

# Secrets From Great Writers!

## THIS MONTH'S SECRET: WRITING GREAT DIALOGUE

One way writers bring characters to life is through dialogue: what they say and how they say it. Are they generous? Selfish? Happy? Sad? How do they feel about the other characters in the story?

The words and tone they use help readers understand what each character is like.

In this activity, you will study lines from the play *Cidro-ella* and think about what the line tells you about the character. Then, in part 2, you will try to write your own dialogue for each character in the play.

**Directions:** Read the passage below, from "Cidro-ella." Then fill in the blanks below:

### What They Say

- Cidro's father:** I'll be back in a few days. What presents should I bring you?
- Cidro's stepmother:** Nothing special for me, dear. Just some jewelry or furs.
- What does this tell you about the stepmother?**
- Cidro's stepsister:** I need about a million pairs of shoes.
- Cidro's stepbrother:** I want a solid-gold belt buckle.
- Cidro's father:** And how about you, Cidro?
- Cidro's stepmother (disapprovingly):** You really spoil that child.
- Cidro:** If you don't mind, Father, just bring me some seeds from the tree that shades my mother's grave.
- Cidro's stepbrother and stepsister (in unison):** Weird!

### What Can You Tell?

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**Secrets From Great Writers! Part 2**

**NOW YOU TRY!**

Think about Cidro and his stepbrother and stepsister. You know that Cidro is polite and generous, while his stepbrother and stepsister are selfish and unkind. Think about each character's personality as you write dialogue for them in the spaces below.

1. How would Cidro ask his father for a new pair of shoes?

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2. How would Cidro's stepbrother ask Cidro for help with his homework?

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3. What would Cidro's stepbrother say if you asked him to take out the garbage?

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4. What would Cidro's stepsister say if you accidentally stepped on her foot?

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5. What would Cidro say if someone asked him to share his sandwich?

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6. What would Cidro's stepsister say if someone asked her to share her cupcakes?

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**Critical Thinking**

Choose one character in the play and tell what kind of person he or she is. As supporting evidence, choose at least three lines in the play that showed you what kind of person this character is.

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