

# Direct Speech Punctuation

# Look at the punctuation in this:

A man walked into a doctor's surgery with an apple on his head.

“What seems to be the problem?” asked the doctor.

“Well,” replied the apple, “I've got this growth on my bottom.”

Notice the speech marks around  
what is actually said.

“What seems to be the problem?”  
asked the doctor.

What was actually said?

What was actually said?

What seems to be the problem?

So this is what we put the speech marks around.

“What seems to be the problem?”

Notice that the question mark is  
inside the speech marks.

“What seems to be the problem?”

# IMPORTANT!

There must always be some kind of punctuation before the second set of speech marks!



Let's look at that joke again.

A man walked into a doctor's surgery with an apple on his head.

“What seems to be the problem?” asked the doctor.

“Well,” replied the apple, “I've got this growth on my bottom.”

Look at the way the text is set out.

A man walked into a doctor's surgery with an apple on his head.

“What seems to be the problem?” asked the doctor.

“Well,” replied the apple, “I've got this growth on my bottom.”

Can you see that each time  
someone new speaks you have to  
start a new line?

A man walked into a doctor's surgery with an  
apple on his head.

“What seems to be the problem?” asked the  
doctor.

“Well,” replied the apple, “I've got this  
growth on my bottom.”

**IMPORTANT!**

Remember that a new speaker  
starts a new line!

(This is good news because it makes it look  
like you have written more on your page!)

Now look at who said the speech.

A man walked into a doctor's surgery with an apple on his head.

“What seems to be the problem?” asked the doctor.

“Well,” replied the apple, “I've got this growth on my bottom.”

Notice that after a full stop,  
question mark or exclamation  
mark you don't need to start with  
a capital letter.  
(Strange huh?)

“What seems to be the problem?” asked the  
doctor.

If, like this one, you have who said it in the middle of the speech, don't forget to put in a comma before you start the speech again.

“Well,” **replied the apple,** “I’ve got this growth on my bottom.”

Now it is your turn!

Let's look at another joke and see if we can put in the direct speech punctuation.



Knock, knock said Shanice  
Who's there replied Dean Genoa  
giggled Shanice Genoa who?  
asked Dean Genoa good teacher  
laughed Shanice

It's hard to read without  
the punctuation isn't it?

Let's start by putting in a new line for a new speaker.

Knock, knock said Shanice  
Who's there replied Dean Genoa  
giggled Shanice Genoa who?  
asked Dean Genoa good teacher  
laughed Shanice

Knock, knock said Shanice  
Who's there replied Dean  
Genoa giggled Shanice  
Genoa who? asked Dean  
Genoa good teacher laughed  
Shanice

Great! It's easier to read already!

Knock, knock said Shanice

Who's there replied Dean

Genoa giggled Shanice

Genoa who? asked Dean

Genoa good teacher laughed Shanice

Now let's think about putting  
speech marks around what is  
actually said.

Knock, knock said Shanice  
Who's there replied Dean  
Genoa giggled Shanice  
Genoa who? asked Dean  
Genoa good teacher laughed Shanice

Now let's think about putting speech marks around what is actually said.

“Knock, knock” said Shanice

“Who's there” replied Dean

“Genoa” giggled Shanice

“Genoa who?” asked Dean

“Genoa good teacher” laughed Shanice

The next stage is to make sure we have punctuation before we close the speech marks.

“Knock, knock,” said Shanice

“Who’s there?” replied Dean

“Genoa,” giggled Shanice

“Genoa who?” asked Dean

“Genoa good teacher,” laughed Shanice



Lastly we need to make sure all our sentences have full stops at the end.

“Knock, knock,” said Shanice.

“Who’s there?” replied Dean.

“Genoa,” giggled Shanice.

“Genoa who?” asked Dean.

“Genoa good teacher,” laughed Shanice.

If you can do all this you are  
ready to have a go on your own!

**Good luck!**