

# *Pendemonium*

## *Star Words: Apostrophes and Double Negatives*

### Teacher's Guide



**Grade Level:** 6–8

**Curriculum Focus:** Language Arts

**Lesson Duration:** One class period

#### **Program Description**

Learn about apostrophes and double negatives when Dark Marker tries to rule the entire universe. Students travel through space, visiting the moon, Mars, and the Milky Way.

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#### **Onscreen Questions**

- What are apostrophes?
  - When do we use apostrophes to show ownership or possession?
  - When do we use apostrophes to show contractions?
  - How can we avoid using double negatives with contractions?
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#### **Lesson Plan**

##### *Student Objectives*

- Identify apostrophes
- Categorize the various uses of apostrophes

##### *Materials*

- *Star Words: Apostrophes and Double Negatives* video
- Paper, pencils, and markers
- Encyclopedias
- Print resources

##### *Procedures*

1. After viewing the video, reinforce the video's concepts by introducing several books about apostrophes listed under *Print Resources*.
2. Discuss the placement of apostrophes in possessives and contractions. Draw attention to the changes within words when using contractions, pointing out how double negatives should be avoided.

3. Discuss the importance of using apostrophes. To demonstrate, ask students to describe someone's clothing using words without apostrophes or to speak formally without using contractions.
4. Quickly review the setting of *Star Words: Apostrophes and Double Negatives* and the various places in outer space the four characters visited. Discuss some characteristics of various planets (e.g., Mercury is the closest to the sun, Jupiter is the largest planet, and Saturn has rings).
5. Explain that students will create maps of the solar system and write simple sentences that describe each planet's characteristics. Draw a solar system on the board with each planet starting closest to the sun. Leave room inside or above each planet for two sentences.
6. After distributing paper and markers or crayons, have students draw a map of the solar system that fills the page.
7. Make a list on the board that includes several of each planet's characteristics. Try to think of at least two characteristics for each planet (e.g., Mercury is closest to the sun and is the hottest planet).
8. If there is time, students may also research the characteristics of different planets using encyclopedias or other reference materials available in class.
9. Have students write two sentences in or near each planet using apostrophes. One sentence should demonstrate possessives (e.g., Saturn's rings go all around the planet). The other sentence should demonstrate contractions (e.g., It's very cold on Pluto).
10. When students have completed their solar systems, have them share their sentences and explain how they used apostrophes.
11. Create a classroom bulletin board about apostrophes and display student solar systems.

## Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- **3 points:** Students clearly identified the two uses of apostrophes presented in the lesson – possessives and contractions; constructed a solar system with all of the planets in the correct order; clearly explained the characteristics of the planets using apostrophes correctly; avoided the use of double negatives
- **2 points:** Students identified the two uses of apostrophes presented in the lesson – possessives and contractions; constructed a solar system with most of the planets in the correct order; explained some of the characteristics of the planets using apostrophes correctly; limited the use of double negatives
- **1 point:** Students were unable to identify the two types of apostrophes presented in the lesson – possessives and contractions; constructed a solar system with few of the required planets; were unable to explain the characteristics of the planets using apostrophes; used frequent double negatives

## Vocabulary

### apostrophe

*Definition:* a punctuation mark that shows ownership of an object or a contraction of two words

*Context:* *Jenny's sweater isn't as nice as the other one in the store.*

### contraction

*Definition:* the act of shortening words by combining two words and removing a letter or letters

*Context:* In a contraction, the words *I am* become *I'm*.

### double negative

*Definition:* a grammatically incorrect use of two negatives, which results in an unintentionally positive meaning of the sentence

*Context:* If we say *Nancy didn't not* eat the last cookie in the box, what we really mean is that *Nancy did* eat the last cookie in the box.

### possessives or possessive nouns

*Definition:* nouns that show ownership

*Context:* To show that the bike belongs to Katherine, we call it *Katherine's bike*.

### solar system

*Definition:* the collection of planets, stars, and other heavenly bodies that revolve around the sun

*Context:* The solar system is within the Milky Way galaxy.

## Print Resources

Jarnicki, Harold. *No Boring Practice, Please! Punctuation and Capitalization*. Teaching Resources, 2005. Engaging practice pages and easy-to-score quizzes help students learn and teachers assess. Includes crosswords, word searches, and other articles. Ages 9-12.

Learning Resources. *Learning Resources Fold-Up Flashcards, Contractions*. Learning Resources, 2005. Inventive fold-up flashcards show two words, then fold to show the combined contraction. All ages.

Usborne Books. *Apostrophe, Colon, Hyphen*. EDC Publishing, booklet edition, 1999. This intermediate children's book explains various punctuation marks. Ages 9-12.



## Academic Standards

### Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit <http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Language Arts: Viewing—Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media
- Language Arts: Writing—Uses conventions of punctuation in written compositions (e.g., uses apostrophes in contractions and possessive nouns)

### The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

The National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association have developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching the English language arts. To view the standards online, go to <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110846.htm>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
- Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

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## DVD Content

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

### How to Use the DVD

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

**Play Video**—This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.



**Video Index**—Here the video is divided into sections indicated by video thumbnail icons; brief descriptions are noted for each one. Watching all parts in sequence is similar to watching the video from start to finish. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote for TV playback; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail and read the accompanying text description and click again to start the video.

**Standards Link**—Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

**Teacher Resources**—This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

## Video Index

### I. The Need for Apostrophes (6 min)

Dark Marker steals *The Point's* apostrophes and takes them to Mars. Penny explains how apostrophes show ownership or possession.

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: What are some common punctuation marks?

A: Punctuation marks include periods, commas, exclamation points, and question marks.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: Why might we need to use punctuation marks?

A: We might use punctuation marks to avoid confusion or to emphasize certain words.

### II. Using Apostrophes with Possessives (3 min)

Penny explains how to use apostrophes with singular and plural nouns to show possession. The team uses this knowledge to solve Dark Marker's clue and travel to the moon.

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: Why would we need to use apostrophes to show ownership?

A: We might use apostrophes in this case to avoid confusion.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: What is another term for possessives?

A: Answers may include possessive nouns.

### III. Using Apostrophes for Contractions (7 min)

The team discovers Dark Marker's purple flag on the moon. They use apostrophes with contractions to solve his next clue, which leads them to Mars.



*Pre-viewing question*

Q: Where might we use apostrophes besides possessives?

A: We might use apostrophes with contractions.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: Where do we place the apostrophe when using it with a contraction?

A: We place the apostrophe in the place where letters have been removed.

**IV. Avoiding Double Negatives (2 min)**

On Mars, Dark Marker plans to take over the entire universe and guides the team to the other side of the Milky Way with his last clue.

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: What possible mistake can happen when using a contraction?

A: Possible mistakes include dropping the wrong letter or using double negatives.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: How can we avoid making these mistakes?

A: By paying special attention, we can avoid making these mistakes.

**V. Review of Apostrophes (5 min)**

The team reviews the uses of apostrophes. They battle Dark Marker using apostrophes with possessives and contractions. The team saves *The Point* as it returns all apostrophes to the paper just in time.

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: Where does the apostrophe go with a plural possessive noun?

A: The apostrophe goes after the s.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: Why do we use apostrophes?

A: We use apostrophes with contractions and with words that show ownership.