

WRITING FUNDAMENTAL SERIES

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**The
Dialogue
Writing
Workbook**

by

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About the Author

Heena Rathore-Pardeshi is an award-winning novelist, developmental editor, and creative writing mentor with over a decade of experience helping writers shape powerful stories.

She has taught hundreds of writers through her courses, workshops, and editing programs, and has

worked with bestselling authors, debut novelists, and publishing houses across India and abroad. She has also worked with multiple American and British production houses for turning books into scripts.

Her own works, including the acclaimed psychological thriller *Deceived*, gothic Indian-folklore horror *The Manor* and her upcoming book *The Art of Storytelling*, are known for their depth, atmosphere, and intricate psychological layering.

A passionate reader (she reads over 100 books a year), Heena brings to her teaching a rare blend of literary insight, structural precision, and emotional intelligence. Through her YouTube channel and Verbatik Media, she continues to build spaces for writers to learn, create, and grow.



Introduction

Dialogue is often the first thing readers notice, and the first thing writers doubt.

Most writers are scared of writing dialogue :

- Does this sound natural?
- Do my characters all sound the same?
- Is this too much dialogue... or not enough?
- Why does this feel flat even though I know what I want to say?

If you've ever asked yourself any of these questions, this workbook is for you.

You will be guided through:

- noticing what works and what doesn't
- rewriting weak dialogue into stronger versions
- understanding why certain choices are effective
- developing an ear for rhythm, voice, and subtext
- and building confidence in revising dialogue rather than fearing it

This workbook is meant one exercise at a time, one scene at a time. By the end of this workbook, you should not only write better dialogue, you should understand why it works when it works, and how to fix it when it doesn't.

I hope this helps you in writing better dialogue and becoming a better writer.

How to Use This Workbook

This workbook is designed to be practical, slow, and iterative.

Do not rush through it, go through each and every single exercise.

You can:

- Print it and write by hand (recommended)
- Fill it digitally
- Revisit the same exercises multiple times with different scenes

The goal is not perfection. The goal is awareness, control, and confidence in writing dialogue.

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SECTION 1

UNDERSTANDING

DIALOGUE

Exercise 1.1: Dialogue or Conversation?

Read the dialogue below:

“Hi.”

“Hey.”

“How are you?”

“I’m fine.”

Now answer these questions:

1. What does this dialogue reveal?
2. What changes by the end of this exchange?
3. Would the story lose anything if this were removed?

Rewrite this exchange so that something is revealed.

Exercise 1.2: Dialogue as Action

Rewrite the line below so it changes the direction of a

scene.

“I need to talk to you.”

Rewrite 3 versions where the line:

1. Creates conflict

2. Reveals a secret

3. Signals a decision



SECTION 2

WHY DIALOGUE MATTERS

Exercise 2.1: Pace Control

Convert this narrative moment into dialogue:

She realised something was wrong and felt a sudden fear.

1. Write a fast-paced dialogue version:

2. Write a slow, emotionally heavy dialogue version:

Exercise 2.2: Character Revelation

Choose ONE of your characters and answer:

- What do they avoid talking about?

- What emotion do they struggle to express directly?

Now write 3 lines of dialogue where that emotion is implied, not stated:



SECTION 3

QUALITIES OF GOOD DIALOGUE

Exercise 3.1: Purpose Check

Write/paste a dialogue exchange from your work-in-progress below:

Now answer these questions:

- What does this dialogue reveal?

- What does it change?

- If nothing changes, how can you fix it?

Now revise your dialogue and write it:

SECTION 4

WRITING GREAT DIALOGUE

Exercise 4.1: From On-the-Nose to Subtext

Original line: “I’m scared you’ll leave me.”

Rewrite it using subtext:

Exercise 4.2: Adding Action Beats

Flat dialogue: “I don’t trust you.”

Rewrite this by adding one physical action that adds meaning:

Exercise 4.3: Tightening Dialogue

Overwritten line: “I just want you to understand why I made the choice I did.”

Rewrite it in half the number of words:



SECTION 5

FORMATTING & MECHANICS

Exercise 5.1: Spot the Error

What is wrong with this dialogue?

“I can’t do this,” she wiped her eyes.

Correct it below:

Exercise 5.2: Interruptions vs Hesitation

Rewrite the line twice:

“I thought you were gone”

Version 1 (interruption):

Version 2 (hesitation):

SECTION 6

COMMON MISTAKES

Exercise 6.1: Fix the Info Dump

Original:

“As you know, the city has been under military rule for five years.”

Rewrite it as natural dialogue:

Exercise 6.2: Remove Filler

Original:

“I just wanted to talk to you about something important.”

Rewrite it to start where tension begins:

CONGRATULATIONS!!

You've Completed the Dialogue Blueprint Workbook!

If you've worked through these exercises, you now have:

- Greater control over dialogue
- Clearer character voices
- Stronger subtext awareness
- Professional formatting confidence

Keep practising.

Dialogue improves every time you listen more closely to your characters.

STAY CONNECTED

**Continue your writing journey with me
and the Writing Fundamentals
community.**

**You'll find more workbooks, resources,
and upcoming live sessions here 📌**

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