Language Summary

Reporting verbs: review

Use

You use **reporting verbs** to summarize what people say. There are many different reporting verbs and many different ways of using them.

• Reporting verbs with **that** clauses report what happened in a particular situation, or give an idea or summary of something.
New research says that eating five portions *of fruit and vegetables a day is not enough.*
The report highlights that eating even more *than five portions has important health benefits.*

• We can also use reporting verbs with **that** clauses to say what someone says or thinks.
Dr. Philips says that *drinking juice is a good way to get some of your seven a day.*
We were told that *we needed to eat five portions a day.*

• Reporting verbs with if or **wh- word (what, where, when, etc.) clauses** usually summarize problems, questions, or solutions.
He explained what *we needed to do.*
If you asked me whether *processed juice had health benefits, I'd say no.*

• Reporting verbs can also **reference and give more information** about a noun.
The report highlights *several problems.*

Language Summary

Reporting verbs: review cont.

Form

• Reporting verbs with ***that clauses*** have the structure: subject + reporting verb + that + clause.
I think that eating lots of fruit and vegetables is a good idea.

• It is often possible to ***omit that without changing the meaning*** of the sentence.
We were told (that) we needed to eat five portions a day.

• Reporting verbs with ***if / wh- words*** have the structure: subject + reporting verb + if / wh- word + clause.
She explained what we had to do.
He asked if I was ready.

• Reporting verbs with ***direct objects*** have the structure: subject + reporting verb + direct object + (that) or if / wh- word + clause (*the direct object comes after the verb, without to*).
He told me (that) drinking juice was good for you.
If you asked me whether processed juice had health benefits, I'd say no.

• Reporting verbs that ***reference a noun*** have the structure: noun + reporting verb + noun. We don't use ***that*** to directly reference a noun.
This research asks an important question about the engineering profession.