Testing Your Understanding: Quotation Marks

Place the quotation marks where needed in the following sentences. Cross out any misplaced marks. If the sentence is correct as written, indicate with a “C.” An answer key follows.

1) “We need two copies of each document,” the office manager explained.
2) “Father said, “You can’t go to the dance with him,” when I asked about our date,” Alice cried.
3) “Your cat is an exceptional animal,” the veterinarian said, “he has overcome tremendous odds.”
4) Sammie clearly lacked confidence about the decision because she used “maybe” and “if” with every expressed thought.
5) Jeremy yelled; “We’re over here!”
6) John said that, “I should take the afternoon off because business was slow.”
7) When I was a child, my mother would read a poem by Eugene Field at bedtime. I still remember the beginning:
   “Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
    Sailed off in a wooden shoe--
    Sailed on a river of crystal light,
    Into a sea of dew.”
8) I have to admit that I’m a Star Trek fan; my favorite episode is The Trouble with Tribbles.
9) Kim calls herself thrifty and efficient; I call her stingy.
10) Joannie enthusiastically inquired, “How many gifts under the tree are for me”?

Answers below:

Answer Key:
1) “We need two copies of each document,” the office manager explained. (see # 5 - explanatory words continue the sentence, do not begin them with a capital letter)

2) “Father said, ‘You can’t go to the dance with him,’ when I asked about our date,” Alice cried. (see # 5 – quotation within a quotation)

3) “Your cat is an exceptional animal,” the veterinarian said. “He has overcome tremendous odds.” (see # 5 - new sentence after an explanatory interruption – use a period at the end of the interruption and continue the quotation with a capital letter)

4) Sammie clearly lacked confidence about the decision because she used “maybe” and “if” with every expressed thought. (see # 3)

5) Jeremy yelled, “We’re over here!” (see # 5 – introducing quotation)

6) John said that I should take the afternoon off because business was slow. (see # 1 – indirect quotation)

7) When I was a child, my mother would read a poem by Eugene Field at bedtime. I still remember the beginning:

   Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
   Sailed off in a wooden shoe--
   Sailed on a river of crystal light,
   Into a sea of dew.

   (see # 6 – more than 3 lines of a poem – indicate with indention versus quotation marks)

8) I have to admit that I’m a Star Trek fan; my favorite episode is “The Trouble with Tribbles.” (see # 4)

9) Kim calls herself “thrifty” and “efficient”; I call her stingy. (see # 2)

10) Joannie enthusiastically inquired, “How many gifts under the tree are for me?” (see # 5 – question marks inside unless applies to whole sentence)