

Don't overuse direct speech

Read the text below and note the overuse of direct speech. Copy and paste the text into a Word document. Read the text again and decide which lines of direct speech should remain. Then rewrite the other sentences to reduce the amount of direct speech in the text. Highlight the changes in yellow (*Home* tab > *Font* group > *Text Highlight Color*) and save your work as a PDF (*Acrobat* tab > *Create PDF*). Share your work with your classmates. Compare the changes you have made with theirs.

'I think we're lost,' muttered Johan.

Looking at him in disbelief, I asked, 'But how can we be lost? We have been following the directions so carefully!'

I could hardly hear him when he replied, 'I know, but somehow we've ended up on the wrong path.'

'So what do we do now?' I asked.

'We'll stop and get our bearings. I'm sure we can work out where we went wrong. Then we'll know which way to go,' he said.

'But it will be dark soon,' I cried, 'and we don't have time to return while it's still light!'

'Calm down!' he said sternly. 'Getting upset won't help at all.'

'I'll try,' I whimpered, 'but I'm really scared. It's getting cold and we haven't brought our warm clothes with us.'

'You think I don't know that?'

After a brief silence, he continued, 'We'll retrace our steps to that twisted old tree. That's where I think we went wrong.'

'How long will that take?'

'About twenty minutes. Now stop talking and let's hurry,' he snapped.