

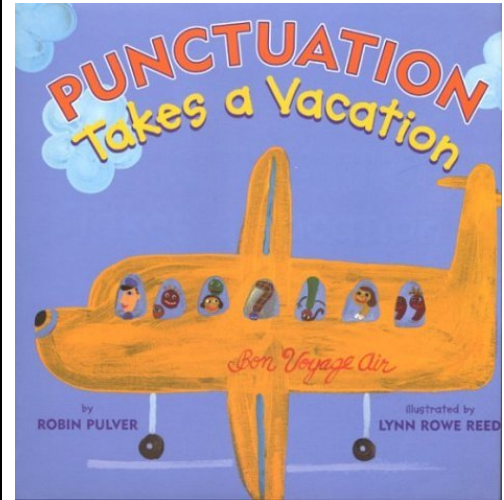
This complimentary **conventions** lesson comes from the Northern Nevada Writing Project’s “Going Deep with 6 Traits Language” Guide. Information on ordering a copy of this 194-page resource can be found by visiting <http://nnwp.org> and checking out the “NNWP Publications for Purchase” page.

Here’s a **conventions** activity that focuses on punctuation play:

Corresponding Punctuation Marks

From Mary Dunton, Northern Nevada Writing Project Teacher Consultant

In Robin Pulver’s Punctuation Takes a Vacation, Mr. Wright’s students boldly complain about punctuation, the punctuation overhears, and all the marks decide to take a vacation away from the school. When the students return from recess, the punctuation has already gone, and the students learn how necessary punctuation actually is as they try to make sense in a world where there is no punctuation. One of the most charming parts of the book involves the classroom receiving postcards from the vacationing punctuation marks. Each piece of punctuation (the period, the question mark, the comma, etc.) has composed a postcard relying completely on itself. The question mark’s postcard, for example, asks nothing but questions: “Do you miss us? How much?” Etc.



Punctuation Takes a Vacation
by Robin Pulver
ISBN: 0823418200

The writing assignment: Brainstorm all the different types of punctuation marks, and write them on a class chart. The picture book leaves a number of good ones out, so make a complete list. Re-read the page of postcards from the book. Tell students, “A postcard is a pretty short type of writing. What are other types of short and concise writing?” Make a second class list.

Types of punctuation marks:	Concise types of writing:
periods question marks exclamation points apostrophes quotation marks semi-colons colons dashes ellipses etc.	e-mails shopping lists recipes thank-you notes love notes haikus office memos newspaper ads horoscopes etc.

Re-examine the postcards from the book once more. Then, have students—in groups or as individuals—choose one interesting piece of punctuation from the first list and one interesting type of writing from the second list. The task is this: like the postcards, write the type of writing as though from the punctuation mark’s voice. Share the writing aloud. Listen for students who really understand the piece of punctuation mark they are writing about.

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Five Essays to Inspire Dialogue Among Teachers:

These five essays come with embedded Trait Post-Its so that teachers can not only discuss each essay’s message but also think about specific writing traits in new and unique ways.

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The Trait Modules:

These six modules contain lesson plans and resources from a variety of first- through twelfth-grade classrooms. These modules are not about giving away the lessons and resources to just the teachers who teach the exact same grade. The lessons and resources should not be quickly dismissed if it’s discovered that the providing teacher teaches a different age or socio-economic level of student.

These lessons and resources come from teachers who have gone out of their way to help students own trait language in their classrooms. Helping a student own an academic language is a universal concept, not a grade specific one.

The goal of these six modules is to promote “adaptive talk.” If, while exploring these modules, a teacher says, “I like the idea here, but I’d make it look different for my students, and here’s how,” then that teacher has succeeded in using this guide in the way it was intended.

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