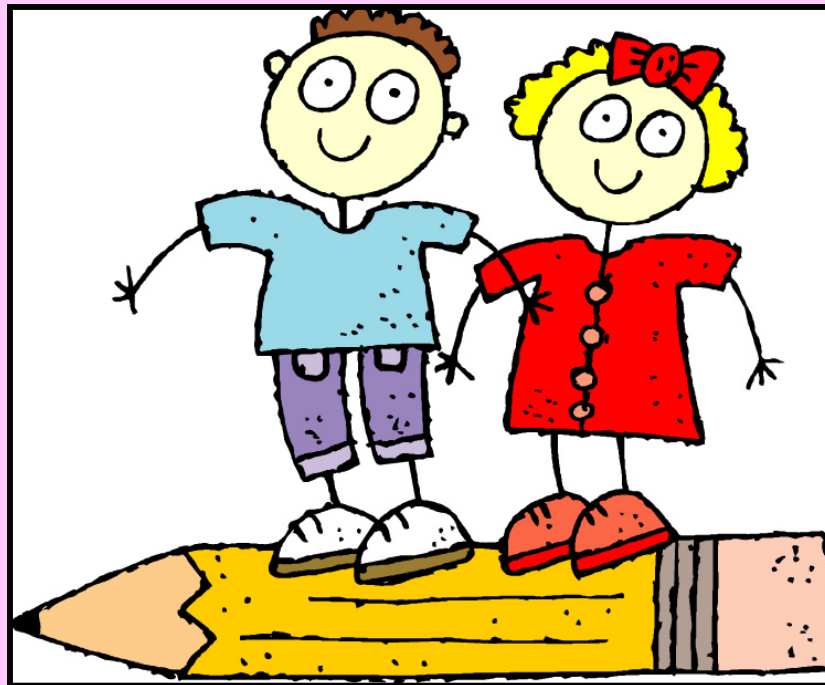




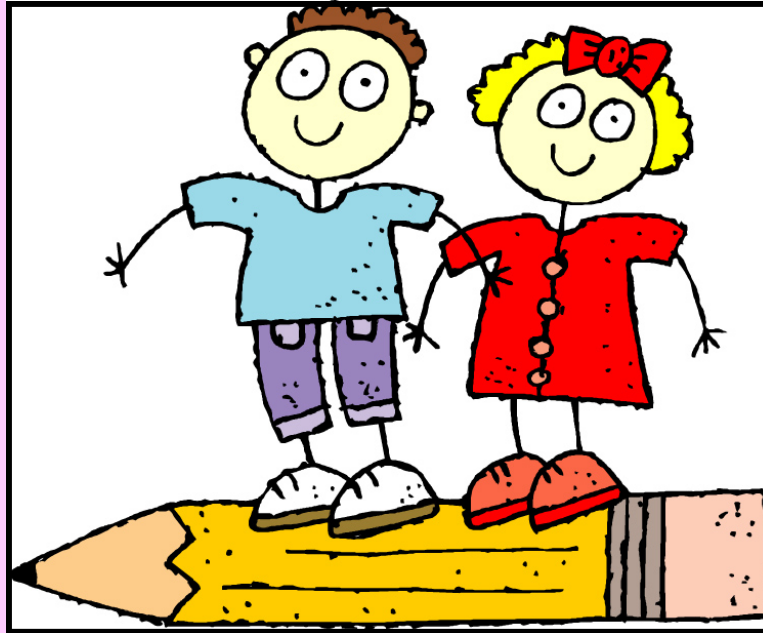
Primary Success Publications

# Successful Writing Lessons Grade Two



Mini-lessons to give direction  
to your class writing time....

By Jean Roberts



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## Successful Writing Lessons - Grade Two

By Jean Roberts

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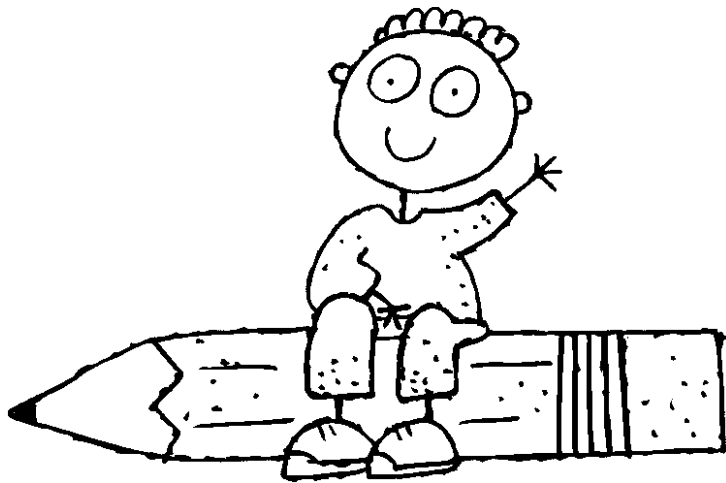
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# Capital Letters And Punctuation

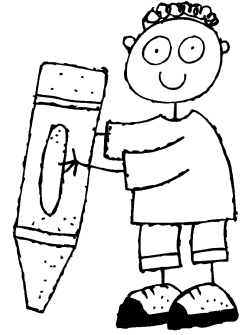


The correct usage of punctuation and capital letters is very important. Without this, writing often does not make sense. These are the first building blocks of good writing.

Students should be taught this usage from the beginning of the writing process, and most students will know the basics used in simple sentences by the time they reach *Grade Two*. Now the students begin to learn the more difficult use of capital letters, and the use of question and exclamation marks, quotation marks and commas.

The following lessons may be repeated frequently as you see the need. Some concepts, such as quotation marks, will need to be taught often so that the students thoroughly understand the usage. Hands-on lessons and bringing the concepts into the students' writing will help to teach these difficult concepts.

# Periods



Skill: Understanding that a period means to 'stop'

Materials: Chart paper, pencil - or a dry erase board and dry erase pens

Lesson:

1. Take a good Journal entry of one student and print it on the chart in pencil, or on a dry erase board with dry erase pens. Or..... print the following:

At recess I played with my friend Katie. We climbed on the monkey bars and slid down the slide. We tried to think of new ways to go down the slide. We went head first and feet first and then we went together. Then we played tag. Katie was 'it' and she chased me all the way to the end of the playground. That is when the bell rang and we had to run all the way back to the school. Recess was fun.

2. Read through the story several times. Now, erase and replace all upper case letters at the beginning of sentences with lower case, and erase all the periods.

at recess I played with my friend Katie we climbed on the monkey bars and slid down the slide we tried to think of new ways to go down the slide we went head first and feet first and then we went together then we played tag Katie was 'it' and she chased me all the way to the end of the playground that is when the bell rang and we had to run all the way back to the school recess was fun

3. Discuss how to read the story now. What does a period do and what does it mean? (In many countries, England, for example, the period is called the 'full stop'.) Read the story through without any stops. Now, put the periods at the end of each line and read the story. Discuss where each period should go, and why. Where should the capital letters go?

4. Do the Journal entries.

5. When the students are doing the reading aloud for the self-editing, remind them to think about the period stops. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct.

# Upper case letters at the beginning of sentences



Skill: The use of upper case letters in sentences

Materials: A big book with easy reading with several sentences (or more) on a page, an easel

Lesson:

1. Discuss what upper case and lower case letters are. Use these terms. Your students may not be familiar with these terms, and call the letters 'big' and 'little', or 'capital' letters and 'small' letters.

2. Open the big book and read it through quickly. Now, talk about the sentences, ending with a period and beginning with an upper case letter. If there are sentences ending with a question mark or exclamation mark, discuss that there is a period in each, meaning the full stop.

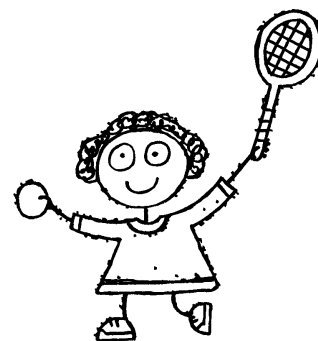
Ask the students to clap every time they come to a period, hold their hands out at a low level for lower case letters and raise both hands high in the air for an upper case letter. They will enjoy this! Discuss that a clap and the hands up high go together — the end of one sentence and the beginning of the next.

3. Discuss that the upper case (capital) letter must go at the beginning of each sentence. That is an important place, just as the line leader is an important position when the class lines up to go to another part of the school. How can you have a line without a leader?

4. Do the Journal entries.

5. When the students are doing the reading aloud for the self-editing, have them quietly do the clap for periods and the hands high for the upper case letters. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct.

# Question marks



Skill: Understanding the meaning of 'question' and the use of the question mark

Materials: Chart paper, pens, big book

Lesson:

1. Discuss questions. Have every student in the class think of a question and briefly share them. On the chart paper, make a huge question mark and point to it at the end of each question to associate the question to the punctuation.

On the chart paper around the large question mark, print the first words in questions—call them 'Question Words'. These are: who, when, where, which, why, what, do, how, could, should, would, whose.... (There are lots more!)

2. When you have elicited a list of question words, have the students give you questions beginning with each word and each time the sentence is completed, have all the class point to the big question mark. They could also draw one in the air at the end of each question and a quick poke with the finger for the period below it. Have them do sound effects if you wish!

Open the big book to a page with statement sentences and at least one question. Do the clap for the periods, hands up high for upper case letters and draw the question marks in the air at the end of questions.

3. Ask the students to use at least one question as part of the Journal. The question will begin with one of the question words and end with the question mark, of course.

4. Do the Journal entries.

5. When the students are doing the reading aloud for the self-editing, have them quietly do the clap for periods and the hands high for the upper case letters and the hand drawing of the question mark. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct.

# Exclamation marks



Skill: Understanding and using exclamation marks in writing

Materials:

Lesson:

1. Discuss exclamation marks. The students will likely understand that sentences that end with an exclamation mark will be spoken with emphasis, excitement and expression. Discuss the period in it, and that it means a full stop, just as the period.

2. Give the students 1 or 2 minutes to find exclamation marks in books at their independent reading levels. Have each student read a sentence that ends with an exclamation mark. Why did the author end that sentence that way? How would you read it if it just had a period?

What would happen if the author used too many exclamation marks? If there are too many, the sentences may sound silly and it may be difficult to read. Try reading some statement sentences with an exclamation mark. We do not want the students to over-use this, but sometimes using an exclamation mark is correct.

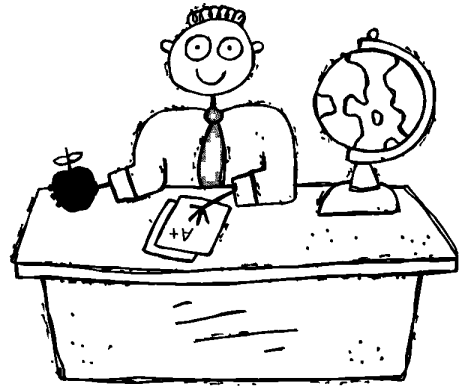
3. Ask the students to put one (just one) exclamation mark in their Journal entry.

4. Do the Journal entries.

5. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct. Come together and have students read that one sentence with the exclamation mark to the group with proper inflection..... not over-done!



# Upper case letters on proper nouns — people



Skill: Using upper case letters on people's names

Materials: Chart paper, pens

Lesson:

1. Discuss upper and lower case letters. The students undoubtedly know that names begin with upper case letters, and this lesson expands this.

Discuss the word 'I'. 'I' am important! People are important and their names begin with capital/upper case letters. You are important, and your name begins with an upper case letter.

2. Discuss words like 'baby, father, mother, doctor, mister, principal'. These words are about people, too, but not particular people. It could be any baby or mother or doctor. Talk about the difference between the upper case on Mom and using the word mother, or doctor and Dr. Smith. If it is the name of one person, then it will have an upper case letter.

This is a bit tricky..... if you talk about Aunt Beth and Uncle Thomas the words 'Aunt' and 'Uncle' begin with upper case letters, but if you say 'my aunt and uncle' the words are not capitalized.

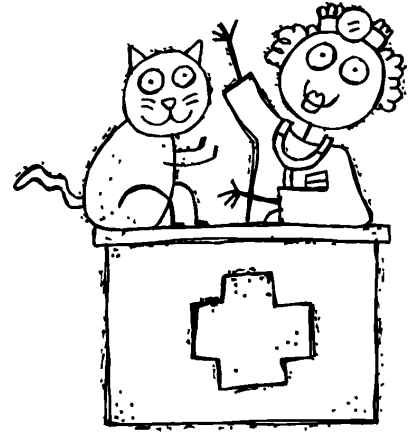
The special names of pets begin with an upper case letter, too.

3. Ask the students to have some names in today's Journal.

4. Do the Journal entries.

5. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct. Come together for a few minutes at the end of the lesson and print some of the names the students put in their writing on a chart, talking about the upper case letters.

# Upper case letters on proper nouns - places



Skill: Using upper case letters on place names

Materials: Chart paper, pens

Lesson:

1. Discuss upper and lower case letters. Upper case letters are used on people's names and also the specific names of places.

2. Discuss words like 'town, city, street, school, country, river, mountain'. These words are about places, too, but not specific places. It could be any city or river or lake. Talk about the difference between the upper case on Main Street and using the word street, or river and Muddy River (use local names). If it is the name of a specific place, then it will have an upper case letter.

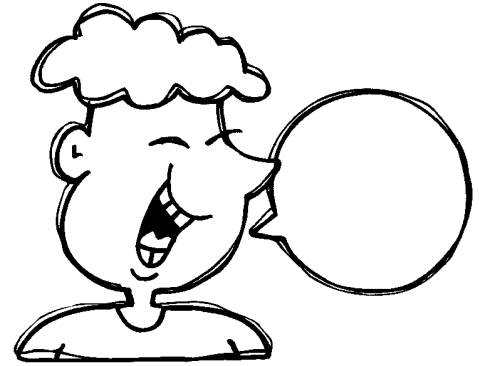
Brainstorm a list of place names and write them on a chart. Write the names of local rivers, lakes and streets, schools, towns, etc. Ask the students to tell you when words should be capitalized.

3. Ask the students to have some place names in today's Journal.

4. Do the Journal entries.

5. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct. Come together for a few minutes at the end of the lesson and print some of the place names the students put in their writing on a chart, talking about the upper case letters.

# Speech Bubbles— Quotation marks



Skill: Understanding the use of quotation marks

Materials: Cartoon on an overhead sheet, chart paper, pens

Lesson:

1. Discuss comic strips. You could photocopy a 'Peanuts' or other comic strip onto a clear sheet and show it on the overhead machine. Discuss the speech balloons, and that they contain the exact words that a person is saying.

Place two of your more vocal students below the chart paper. Draw a speech bubble of the head of the student on the left and have him say something to the other student. Print the exact words in the bubble. The other student answers and his words are printed in a bubble over his head.

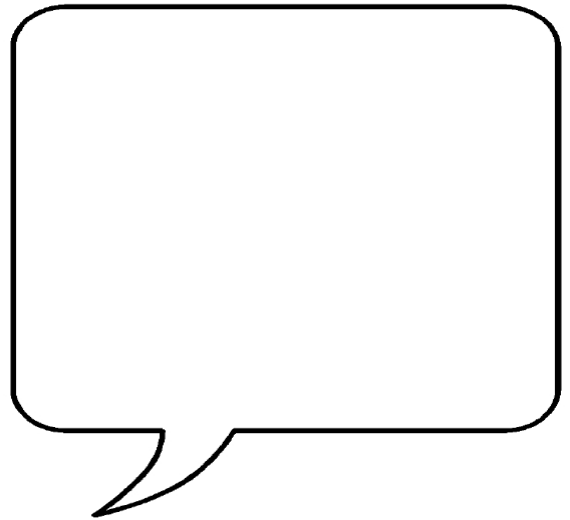
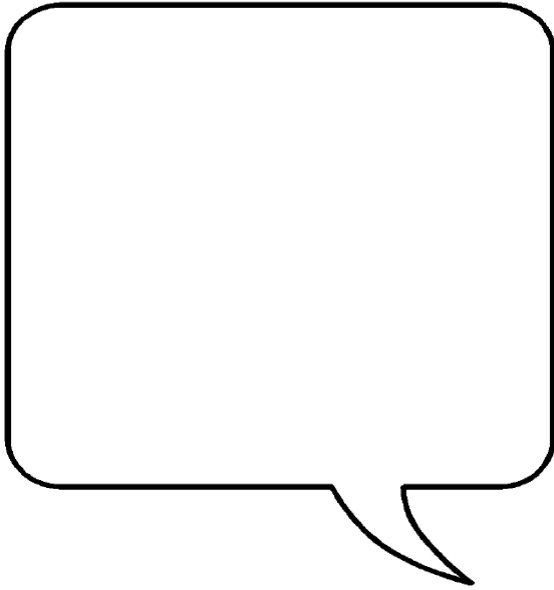
You can make up a conversation in speech bubbles, and have students say the words.

2. Take the exact words that were said, and write them on a sentence strip. Put quotation marks around the words. This means the same as the speech bubble—these are the exact words that a person speaks. Now add, 'Peter said,' or 'asked Marie.' This tells us who said the words or asked the question.

3. Show the following page. Have the boys saying something to each other in the speech bubbles. Discuss possibilities. Then print the conversation into sentences, using the boys' names and 'said'. Talk about using quotation marks. Share the conversations.

4. Do the Journal entries. Ask the students to put at least one direct quotation into the Journal entry.

5. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct. Come together for a few minutes at the end of the lesson and discuss the direct quotations and the quotation marks.



Mike

Pete

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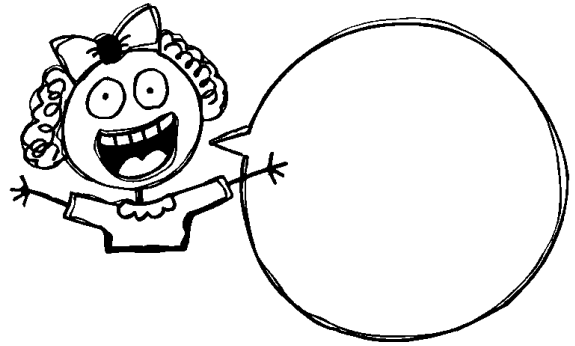
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# Quotation marks



Skill: Using quotation marks correctly

Materials: A big book with conversations, or enough copies of student-held books, chart paper, pens, sentence strips, elbow macaroni, glue sticks

Lesson:

1. Show a big book with conversation. Discuss the quotation marks. On a chart, copy short quotations from the book. Show how the person who speaks may have the name in front of the quote, after it and in the middle. The quotation marks are like speech bubbles or hands held like brackets around the words that are spoken. Show how the quotation marks are tipped like hands are curved. Read some of the book, with the teacher reading the words that are not spoken and students reading the conversation parts. They can only read the words between the quotation marks.

2. Have the students each say one sentence to the class. Print each on a sentence strip with 'said \_\_\_\_\_' or '\_\_\_\_\_ said'. Show how this can be split..... Hello, said Mary. It is nice to see you.

3. Now have the students take their sentence strips and glue two pieces of elbow macaroni for each pair of quotation marks. Then come together and only read the words between the marks and discuss this.

4. Do the Journal entries. Ask the students to put at least one direct quotation into the Journal entry.

5. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct. Come together for a few minutes at the end of the lesson and discuss the direct quotations and the quotation marks.

# What is a comma?



Skill: Learning the meaning of the comma

Materials: Highlight tape, a big book that contains commas in the text, chart paper, pens

Lesson:

1. The students understand that a period means a stop. At a period, we stop and begin again with a new sentence.

Sometimes we have a little pause when we read or write. Make sure all students understand the word 'pause'. A comma is used when we pause briefly.

2. Look at the book. Have the students find all the commas and highlight them with the highlight tape. Now, read through the book, noticing the pauses at the commas. Can the students tell you why there are commas where they are? (Don't teach the rules - just ask for opinions.) How would these sentences read if there were no commas?

3. Print the following on the chart paper.

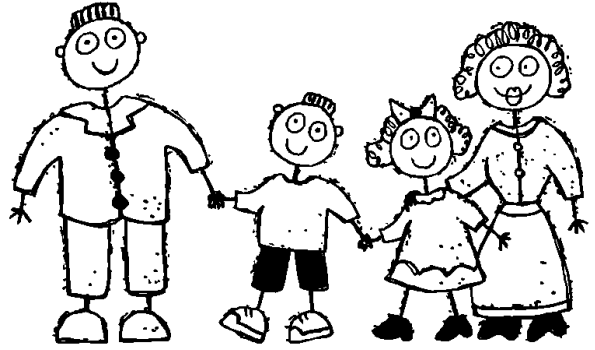
Yes I would like to go to the mall after school. I need to buy a pencil some crayons and an eraser.

Read the sentences without pauses. Will commas make the writing better? Discuss where commas might go. Try them in some odd places and see what happens.

4. Do the Journal entries. Ask the students to think about commas, and put a comma in if they think it is really needed. We don't want the students to use too many!

5. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct. Come together for a few minutes at the end of the lesson and discuss any commas that they used in the writing.

# Commas in a series



Skill: Learning where to put commas in a series

Materials: Chart paper, pens

Lesson:

1. One of the easiest and most common uses for the comma is in a series. This can be a series of nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs (less common). One comma is used when there are three items in the series, but the last two items do not have the comma.

2. Ask the students questions that will have a series for an answer. What are your favourite toys? Print the answers: My favourite toys are lego, superheros and a train set. Who did you see at recess? I saw Matt, Michael, Marie, Peter and Katie. What is in your desk? Pencils, books, an eraser, crayons and glue are in my desk. What did you do at recess? I ran, climbed the monkey bars, played catch and tag at recess.

3. Can the students see the rule? There is a comma after all the items except for the last two; \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. When there are just two things a comma isn't needed and this works no matter how long the list may be.

Print a few more sentences on the chart and have the students put the commas in the right place.

4. Do the Journal entries. Ask the students to try to put a series of things into their Journal entries.

5. Self-edit and teacher-edit and correct. Come together for a few minutes at the end of the lesson and discuss any commas that they used in the writing.