



## Lord of the Flies Using Dialogue to Reveal Character

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**dialogue** (*n.*) the words spoken aloud between characters

Authors use dialogue to reveal the personality of a speaker and the relationship among different speakers.

Realistic dialogue is frequently written with short sentences that often drift off or are interrupted.

The writer usually indicates the change of speaker with a new paragraph.

In an exchange between two speakers, the speaker is not always identified.

The passage below shows a conversation between Ralph and Jack. To help you notice the role dialogue plays in a story, do the following:

- a. Read the three questions below.
- b. Then read the passage with the questions in mind.
- c. Answer the questions.

### Questions:

1. What does the dialogue reveal about Ralph?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What does the dialogue reveal about Jack?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What does the dialogue reveal about the Ralph and Jack's relationship?

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**Passage:**

"They've put on green branches," muttered Ralph. "I wonder!" He screwed up his eyes and swung round to search the horizon.

"Got it!"

Jack shouted so loudly that Ralph jumped.

"What? Where? Is it a ship?"

But Jack was pointing to the high declivities that led down from the mountain to the flatter part of the island.

"Of course! They'll lie up there—they must, when the sun's too hot—"

Ralph gazed bewildered at this rapt face.

"—they get up high. High up and in the shade, resting during the heat, like cows at home—"

"I thought you saw a ship!"

"We could steal up on one—paint our faces so they wouldn't see—perhaps surround them and then—"

Indignation took away Ralph's control.

"I was talking about smoke! Don't you want to be rescued? All you can talk about is pig, pig, pig!"

"But we want meat!"

"And I work all day with nothing but Simon and you come back and don't even notice the huts!"

"I was working too—"

"But you like it!" shouted Ralph. "You want to hunt! While I—"

They faced each other on the bright beach, astonished at the rub of feeling . . . (p. 54)

They walked along, two continents of experience and feeling, unable to communicate.

"If I could only get a pig!"

"I'll come back and go on with the shelter."

They looked at each other, baffled, in love and hate. (p. 55)

## Your Turn!

Now you try. Using the model above, create a dialogue between two characters of your choosing. Place your characters in a modern scenario, but show how these characters are missing each other's points or not understanding each other's concerns.

(Scenario suggestions: friends, classmates, siblings, parent–child, teacher–student, coach–athlete)

W.9-10.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

W.9-10.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

W.9-10.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grades 9-10 [here](#).)

L.9-10.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.9-10.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.