

Narration

**Introduction:** Narration is reporting somebody's statement/instruction/question/prayer/exclamation to someone else. For example, A says something to B. Now C narrates it to D. Here what C does is narration. (He narrated the statement of A to D). C can do this narration in two ways, namely, directly without any change in the statement of A, which is known as Direct Speech or indirectly by conveying the meaning of A through his own language, which is called Indirect Speech. If analyzed in this way, it is seen that there are four parties involved in narration, speaker, listener, narrator and to whom narrated. But it is not necessary to be four persons there, because sometimes even two persons can play the role of four parties. For example, A said something to B yesterday. Today he repeats the same thing referring back to yesterday's statement. Now yesterday A was speaker and B was listener. Today A is narrator and B is to whom narrated. When we write about something or tell about something sometimes it becomes necessary to report other's comment in this subject. But it is not always possible as well as sound to report the statement of the speaker exactly as it was told by the speaker. In that case we use indirect speech. Sometime we see the speaker's statement worth narrating exactly. At that time we use direct speech. So it is necessary to learn both ways of reporting.

**Change of Narration:**

Direct: My friend (1) said to me, (2)“(3)I shall tell (4)you about this solution more elaborately (5)tomorrow.”

Indirect: My friend *told* me *that* he *would* tell *me* about that solution more elaborately *the next day*.

If we compare both ways of narration we see the following changes:-

- 1- Change of Reporting Verb
- 2- Replacement of Inverted Comma
- 3- Change of tense within Reported Speech
- 4- Change of Pronoun within Reported Speech.
- 5- Change of words expressing the nearness of time and place.

**How these changes are done:**

1. Reporting Verb: Reporting verb is changed as per the kind of sentence in the reported speech. A list of appropriate reporting verbs in the indirect speech is given below-
    - a. Assertive- said (without object), told (with object)
    - b. Imperative- ordered, instructed, prohibited, requested, advised, asked, suggested
    - c. Interrogative- asked, inquired of, wanted to know from
    - d. Optative- prayed, wished
    - e. Exclamatory- exclaimed, exclaimed with joy/sorrow/wonder (if there is interjection)
  2. Replacement of Inverted Comma: Inverted comma is not used in the indirect speech. It is replaced by some words as follows:-
    - a. That- for assertive, imperative with *let*, optative and exclamatory.
    - b. If- for Yes/No question (no replacement in Wh questions)
    - c. To- affirmative imperative
    - d. Not to-negative imperative
  3. Change of tense: tense of the reported speech will not change if the reporting verb is in present or future form.
- Moreover, if the reported speech is a universal truth tense will not be changed.

If the reporting verb is in past form, while changing the narration the tense of the reported speech will have to be changed in the following manner:

Am/is/are (both as main and auxiliary)	⇒	was/were	⇒	had been
Have/has	⇒	had		
Will/shall	⇒	would		

Can	⇒	could	
May	⇒	might	
Present form of verb	⇒	past form of verb	⇒ had+pp of verb
Question of present indefinite	⇒	assertive past indefinite	
Question of past indefinite	⇒	assertive of past perfect	

4. Change of pronoun: Pronouns within reported speech are changed as follows:
  - a. All forms of first persons will go to the person of speaker (subject of reporting verb)
  - b. All forms of second person will go to the person of listener (object of the reporting verb).  
In case there is no object, then the second person can be changed into the first person.
  - c. Third person pronouns are not be changed.
5. Words of nearness are changed as follows:
 

Today	- that day
Tomorrow	- the next day
Yesterday	- the previous day
Here	- there
Now	- then
This	- that
These	- those

### Examples:

Direct -The teacher *said to* me, "I am checking your script."

Indirect - The teacher *told me* that he was checking my script. (Note the change of reporting verb, pronoun and tense)

Direct: The teacher *said*, "I shall tell you about it *tomorrow*."

Indirect: The teacher *said* that he *would* tell me about it *the next day*. (Note the change of reporting verb, inverted comma and pronoun and word of nearness.)

Direct: The teacher says, "***Your are*** the best boy in the class."

Indirect: The teacher says that ***I am*** the best boy in the class. (Note that tense is not changed because the reporting verb is in present form)

Direct: The teacher said, "***The earth moves*** round the sun."

Indirect: The teacher said that ***the earth moves*** round the sun. (Note that the tense is not changed, because the reported speech is a universal truth.)

Direct: My friend said to me, "***I sent*** you a gift yesterday."

Indirect: My friend told me that he ***had sent*** me a gift the previous day. [Note that past form of the verb has been changed into had+pp form.]

Direct: My father said to me, "I shall give you money if you do a course on English language."

Indirect: My father told me that he would give me money if I I did a course on English language. [Note the change of 'shall' into 'would' and change of 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns within reported speech.]

Direct: The instructor *said to* the trainees, "Do this exercise repeatedly until it seems very easy to you."

Indirect: The instructor *asked* the trainees *to* do that exercises repeatedly until it seemed very easy to them. [Note the change of reporting verb and replacement of inverted comma and change of tense in the subordinate clause.]

Direct: The teacher *said to* the students, "Don't keep your today's activity for tomorrow."

Indirect: The teacher *advised* the students *not to* keep their that day's activity for the next day.

Direct: The teacher **said to** the students, “Are you doing the exercises according to my instruction?”

Indirect: The teacher **asked** the students *if* they were doing the exercises according to his instruction. {Note that an interrogative sentence becomes assertive when it is changed into indirect speech.} [Note the change of reporting verb and inverted comma.]

Direct: I said to **my friend**, “**What do you** suggest for me about this problem?”

Indirect: I asked **my friend what he suggested** for me about that problem. [Note that no connector is used in place of inverted comma in the WH question and also the question of present indefinite has been changed into the assertive of past indefinite.]

Direct: My father said to me, “Long live my son.”

Indirect: My father prayed for me that his son **might live** long. [Note that in indirect speech of optative sentence ‘might+simple verb’ is used.]

Direct: My friend **said to** me, “**How nice** your hand writing is!”

Indirect: My friend **exclaimed to** me that my handwriting was **very nice**. [Note that how nice is changed into very nice. In the same way-what a nice will be a very nice, what a beauty will be a great beauty.]

Direct: The boys said, “**Hurrah!** We have won the match.”

Indirect: The boys **exclaimed with joy** that they had won the match. [Note the use of ‘exclaimed with joy’ in place of interjection ‘hurrah’. In the same way ‘alas’ will be replaced with ‘exclaimed with sorrow’]

#### Examples Worked Out

1. Salil said to his friend, “You are ill.”	1. Salil told his friend that he was ill.
2. Salil said to me, “You are ill.”	2. Salil told me that I was ill.
3. I said to you, “I don’t believe you.”	3. I told you that I didn’t believe you.
4. He said, “I have passed the examination.”	4. He said that he had passed the examination.
5. He said, “I was playing football.”	5. He said that he had been playing football.
6. He said, “I shall play football.”	6. He said that he would play football.
7. He said, “I shall go to Delhi tomorrow.”	7. He said that he would go to Delhi the next day.
8. He said, “I have never seen anything like it.”	8. He said that he had never seen anything like it.
9. He said, “We ought to go.”	9. He said that they ought to go.
10. She said, “We must go.”	10. She said that they must go.
11. “Do you know the way to the station?” She said to Mahim.	11. She asked Mahim if he knew the way to the station.
12. “Does she require any help?” the old man asked me.	12. The old man asked me if she required any help.
13. I said to the boy, “Did you go to school?”	13. I asked the boy if he had gone to school.
14. “Isn’t poverty a curse?” my father said to me.	14. My father asked me if poverty was not a curse.
15. “Are you weeping?” he asked her.	15. He asked her if she was weeping.
16. “Have you brought a pen for me?” the girl said to her father.	16. The girl asked her father if he had brought a pen for her.
17. “Can you see a woman seated at a table?” he asked her.	17. He asked her if she could see a woman seated at a table.
18. Reza said, “Marie, isn’t soup boiling yet?”	18. Reza asked Marie if the soup was not boiling by that time.
19. “Would you sing for our visitor?” My mother said to my sister.	19. My mother asked my sister if she would sing for their visitor.
20. “Do you suppose you know better than your brother?” jeered his angry mother.	20. His angry mother asked if he supposed that he knew better than his own father.
21. My brother said to me, “Will you not go to the show?”	21. My brother asked me If I would not go to the show.
22. I said to him, “Shall I reach the village before dawn?”	22. I asked him If I would reach the village before dawn.
23. The girl said, “Shall I go out for shopping?”	23. The girl asked if she would go out for shopping.
24. I said to the man, “Who are you?”	24. I asked the man who he was.
25. He said to me, “What are you doing?”	25. He asked me what I was doing.
26. “Where do you live?” asked the stranger.	26. The stranger asked me where I lived.
27. “Why are you weeping?” the swallow asked the prince.	27. The swallow enquired of the prince why he was weeping.
28. “Why doesn’t she talk to me anymore?”	28. I thought to myself why she did not talk to me any more.
29. “When will you come back?” the price said to the swallow.	29. The prince asked the swallow when he would come back.
30. “How did you do that” they asked Edison.	30. They asked Edison how he had done that.

31. He said to me, "Which book do you want?"	31. He asked me which book I wanted.
32. He said to me, "You are going to the playground, aren't you?"	32. He asked me whether it was true that I was going to the playground.
33. He said to me, "You didn't cause much damage to the book, did you?"	33. He asked me whether I had caused much damage to the book.
34. The officer shouted to the men, "Halt."	34. The officer ordered his men loudly to halt.
35. Father said to me, "Go home at once."	35. Father ordered me to go home at once.
36. The teacher said to me, "Don't come here."	36. The teacher ordered me not to go there.
37. He said to me, "Please open the door."	37. He requested me to open the door.
38. He said to me, "Please wait here till I return."	38. He requested me to wait there till he returned.
39. Mother said to him, "Don't run in the sun."	39. Mother advised him not to run in the sun.
40. Rina said to him, "Sir, Don't go home now,"	40. Rina asked him politely not to go home then.
41. Laila said to her friends, "Let us have a picnic on Sunday."	41. Laila proposed to her friends that they should have a picnic on Sunday.
42. He said to his companions, "Let us not miss this chance."	42. He proposed to his companions that they should not miss that chance.
43. We said, "Let him tell the story."	43. We said that he might (might be allowed to) tell the story.
44. She said, "Let him eat whatever he likes."	44. She said that he might be allowed to eat whatever he liked.
45. He said to me, "You must leave the place."	45. He told me that I must leave the place.
46. He said to me, "Would you help me to do the sum?"	46. He requested me to help him to do the sum.
47. I said to her, "Could you give me a cup of tea?"	47. I requested her to give me a cup of tea.
48. The master said to his servant, "Do as I told you."	48. The master ordered his servant to do as he had told him.
49. I said to him, "May you be happy."	49. I wished that he might be happy.
50. Mother said to me, "May God bless you."	50. Mother prayed for me that God might bless me.
51. He said, "May his soul rest in peace."	51. He prayed that his soul might rest in peace.
52. The girl said, "Oh, had I the wings of dove."	52. The girl wished that she could have the wings of a dove.
53. The boys said, "Hurrah! We have won the match."	53. The boys exclaimed with joy that they had won the match.
54. He said to me, "Alas! I could not save you."	54. He exclaimed in grief that he could not save me.
55. The boy said, "what a fool I am."	55. The boy exclaimed that he was a great fool.
56. He said, "What a nice bird it is!"	56. He exclaimed that it was a very nice bird.
57. He observed, "How dirty the house is!"	57. He exclaimed that the house was very dirty.
58. "Help! Help!" shouted the woman.	58. The woman shouted for help.
59. He said, "Good bye, my friends!"	59. He bade goodbye to his friends.
60. The teacher said, "Thank you my boys."	60. The teacher thanked the boys.
61. He said, "By God! What a good news."	61. He swore by God that it was a very good news.
62. He said to me, "Eid Mubarak."	62. He wished me Eid Mubarak.
63. He said to them, "Bravo! You have done well."	63. He applauded them saying that they had done well.
64. The old man said to him, "Fie, you are such a coward."	64. The old man exclaimed that it was shameful that he was such a coward.
65. He said, "Poor fellow! How changed you are."	65. He pitied the man and exclaimed that he was greatly changed.
66. "So help me heaven." he cried, "I'll never do so again."	66. He prayed to heaven to help him and resolved not to do so again.
67. Who knew that this would happen!"	66. He said that none knew that (that) would happen.
68. "Good Heavens!" We have reached the station." said the boys.	69. The boys exclaimed with delight that they had reached the station.
69. Father said, "Sunil, go to school."	69. Father asked Sunil to go to school.
70. The teacher said, "Keep quiet my boys."	70. The teacher asked the boys to keep quiet.
71. The teacher said, "Keep quiet my dear boys."	71. The teacher affectionately asked the boys to keep quiet.
72. "Jim darling!" cried Della "Don't look at me that way"	72. Addressing Jim as her darling, Della implored him not to look at her that way.
73. I said to him, "Who are you? What do you want?"	73. I asked him who he was and what he wanted.
74. Shila said to me, "I have left my pencil at home. Can you give me one to write with?"	74. Shila told me that she had left the pencil at home and asked me if I could give her one to write with.
75. Mr. Sen said to his friend, "What time is it? My watch has stopped."	75. Mr. Sen asked his friend what time it was and added that his watch had stopped.
76. Biman said, "Why are you still waiting here, Bipin? Go away now."	76. Biman asked Bipin why he was still waiting there. Then he ordered him to go away.

**Change the following sentences into indirect narration.**

1. The teacher said to the boy, "You have forgotten the lesson."
2. "Do you know the way to the station?" She said to Mahim.
3. "Where do you live?" asked the stranger.
4. I said to him, "Please explain the passage"
5. She said, "Let him eat whatever he likes."
6. The boy said, "Hurrah! We have won the match."
7. Refat said, "My friend! I always thought of you."
8. My father said to my mother, "I have often advised you not to indulge your son so much."
9. John said to Julia, "Why didn't you telephone me yesterday?"
10. "Have you anything to say on behalf of the prisoner?" said the judge finally.
11. "Hurry up," he said to his servant, "do not waste your time."
12. He said, "Alas! Our foes are strong."
13. The teacher promised, "If you will come tomorrow, I will explain it."
14. "Don't you know the way home?" asked I.
15. She said to me, "Shall I post these letters for you?"
16. "Is there anybody there?" said the traveler.
17. "Who are you and what do you want of us?" I said to them.
18. The teacher said to the boys, "Don't make such a noise."
19. I said, "Let him do what he likes."
20. My mother said to him, "May God grant you long life."
21. You said to me, "I shall help you if you seek my help."
22. The teacher said to the students, "Do these exercises carefully."
23. The man said to me, "Can you show me the way to the hospital?"
24. My friend said to me, "Who has told you that I have been selected?"
25. I said to my friends, "Let us form an English language club."
26. The beggar said to me, "Let me have a plate of rice."
27. The foreigner said, "What a nice country you have!"
28. The teacher said to the boy, "I have examined your script carefully."
29. "Can you help me?" She said to Mahim.
30. "What is your name?" asked the stranger.
31. I said to him, "Don't open my file"
32. He said, "Let us solve the problem mutually."
33. The boy said, "Alas! My father is dead."
34. Mother said to me, "Long live my son."
35. He said, "Will you accompany me?"
36. Tom said to John, "How nice your hand writing is!"
37. He said to me, "I have often told you not to play with fire."
38. "You have all done very badly" remarked the teacher.
39. They wrote, "It is time we thought about setting this matter."
40. The teacher promised, "If you come to class tomorrow, I will explain it."
41. She wrote, "I am waiting and watching and longing for my son's return."
42. The examiner's orders were, "No one is to bring books into the room nor ask me questions about what I have told you to do."
43. The man said to her, "Promise me that when you are Queen you will give me a job at your court."
44. "That's my horse," said she, "and if I do not prove it in a few minutes I will give up my claim."
45. "I will avenge your wrongs," he cried, "I will not enter Athens until I have punished the king who had so cruelly treated you."
46. Aladin said to the magician, "What have I done to deserve so severe a blow?"
47. The poor man exclaimed, "Will none of you help me?"
48. He said to us, "Why are you all sitting about there doing nothing?"
49. "Which is the proper way to answer this question father?" the boy enquired.
50. "Dear bird," she said stroking its feather, "have you come to comfort me in my sorrow?"
51. When the Brahmin approached, the first thief said, "Why do you carry a dog on your back? Are you not ashamed?"
52. "Bring me a cup of milk", said the swami to the villagers.
53. "Take off your hat" the king said to the hatter.
54. "What a stupid fellow you are!" he angrily remarked.

55. He said, "My God! I am ruined."
56. "Ah me," exclaimed the Queen, "What a rash and bloody deed you have done!"
57. He said to me, "You are wicked; so I shall not mix with you."
58. You said to him, "I am ill; so I can't come to your place."
59. He said to you, "I was much impressed by your eloquence."
60. We remarked, "God is gracious."
61. They said to me, "We have been your friends all through. You may rely on us for support."
62. You said to them, "Have you seen the man who came to me the other day?"
63. "Come here, please give me a book." He said to us.
64. The president said to the members, "Please obey the chair."
65. I said to her, "May you live long."
66. You said, "By God! I never meant you any harm."
67. You said to me, "How clever your action was!"
68. She said to him, "Father, kindly excuse me this time."
69. The boy said, "Sir, please grant me leave."
70. He said, "Let me try."
71. I said to him, "Where did you see me and what do you think of me?"
72. He said to me, "Is there no hope for me?"