive.

Pip: Well, how about Luigi's? I've heard that their pizza is awful good.

Pep: I don't know, I've heard nobody goes there because it's too busy.

Pip: Well that makes no sense.

Pep: What makes no sense?

Pip: "Nobody goes there because it is too busy"...That makes no sense. If no one goes there then it is empty, not busy.

Pep: Well, you know what I mean. Wait....you said something that makes no sense, too.

Pip: I did?

Pep: Yes you did. You said, "the pizza is awful good." How is that possible? How can something be awful and good at the same time?

Pip: Wow, I guess you're right. What is that called?

Pep: I don't know. Let me google it on my phone. Just a sec.

Pip: Ok

Pep: So, I typed in "awful good" and it says that it is an oxymoron.

Pip: A what?

Pep: An oxymoron, it says that it is a part of speech that happens when you contradict something...oh, look at this, it says that it come from a Greek word meaning "sharp dull."

Pip: Ahahaha! That is too funny. I had a cousin once who was a sharp dull.

Pep: What happened to him?

Pip: He turned up missing.

Pep: He what?

Pip: He...ahh, got it, another oxymoron. How could he turn up and be missing at the same time?

Pep: Right.

Pip: Man, I bet we use a lot of oxymorons all the time. Like, the oxymoron you said before "nobody goes there because it is too busy."

Pep: No, that's not an oxymoron.

Pip: It's not?

Pep: No, that was a paradox; I looked that up, too.

Pip: Wait, what is a paradox?

Pep: A paradox is like an oxymoron only it's more about a whole situation not just a couple of words that are contradictory.

Pip: *(sarcastically)* Oh, yeah that totally makes sense.

Pep: *(shocked)* It does?

Pip: *(defeated)* No.

Pep: *(frustrated)* That figures. Listen, my mom used to say that I wasn't allowed near the water until I could swim. Do you see why that doesn't make sense?

Pip: Of course. How could you learn how to swim if you couldn't ...OHHHH I get it!

Pep: Yes! And that makes me think about my grandpa. He always used to say that we have learned from history that we don't learn from history.

Pip: Whoa! That's deep.

Pep: I know.

Pip: Thinking this much makes me hungry. Are you ready for dinner?

Pep: Yeah. Why don't we just go here? Or is it too busy for you?

Pip: No, this is fine. They look like a peaceful mob of people.

Pep: Hahahaha....peaceful mob...HILARIOUS!

Author - Ann Phillips

## 2.3 Misplaced Modifiers

*Nick and Nora are playing ping-pong. It is apparent that Nora can play very well. Nick is impressed. Nora aces Nick with a screaming serve across the table.*

Nick: Well, well. I had no idea.

Nora: What's that, fella?

Nick: I did not know I was keepin' company with a ping-pong hustler.

Nora: *(raising an eyebrow)* Watch your phraseology there, bub?

Nick: Good thing this establishment does not tolerate gambling. You could take me to the cleaners.

Nora: And don't you forget it. *(zipping another serve past him)*

Nick: Holy shooting stars! Where'd it go?

Nora: Right into the record books.  
That's game. *(smiling sweetly)* Again.

Nick: Wow. I've almost lost every game, so far.

Nora: *(confused)* Huh?

Nick: Sure. I've only won once, while you've won three times.

Nora: Yes, honey-buns, but what you said – "I've almost lost every game" – sounds like you won every game, but by a narrow margin.

Nick: What? That's not what I meant to say, sugar.

Nora: But it sounds as if you "almost lost" four times.

Nick: *(realizing)* Ah! So I should have said, "I've lost almost every game, so far?"

Nora: That's the ticket, grammar boy.

Nick: So my modifier, "almost," was misplaced next to the word lost, implying that I won, but came close to losing...

Nora: Uh huh.



Nick: ...when in reality, I did not have a chance against the devastatingly tenacious – yet also devastatingly lovely – Nora.

Nora: Don't you forget it, handsome.

Nick: So if, for example, I said "Nora's serves overwhelmed Nick flying across the table," it would be confusing.

Nora: Yes! Immediately I have an image of you caroming off the surface of the table.

Nick: It should be "Nora's serves, flying across the table, overwhelmed Nick."

Nora: The serves are flying – not Nick.

Nick: Ah yes.

Nora: Baby-doll, you come up with the most interesting date nights.

Nick: Some guys got it, I guess.

Nora: A romantic evening of ping-pong and grammar.

Nick: I could light some candles on the table – create an ambience?

Nora: 'Might get in the way of my serve.

Nick: *(innocently)* What a shame.

Nora: C'mon, smarty-pants. One more game.

Nick: See? This date is working. You're merely putty in my hands, now.

Nora: *(smiling)* We'll see about that, Mister. Your serve.

*Nora tosses the ball to Nick, who serves.*

Author – Brian Wegener

## 2.5 Pronouns and Their Antecedents

*Nick and Nora – out on their first date – are miniature-golfing. They are currently attempting the ubiquitous and dreaded “windmill” hole. Nick is standing near the hole, having successfully putt through the windmill. Nora is lining up her first shot through the windmill.*

Nick: You can do it, my little birdie.

Nora: Easy for you to say, my darling putter.

Nick: Whaddaya mean, my ... uh ... little tee shot?

Nora: You already made it through the stupid windmill blades, my dearest fairway driver.

Nick: Ooh, I like that one.

Nora: *(executing a fine putt into the windmill)* Thanks. I was rather proud of it, but let's can the goofy golfing pet names. I'm runnin' out of material.

*(Clunking noise from within the windmill)*

Nick: *(perplexed)* Hey, my sweet little sand wedge, two balls came out the other side!

Nora: *(skeptical)* Riiiiight. Me-thinks my little chili-dipper is being a funny boy.

Nick: No! Really. Your ball went into the windmill, but two came out!

Nora: Huh?

Nick: Two came out.

Nora: Are you joking?

Nick: No. Two. *(Pause)* Really.

Nora: *(Thinking)* Is this like that allegedly dirty joke about the pigs in the mud?

Nick: Heh. *(Smiles)* No, it's the truth.

Nora: *(Moving past the windmill to get a look)* Great Caesar's Ghost! Whose ball is that?

Nick: See? Somebody – probably that guy ahead of us – got their ball stuck in the windmill.



Nora: Somebody got his ball stuck in the windmill.

Nick: Yeah, that's what I said.

Nora: No, my darling duffer; you said "their"; I said "HIS," as in singular.

Nick: What's that?

Nora: Your pronoun, my little bogie, must agree with your antecedent.

Nick: My Auntie Sadie is very opinionated. Why do we have to agree with her?

Nora: Listen, you have to match your pronoun up with the word that came before.

Nick: *(Lining up his next shot)* Oh, yes. So when I said "Somebody," which is singular, I should have followed with a singular pronoun, such as "his."

*(He putts directly into the hole)*

Nora: Huh.

Nick: What?

Nora: *(Preparing to shoot)* Smart guys are so adorable.

Nick: Aw shucks, ma'am. Your shot, my little sand trap.

Nora: You got it.

*(She putts in)*

Nick: Nice shot. I'm gonna have to try harder.

Nora: Yup. Keep tryin'.

Nick: But I still don't know why we have to agree with my Auntie Sadie.

Nora: Oh, don't worry about it.

Nick: Whatever you say, my precious little pitch 'n ' putt.

*(They walk to the next hole.)*

Author – Brian Wegener

### 3.4 Embedding Quotes

*Hop and Hip are in the computer lab at school, working on their research papers. Hip, big grin on face, grabs his paper out of the printer and heads over to Hop.*

Hip: I'm done! One week early! And Miss Malaprop said this would take two weeks to finish! I started today, I finished today. I'm a genius!

Hop: Hip, there's no way you started and finished today. Let me see that.

*Hip hands it over to Hop and Hop looks it over.*

Hop: Hip, you have no original words in this entire paper!

Hip: What are you talking about? It's got tons of words - 4 pages worth!

Hop: 4 pages of other people's words.

Hip: Yes, Miss Malaprop said we needed at least 2 sources. I used 4 excellent sources.

Hop: You stole from 4 excellent sources.

Hip: I did not! I quoted from those sources and I even used proper MLA format to cite all of my quotes!

Hop: But 98% of your paper is quotes!

Hip: Quotes from excellent and reliable sources explaining what the "The Scarlet Ibis" means.

Hop: But what do you think it means?

Hip: *(Hip grabs the paper and starts reading it)* Doodle's miniature coffin symbolizes his parents' expectation of Doodle's imminent death which is clearly contradicted by the narrator's actions.

Hop: What does that mean, Hip?

Hip: You heard me. I'll read it again.

Hop: No, you need to know what that means.

Hip: You heard what it means.

Hop: I heard what someone else thinks it means. What's the point of the story, Hip?



Hip: It's about this kid who dies.

Hop: That's all you got?

Hip: My paper says the rest.

Hop: Miss Malaprop wants to know what you think of the story.

Hip: So I've got to go back and read the story, I guess.

Hop: Yes, and decide what you think it means. THEN, use quotes to support your interpretation.

*(Later that night, Hop comes over to Hip's house. Hip has Kanye West blaring in his room)*

Hop: So how's your paper coming?

Hip: I think I know what the story means...what I think it means.

Hop: Good. What does it mean?

Hip: The point is that the narrator regrets how he treated his little brother. Doodle was a little miracle that taught them all how to live, but then he died.

Hop: That's good, Hip.

Hip: But that's just what I think.

Hop: Then that's what you write about.

Hip: So how do I use those embedded quote things you and Miss Malaprop talk about?

Hop: You quote from the story – examples that support what you just said. And you can quote from experts who support what you just said.

Hip: How?

Hop: You know like when Kanye mixes voices together. He might have a Michael Zigson beat and then he mixes a bar from the *Sugar Hill Gang* and then, later in the song, Jay-Z makes an appearance?

Hip: Yeah, I love that!

Hop: Yeah. It's like that. Kanye gets the idea going for the song; it's his concept; his idea. Then he mixes in other sources that support his idea, that give it richness, depth, power.

Hip: Those are like the sources for my paper?

Hop: Yeah. You find sources that support your interpretation. Then, you weave them into your argument, quoting along the way. Their quotes should be short and effective, like Kanye's posse. He never let's them dominate the song; they're just there to support.

Hip: Like in "The Scarlet Ibis" how Doodle made up stories about people who could fly – he was telling people that they could fly, that they could achieve their dreams. That detail supports my interpretation.

Hop: That's good, Hip. Now slide that piece of evidence (with quotation marks) into our own sentence, the one you just said before. Just like Kanye would slide in a Jay-Z line.

Hip: Doodle's stories were lessons for those around him, teaching them that they "all had wings and could fly wherever they wanted to go" in life.

Hop: Beauteous, Hip! I see your interpretation, and you're using words from your source, the story, to back it up with evidence.

Hip: Much better, huh?

Hop: Worlds better. Hip, you're a true scholar and a master mixologist. Kanye would be proud.

Hip: And hopefully, Miss Malaprop will be too.

Author - Claudia Felske

### 3.6 Logical Fallacies: False Dilemma

*The scene is late afternoon in a doughnut shop. Zag and Zig sit at a table after school with a box of doughnuts between them. Their backpacks are open and resting on seats beside them, and both have notebooks out on the table. Zig is staring at his, a look of intense concentration on his face. Zag, holding up a jelly doughnut, sighs reverently. Zig continues to think...*

Zig: Hmmmmm... false dilemma... flawed logic... aagh, my head hurts –

Zag: *(adoringly, to the doughnut)* Hail to thee, Oh all-powerful, divine and deep-fried god of my taste-buds, oh wonderful digestive divinity. I worship your over-sweet and mystical awesomeness... *(noticing Zig is not paying attention)* Dude!

Zig: Wha—?

Zag: Are ya' with me, here?

Zig: With ya?

Zag: The Nutty Dough of the Jelly speaketh! And I heed the call!

Zig: And?

Zag: Jelly-Doughnut-ism dude, it's my new religion.

Zig: Yeah?

Zag: I'm a true believer, man; they're gonna save the world.

Zig: 'Sorry, dude. I'm stuck in Mr. Spooner's logical fallacy notes again: *(dramatically)* The false dilemma: the mistaken idea that because one statement is wrong, a second must be correct.

Zag: The false di-whatsis?

Zig: Dilemma. Dilemma. *(pause)* DI-LEM-MA!

Zag: *(hurt)* You don't have to shout, bud.

Zig: My bad. You were saying? *(pause)* Uh, before?

Zag: Oh! Yeah! The jelly doughnut, man! It's the shizz!

Zig: Huh?

Zag: Yeah. It has socio-LOG-ical power. No lie.



Zig: *(skeptical)* Okay, you'd better explain that one.

Zag: Well, remember what Mr. Spooner was saying about logic?

Zig: Some of it.

*(Pause: Zag looks at Zig)*

Zig: Okay, ... uh... not much of it. What're you talkin' about?

Zag: That the purpose of logic is to show that if one statement is true, then another statement is also true.

Zig: *(consulting notebook)* Uh, yeah, it's right here, next to the frappaccino stain in my notes.

Zag: Alrighty then. Check this logic: Statement one is that jelly doughnuts are popular. True?

Zig: Well, yeah, I'll go with you on that. And?

Zag: So, here is the big "therefore" statement: Either you like jelly doughnuts, or you won't have any friends! Logic-o-rama, no?

Zig: *(pondering)* Um...that does not compute, Master Luke.

Zag: Why not? It's perfect. This jelly doughnut inspired me. Mr. Spooner will eat it up. It'll be up on the board with the brown-nosers' stuff. It'll go down in history!

Zig: Look, Yoda, you don't make sense, because there are other possibilities – not just two.

Zag: How so?

Zig: Maybe you have other common interests with friends besides jelly doughnuts, or maybe your friends like you despite your obsession with J.D.'s, have other ... um ... hang-ups, uh ..., or ... what...? There could be other possibilities besides just the two.

Zag: 'Ya think?!

Zig: You can't say "either – or" when there many other choices besides just the two you mention! That's not logical.

Zag: Logical? I'm just trying to hang on to my friends, and make sense, at the same time! I like jelly doughnuts, so they should, too.

Zig: Why?

Zag: Since I, one important person, love jelly doughnuts, they should also be enamored of the sugary and useless comestible. Isn't that logical?

Zig: Nope. It sounds more like some kind of forced bad diet to me.

Zag: 'Kay, so it can't be true based on the two statements?

Zig: Right. Now let me concentrate. I'm still trying to get my doughnut-addled brain around the "false dilemma." What a concept.

Zag: *(again holding jelly doughnut aloft)* All praise to the great holy confection!

Zig: *(reading aloud)* ".the assumption that because a first statement is incorrect..."

Zag: *(eating)* Mmmmmmmm...

Zig: "...a second statement must be true..."

*(Zag and Zig strive to look cool.)*

Author - Brian Wegener

### 4.3 Evaluating Credible Sources

*Zig and Zag sit side by side at two computers. Both are focused intently on the screens in front of them.*

Zig: *(suddenly pleased)* Aha. That source looks promising.

Zag: *(also pleased)* Whoa – awesomeness!

Zig: What? 'Find a good source for your project?

Zag: Huh? No, dude, a smokin' deal on a snowboard!

Zig: *(looks at Zag's screen)* Okay, you're shopping?

Zag: Just a little harmless Ebay action, my friend.

Zig: Mr. Spooner says we only have 'til the end of class to find three sources for the project, and –

Zag: Chillax, stress monkey. I'm on it.

Zig: *(skeptical)* No doubt.

Zag: No prob. I can do this; that's the beauty of the internet.

Zig: beg to differ.

Zag: Stop beggin'. *(typing quickly)* I'll just do a quick search...

Zig: There's more to it than –

Zag: ...and kazinga! Source-o-rama!

Zig: Uh, dude?

Zag: Thousands of hits!

Zig: Duh – but what kind of hits?

Zag: Why, internet hits, of course.

Zig: *(shaking his head)* And what did Mr. Spooner say about the internet?

Zag: *(squinting, searching his memory)* Uh, don't tell me – I got this –

Zig: *(rolling eyes)* I don't have time for this.



Zag: No, really, dude – um...

Zig: He said that the web can give us (*consulting notes; quoting*) “excellent, reliable information OR useless and inaccurate garbage.”

Zag: Oh, yeah, that’s it.

Zig: So, if that’s the case, why is a quick web search with a couple minutes left in the class not a good idea?

Zag: Uh, ‘cause the web has – um – more garbage than good stuff?

Zig: Correct! Give that man a cookie!

Zag: So wait – what does the Spooner-man want then?

Zig: (*sigh*) He said we need reliable academic sources.

Zag: Yeah, so?

Zig: Yeah, so look at the first one on your list. (*points at Zag’s screen*)

Zag: (*looks*) Huh.

Zig: Your topic is the legalizing “mary jo wanna” debate?

Zag: Uh huh.

Zig: (*points at Zag’s screen*) What’s that say?

Zag: (*reading screen*) “Kam’s Kush for Kash.”

Zig: (*sarcastic*) A truly reliable and academic source! Top notch, dude!

Zag: ‘Kay, I get it.

Zig: Picture some guy sitting at his computer in his parents’ basement...

Zag: I don’t wanna.

Zig: ...36 years old and the guy who retrieves grocery carts at the local grocery store, blogging away in his t-shirt, with one of the sayings like “power to the people!”

Zag: Ok. I am getting the picture!

Zig: ...and he’s smoking doobies, with munchies cascading off the desk, with some grow lights and potted plants.

Zag: Ok. I understand your point!

Zig: ...and that's what you get when you just trust the magic of the internet. Anyone can put their stuff out there. You don't want that reflecting on your project.

Zag: *(suddenly confused)* Well, what do I do, then?

Zig: Spooner says the easiest thing is to use academic databases.

Zag: Huh?

Zig: They only include the good stuff.

Zig: No *Kam's Kush for Kash*?

Zig: Definitely.

Zag: 'Got it. What else?

Zig: If we do actually do a web search, we're supposed to evaluate.

Zag: What?

Zig: Look at the quality and the editing. Does it look professional? Who did it? Are there mistakes in it? Stuff like that.

Zag: Like, make a decision about it?

Zig: Yeah. Use judgment. Don't let the web think for you.

Zag: Dude, that's righteous. You should write that down.

Zig: 'Can't.

Zag: Why not? It's deep.

Zig: It's from my notes. Spooner said it.

Zag: Whoa. The Spoon-man comes up with a good one.

Zig: He has his moments, y'know?

Zag: Now if we could convince him to stop wearing the crazy fish tie...

Zig: I know, right?

Zag: Yeah.



Zig: Not now, though. 'Clock's tickin'.

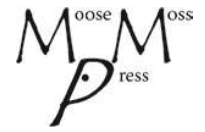
Zag: Oh. Yeah. Credible sources first.

Zig: Then snowboards.

*They hunker down at their computers to find credible sources.*

Author – Brian Wegener

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