Adding Inverted Commas to a Sentence to Show Speech

An informative PowerPoint about using inverted commas

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Showing that Someone is Speaking

In written English, when someone speaks, we put **inverted commas** around what they say.

“My name is Lucy and I’m a superhero.”

What do you notice about where the inverted commas are and which way around they are?

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Where to Place Inverted Commas

We only put “ ” around the words that the speaker actually says.

Can you use this rule to put inverted commas into these sentences?

- I’m tired, said Michael.
- Isabel called, Would you like to come for tea later?
- I whispered, Don’t go any further.

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- I whispered, “Don’t go any further.”

Reporting Clauses

Either before or after the speech itself, a reporting clause is usually used to give a little bit of information about who is speaking and how it was said.

"What's the matter, Dina?" said Sid.

reporting clause

If the reporting clause is **before** the speech, it will end with a comma before the inverted commas open, e.g.

- Sophie shouted, "Stop annoying me!"

If the reporting clause is **after** the speech, no comma is required between the reporting clause and the inverted commas, e.g.

- "Stop annoying me!" shouted Sophie.

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More Rules for Using Inverted Commas

A piece of **speech** in a sentence **always** starts with a **capital letter**, even if it begins in the middle of the sentence.

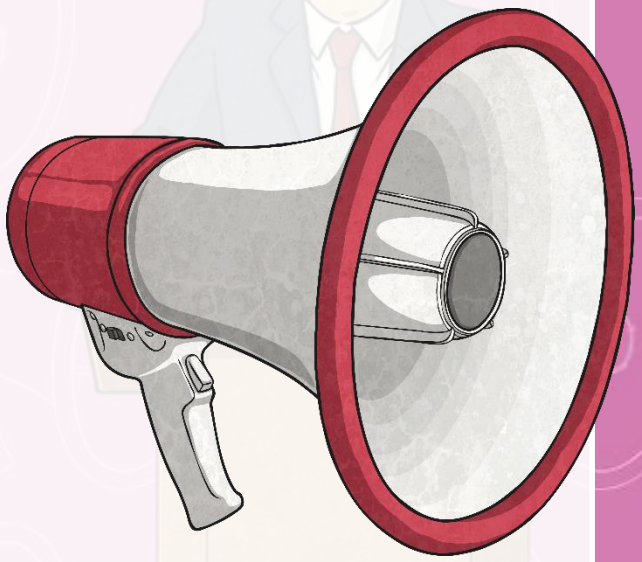
E.g. Emily sobbed, "Why did this happen?"

Separate what was said from the rest of the text with a comma, unless the speech needs a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.

E.g. "That was interesting," said Harriet.

"Ouch!" shouted Barry.

Put your inverted commas on the **outside** of any commas or full stops that you use.



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More Rules for Using Inverted Commas

Can you punctuate this sentence using inverted commas and correct punctuation?

Gregg shouted we're going to Paris tomorrow!

He was so excited.

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More Rules for Using Inverted Commas

Gregg shouted, “We’re going to Paris tomorrow!” He was so excited.

- reporting clause
- comma
- inverted commas
- capital letter
- inverted commas

What If More Than One Person Speaks?

If there is more than one speaker in your text, every time a new speaker speaks you will need to **start a new paragraph**.

For example:

"Are you okay?" Tom said, looking concerned.
"My knee really hurts," answered Ben.

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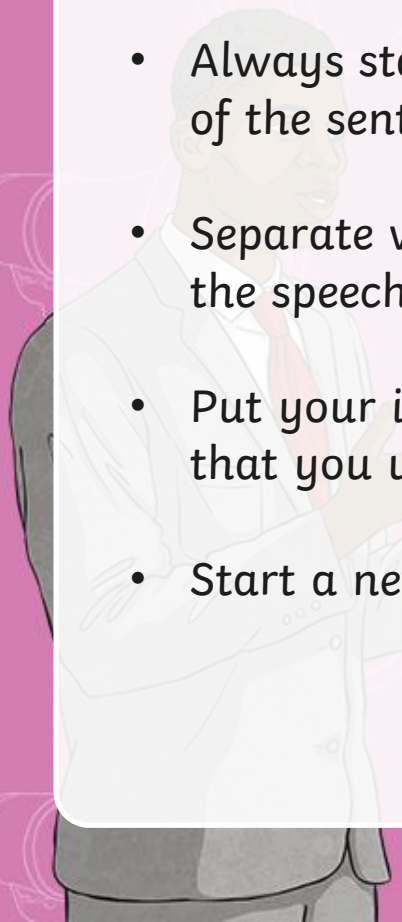
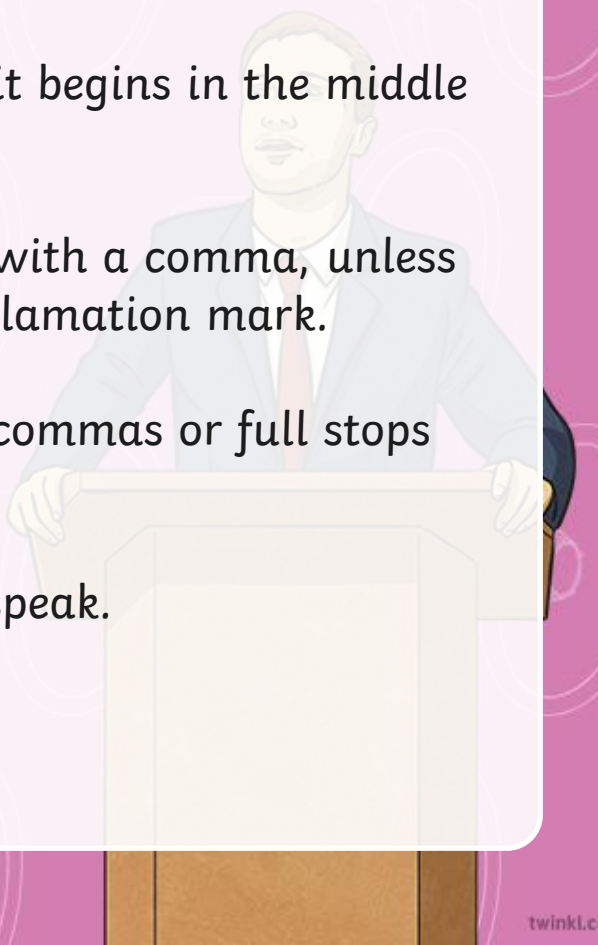
Review

To use inverted commas successfully you will need to:

- Only put “ ” around what the speaker actually says.
- Always start speech with a capital letter, even if it begins in the middle of the sentence.
- Separate what was said from the rest of the text with a comma, unless the speech needs a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.
- Put your inverted commas on the outside of any commas or full stops that you use.
- Start a new paragraph if a new person starts to speak.





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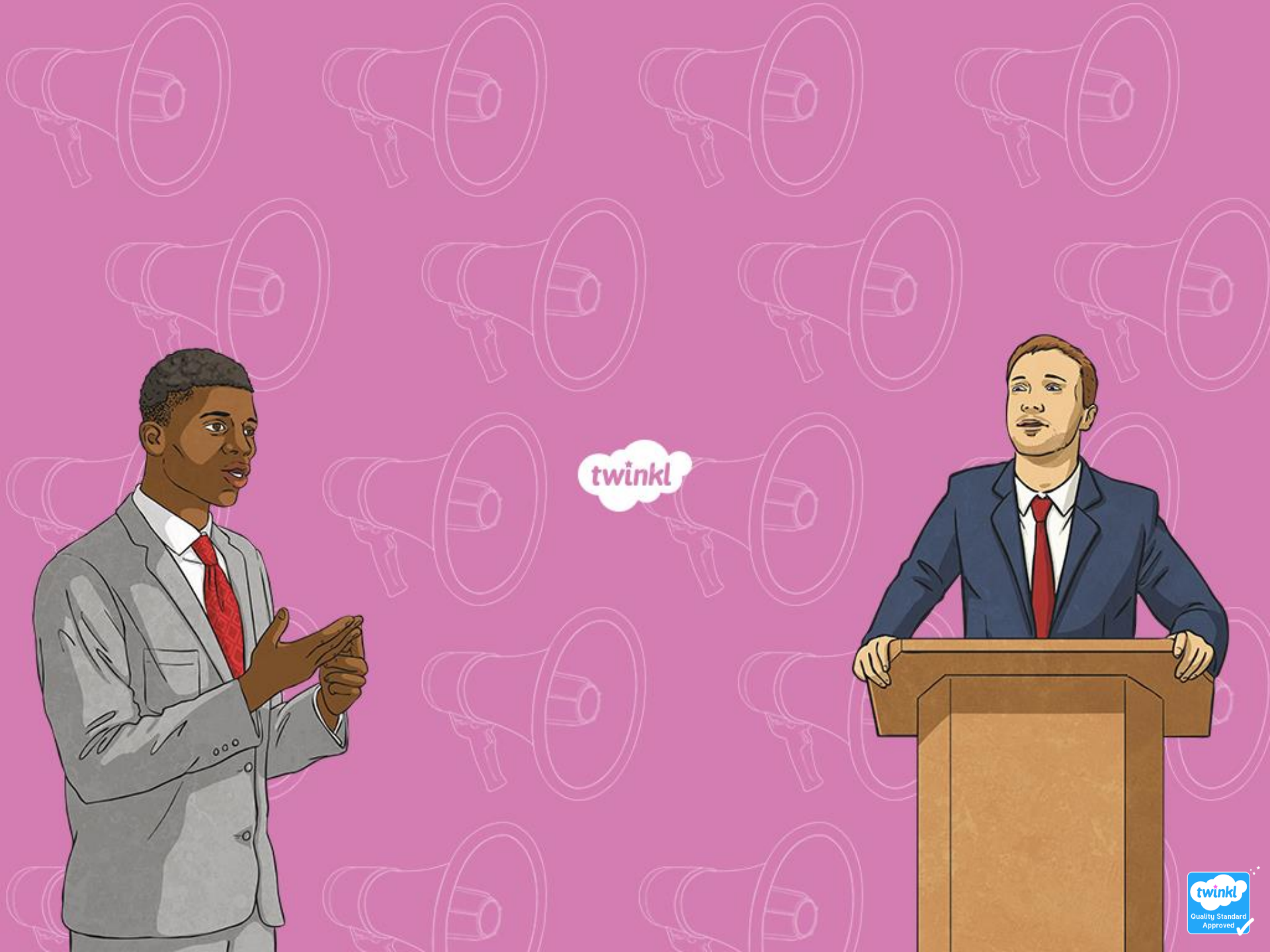
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