

GRAMMAR

Advanced uses of reported speech

LEVEL

Upper-Intermediate
(B2)

NUMBER

EN_B2_2012G

LANGUAGE

English



Learning outcomes

- I can identify and use reported speech verb forms in more advanced sentences.
- I can accurately use reported speech to relay what other people have said.



Warm-up

Complete Steps **1** and **2** below in breakout rooms or together as a class.

Step 1:

Ask a classmate what they had for breakfast.



Step 2:

Share what your classmate told you with everyone else.

Building reported speech

1. **Read** the sentences.
2. Then **review** the information in the blue boxes.

Direct speech:

She said: 'I have never played tennis.'

Reported speech:

She told me she had never played tennis.

- When building reported speech, we change pronouns from **first person** to **third person**.
- We also change the **verb tense**.

- The present simple is changed to the past simple; the past simple is changed to the past perfect, etc.
- Finally, don't forget a reporting verb like **say, tell, ask or suggest**; the reporting verb will vary by context.



Reported speech in use

Direct speech	Reported speech
'We went to an art exhibition,' they said.	They said they had been to an art exhibition.
'I have been taking ballet classes for years,' she said.	She said she had been taking ballet classes for years.
'I took piano lessons,' he said.	He said he had taken piano lessons.
'I am leaving my office,' he said.	He said he was leaving his office.

- Note that both pronouns and possessives change from **first person** to **third person**.
- The **verb tense** often changes in reported speech.
- Don't forget to include a **reporting verb**!



Transform the sentences

Transform the sentences in direct speech to reported speech.

1 She said: 'I finished my homework.'



She said she had finished her homework.

2 He said: 'Our house has become too small for our family.'



3 They said: 'We will probably buy a new house soon.'



4 She said: 'I will buy more coffee!'



5 She said: 'I have one cat and one dog.'



6 He said: 'I went on holiday last week.'

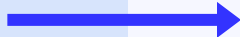




More reporting verbs

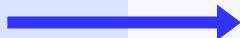
- Using different reporting verbs can make your reported speech more exciting and precise.
- Some will depend on context. For example, **refuse** is used when relaying information about someone being unwilling to do something.
 - *I **will not** drive you to the party = He **refused** to drive me to the party.*

promise



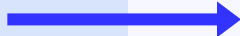
She **promised** to take me shopping.

suggest



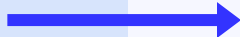
They **suggested** we go to Café Bella.

advise



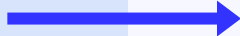
My teacher **advised** me to edit my paper.

claim



The company **claimed** to be the best in town.

refuse



He **refused** to drive me to the party.

remind



Mum **reminded** us to do our chores.



Choose the best sentence

1. **Read** the direct speech. 2. Then **choose** the sentence that best captures what was said.

1 'Please don't forget to buy orange juice,' she said.

a. She reminded me to buy the orange juice.

b. She promised to buy the orange juice.

2 'I'll take you to the shopping mall,' he said.

a. He refused to take me to the shopping mall.

b. He promised to take me to the shopping mall.

3 'Why don't we try the new restaurant?' he said.

a. He advised me to try the new restaurant.

b. He suggested we try the new restaurant.

4 'I make the best pizza in town!' she said.

a. She promised to make the best pizza in town.

b. She claimed to make the best pizza in town.

5 'I would stay in and study if I were you,' she said.

a. She advised me to stay in and study.

b. She reminded me to stay in and study.



Practise reported speech

1. **Choose** one of the situations below. 2. **Tell** your classmates about it.

1 The last thing someone reminded you to do.

2 The last time you refused to do something.

3 The last thing a teacher advised you to do.

4 A suggestion a friend gave you.





It completely **slipped**
my mind!

If something **slips your mind**, you forget it.

When was the last time something **slipped**
your mind? What happened?

Reporting questions with yes/no answers

1. **Read** the example sentences. 2. Then **review** the information in the blue box below.



Excuse me, is it possible to upgrade to business class?

One moment, let me check with my supervisor.



Jane, a customer **asked if** they could upgrade to business class.



- To form this reported speech, use a **reporting verb** + **whether/if** + **clause**.
- You may use the words **whether** or **if** to report on questions that have **yes/no** answers. **Whether** is more formal than **if**.

Reporting questions with question words

- *'What is your name?' he asked.*
 - This type of question is reported by using a **reporting verb** + **question word** + **clause**.

Direct speech	Reported speech
'What is your name?' he asked.	He asked me what my name was.
'How old are you?' she asked.	She asked how old I was.
'Where do you live?' he asked.	He asked me where I lived.
'When can we have dinner?' she asked.	She asked when we could have dinner.
'Why are you late?' he asked.	He asked me why I was late.



Transform the sentences

Transform the sentences in direct speech to reported speech.

1 'Is this seat taken?' she asked.



She asked me if the seat was taken.

2 'What's the address?' the taxi driver asked.



3 'What time does the class start?' he asked



4 'Is the movie scary?' they asked.



5 'Do you want to go on holiday in June?' she asked me.



6 'How long does the cake need to be in the oven?' he asked.





Negatives in reported speech

1. **Read** the example sentences. 2. Then **review** the information in the blue boxes.

She said, 'Please don't move my things.'



She asked me **not to move** her things.

He said, 'I'm sorry I didn't come to your birthday dinner.'



He apologised for **not coming** to my birthday dinner.

- To form negatives in reported speech, we can use:
 - **not to + infinitive**
 - **not + verb-ing**

- The word **not** is the most important indicator for building negative sentences.



Reporting requests

Your neighbours leave you these notes.
How would you report their requests?

Please don't
make so much
noise in the
evening. Our
baby needs to
sleep!

We're sorry we
didn't come to
your party. We
had other
plans.

We are not
coming to
game night this
evening – sorry!

Please don't
move our
bicycles in the
courtyard!





End of the lesson

Idiom

he-said-she-said

Meaning: a disagreement where there is no concrete evidence to prove or disprove something

Example: There's no way to solve this case. All the evidence is he-said-she-said.



Additional practice



Unscramble the sentences



move

personal

not

belongings?

can

my

you

please



her

to

me

belongings

asked

move

she

not





Matching

Match the direct speech (1-5) with the reported speech (a-e).

1 'Fine, I'll wear my winter hat,' she said.

2 'I'll take you ice skating tomorrow,' he said.

3 'I didn't cheat on my test!' he said.

4 'Please don't touch my things,' she said.

5 He said, 'We will easily win this game.'

a She told me not to touch her things.

b He denied cheating on his test.

c He claimed that they would win easily.

d He promised to take her ice skating.

e She agreed to wear her winter hat.



Multiple choice

Choose the best reported speech for each direct speech.

1 'I will call you to discuss the details,' she said.

a. She said she would call me to discuss the details.

b. She said that she had called me to discuss the details.

2 'Get me a coffee at the café,' he said.

a. He told me to get him a coffee at the café.

b. He said he had got a coffee at the café.

3 'We have been saving for a car,' they said.

a. They said that they had been saving for a car.

b. They said that they have saved a car.

4 'I have always dreamt of living abroad,' she said.

a. She said she has been dreaming of living abroad.

b. She told me that she had always dreamt of living abroad.

5 'Please don't play loud music,' he said.

a. He apologized for playing loud music.

b. He politely asked me not to play loud music.





Discuss

Answer the questions.

**What was the last thing
someone suggested to
you?**



**What was the last thing
someone promised
you?**



Unscramble the sentences



moved

Beijing

just

I



London

have

from

to



had

said

from

He

moved

just

he

Beijing to
London.



Reviewing verb tenses

The chart below gives a quick review of the relevant verb tenses you will use in **reported speech**.

Tense	How it's built	Example
Past continuous	was/were + verb- <i>ing</i>	He was talking on the phone.
Present perfect	have/has + past participle	I have contacted your boss.
Present perfect continuous	have/has + been + verb- <i>ing</i>	She has been working there for 10 years.
Past perfect	had + past participle	We had requested a larger room.
Past perfect continuous	had + been + verb- <i>ing</i>	They had been planning the trip since August.



Answer key

P.6:

2. He said their house had become too small for their family.
3. They said they would probably buy a new house soon.
4. She said she would buy more coffee.
5. She said she had one cat and one dog.
6. He said he had gone on holiday last week.

P.8: 1.) a 2.) b 3.) b 4.) b 5.) a

P.13:

2. The taxi driver asked what the address was.
3. He asked what time the class started.
4. They asked if/whether the movie was scary.
5. She asked me if I wanted to go on holiday in June.
6. He asked how long the cake needed to be in the oven.

P.19:

Can you please not move my personal belongings?
She asked me not to move her belongings.

P.20: 1.) e 2.) d 3.) b 4.) a 5.) c

P. 21: 1.) a 2.) a 3.) a 4.) b 5.) b



Answer key

P23:

I have just moved to London from Beijing

He said he had just moved from London to Beijing.



Summary

Reported speech

- When building **reported speech**, we change **pronouns** from first person to third person.
- We also change the **verb tense**, e.g. present simple to past simple.
- *'We went to an art exhibition,' they said. **They said they had been** to an art exhibition.*

More reporting verbs

- *promise; suggest; advise; claim; refuse; remind*
- *'No, I don't want to go with you', he said. He **refused** to go with us.*
- *'Shall we go to Café Bella?' they asked. They **suggested** we go to Café Bella.*

Reporting yes/no questions

- To report yes/no questions, use a **reporting verb + whether/if + clause**. You may use **whether** or **if** to report on questions that have yes/no answers. *Whether* is more formal than *if*.
- *'Can I upgrade to business class?' she asked. Someone asked **if** they could upgrade to business class.*

Reporting questions with question words

- This type of question is reported by using a **reporting verb + question word + clause**.
- *'What is your name?' she asked. She asked me **what** my name was.*
- *'Where do you live?' he asked. He asked me **where** I lived.*



Vocabulary

chore

to slip your mind

to upgrade

to apologise

courtyard



Notes

