

# Parentheses, Brackets, and Ellipses

Consider using with *Voyages in English 2011*  
Grade 6–Chapter 8, Lesson 3 and Writer’s Workshop



## Teach

Tell students that parentheses, brackets, and ellipses are used in special circumstances in their writing. Review the following rules and examples:

- Parentheses are placed around parenthetical elements, information that is not crucial to the sentence. Parentheses are also used to include citations in expository text.
- Ellipsis dots show that something has been left out of a quotation. Ellipses can also be used to show a pause in dialogue.
- Brackets show that something has been added or changed in a quotation.

## Practice

Model for students how each type of punctuation is used in the following examples. Write each example on the board, without the parentheses, brackets, or ellipses. Demonstrate where to add parentheses, brackets, or ellipses. Compare how the punctuation helps clarify the writing.

1. “I . . . don’t know what you mean,” stammered Tara.
2. The artist commented wryly, “My most creative time of day . . . is from dawn until noon.”
3. The scientist remarked, “[The peregrine’s] habitat is being systematically destroyed.”
4. Many families (some with more than five children) were set up in the camps near the lake.
5. This would be the last time they would attempt an ascent over the north face. (Smith, 2009).

## Apply

Provide students with books or magazines to use for quotations and as citations for parentheses. Ask students to draft an example for each use of the punctuation listed above.

## Assess

Check that students use parentheses, brackets, and ellipses correctly in each example. When students complete their research reports, have them identify where they have each type of punctuation in their reports.

*Listening and Speaking Connection:* Have students write dialogue that uses ellipses to note pauses, stammering, or other voice inflections. Ask students to read each other’s completed dialogue aloud, demonstrating how the use of ellipses affects their fluency.