Punctuating speech

Inverted Commas

There are two places where inverted commas are needed when writing direct speech:

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

Inverted Commas

Inverted Commas

You need to **open** your inverted commas with a " (66) before the first word which is being spoken.

You need to **close** your inverted commas with a " (99) after the last word **which is being spoken**.

Imagine that inverted commas are like hands;
They hold within them **only** the words which are being spoken.

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

Punctuation

There are two places where other forms of punctuation are needed when writing direct speech:

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

You need to end the speaking with:
- a comma
- a question mark, if it is a question.
- an exclamation mark, if it is an exclamation.

You will need to finish your sentence with a full stop after the reporting clause.

Examples of other punctuation in direct speech are:
"How exciting it is**!"** exclaimed Sarah**.**
"I don't know what to do**,"** said Sayeed**.**

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Reporting Clauses

After the speech itself, a reporting clause gives a little bit of information about **who is speaking** and **how it was said**.

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

Reporting Clauses | In this case, Sid is speaking.

If Sid said it in a different way,
you could change 'said' to...

"What's the matter, Dina?" **asked Sid**.
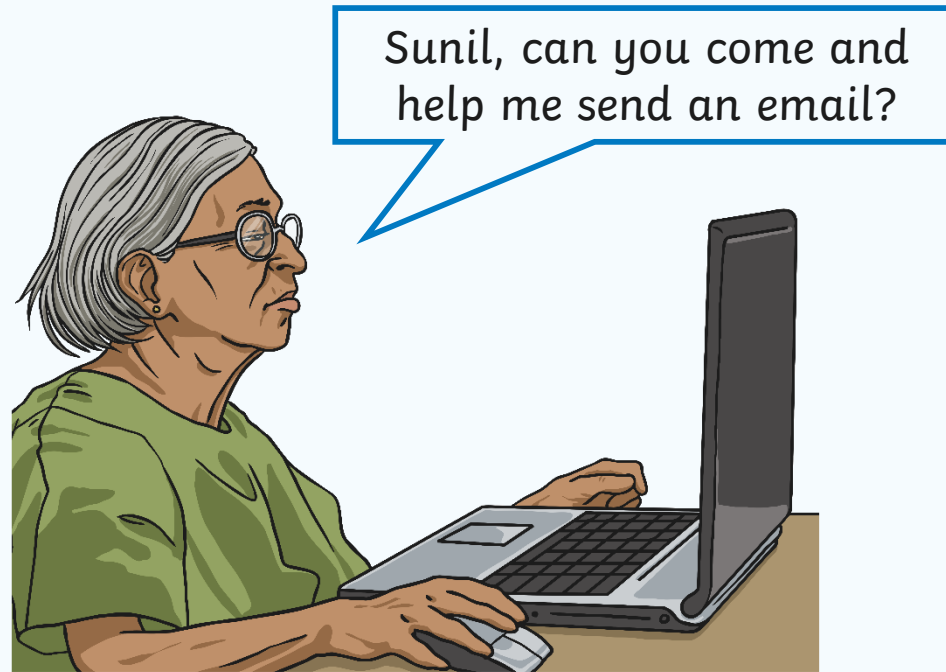
"What's the matter, Dina?" **whispered Sid**.

"What's the matter, Dina?" **uttered Sid**.

"What's the matter, Dina?" **shouted Sid**.

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It's Your Turn...

Here is a conversation between Aminah and her son, Sunil. Write the direct speech on a whiteboard using inverted commas and the correct punctuation.

Sunil, can you come and help me send an email?

Aminah

It's Your Turn...

Here is a conversation between Mr. Miller and Max. Write the direct speech on a whiteboard using inverted commas and the correct punctuation.

Where more than one person is talking, remember to start new line for each new speaker.

Mr Miller

Please could you take those to Jessica's classroom?

No problem, sir.

Max