

DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH

When the actual words of the speaker are reproduced, it is called direct speech.

Example: He said, 'I am going to school.'

When the main idea of a speaker's words is reported by another person and the exact words are not quoted, it is called indirect speech or reported speech.

Example: He said that he was going to school.

- Quotation marks or 'inverted commas' are used for direct speech.
Example: 'I have cut my finger!' cried Mrs Sharma.
- Quotation marks are not used for indirect or reported speech.
Example: Mrs Sharma cried that she had cut her finger.
- Question marks and exclamation marks are not used in reported speech.
Examples: 'Is it bleeding very much?' Mr Sharma asked. (direct)
Mr Sharma asked if it was bleeding very much. (indirect)
- In reported speech, the reporting verbs like asked/enquired, commanded/ordered/requested, advised/suggested, exclaimed/shouted, etc are often used in place of the reporting verb 'said' to convey the mood of the spoken words.
Examples: Ramesh said, 'How hot the soup is!' (direct)
Ramesh exclaimed that the soup was hot. (indirect)
'Stir it with your spoon,' his sister said. (direct)
His sister advised him to stir it with a spoon. (indirect)
The son said to his mother, 'I shall never be rude to you.' (direct)
The son promised his mother that he would never be rude to her. (indirect)
'Why has the clock stopped?' thought Peter. (direct)
Peter wondered why the clock had stopped. (indirect)
- The tense of the verb in the reported speech is in the past tense. However, if the verb in the reported speech is stating a universal truth, a habit, a constant situation, the tense of that verb does not change:
Examples: The boy said, 'I brush my teeth every day.' (simple present tense)
The boy said that he brushes his teeth every day. (simple present tense)

The teacher said, 'The Sun rises in the east.' (direct)

The teacher said that the Sun rises in the east. (indirect)

She said, 'My son wants to be an actor.' (direct)

She said that her son wants to be an actor. (indirect)

- In an indirect or reported question, the subject comes before the verb, not after it. You do not use the helping verb 'do' to form reported questions.

Example: Paul said, 'What time does the bus come?' (direct)

Paul asked what time the bus came. (indirect)

Sarah said, 'When does the show begin.' (direct)

Sarah asked when the show began. (indirect)

- The pronouns are also changed in reported speech.

Pronouns of the first person are changed as below:

Examples: He said, 'I am bored.' (direct)

He said that he was bored. (indirect)

Mira said, 'We are going to the movies.' (direct)

Mira said that they were going to the movies. (indirect)

Rinki said, 'My friends gave me a treat.' (direct)

Rinki said that her friends gave her a treat. (indirect)

Pronouns of the second person are changed as below:

Examples: He said to her, 'You are beautiful.' (direct)

He said to her that she was beautiful. (indirect)

'You must write neatly,' the teacher told her pupils. (direct)

The teacher advised her pupils that they must write neatly.
(indirect)

Pronouns of the third person do not change:

Examples: I said, 'They have gone out.' (direct)

I informed that they had gone out. (indirect)

Leela said, 'These books are theirs.' (direct)

Leela said that those books were theirs. (indirect)

- While converting direct speech into indirect speech, the tense of the verb must change accordingly:

Direct speech		Indirect speech
Simple present	—	Simple past
Simple past	—	Past perfect
Present continuous	—	Past continuous
Present perfect	—	Past perfect
Can	—	Could
Shall	—	Would
Will	—	Would
May	—	Might

Examples: She said, 'I may attend the meeting.' (direct)

She said that she might attend the meeting. (indirect)

Renu said, 'I have finished my homework.' (direct)

Renu said that she had finished her work. (indirect)

- Words indicating 'nearness' of time and place are changed to words indicating 'distance' of time and place:

Direct speech		Indirect speech
This	—	that
These	—	those
Here	—	there
Now	—	then
Today	—	that day
Tomorrow	—	the next/following day
Yesterday	—	the day before/the previous day

Examples: The interviewer said to the young man, 'We will let you know our decision by tomorrow.' (direct)

The interviewer said to the young man that they would let him know their decision by the next day. (indirect)

'These are the documents you will require,' the travel agent informed the tourist. (direct)

The travel agent informed the tourist that those were the documents she would require. (indirect)

- When reporting a question, an order or a request, the connector 'that' is not used.

Examples: The girl said, 'May I come in?' (direct)

The girl asked if she could come in. (indirect)

'Pay your taxes,' the king ordered his subjects. (direct)

The king ordered his subjects to pay their taxes. (indirect)

- In reported speech, the word/words or the sound used by the speaker to express an emotion is omitted.

Examples: 'Wow! What a handsome man he is!' the girls said. (direct)

The girls exclaimed what a handsome man he was. (indirect)

'Hello!' my friend said to me. 'How are you?' (direct)

My friend greeted me and asked how I was. (indirect)

WORKSHEET 17

I. Change the following sentences from direct to indirect speech.

- a) 'Congratulations! You have come first in the exams,' the principal said to me.
- b) Mohit's father said, 'We must not watch TV while having our dinner.'
- c) 'What an expensive car he drives!' remarked Rahul's neighbour.
- d) 'How well you speak German,' his teammate remarked.
- e) 'Hurry up!' said Viru's mother. 'The bus will be here in a minute.'
- f) The policeman ordered the truck driver, 'Show your licence.'
- g) 'You will have to surrender your passport,' the officer said to the passenger.
- h) My grandfather said, 'May you have a long life!'
- i) Mr Jain said to his colleague, 'Will you please drop me at the airport?'
- j) 'Light travels in a straight line,' the teacher explained.
- k) 'I saw an interesting film last evening,' said my friend.
- l) The caller asked, 'May I speak with Shweta?'
- m) 'May I know who is on the line?' her father enquired.
- n) 'Ouch! The bee stung me!' the child said.

II. Read the following dialogues and fill in the blanks.

- a) Husband — Did you talk to Dr Trehan?
Wife — Yes, but it is important for you to rest.
Husband — What is it?
Wife — Silence.
Husband — Is it one or two?
Wife — No.
Husband — Is it three or four?
Wife — Yes

Tushar was admitted in a hospital with a complaint of tumour. He was resting. A few minutes later, he opened his eyes and asked his wife i) _____ she ii) _____. He asked her if it was one or two. She iii) _____. Finally, he wanted to know if it iv) _____ and she agreed with him.

b) Sahil : I have invited four of my friends for dinner today.

Radhika : Then I'll invite my friends also.

Sahil : That will be a good idea.

Radhika : So, what should we have for dinner?

Sahil : Let us decide the menu now.

Sahil told Radhika that i) _____. Then Radhika said ii) _____, which Sahil thought iii) _____. When Radhika asked iv) _____ Sahil replied v) _____.

c) Principal : Where is your mother?

Rhea : I have no mother. She died five years back.

Principal : Who was the lady with whom you came in?

Rhea : She is a stranger. She brought me for a treat.

Principal : You should not accept food from a stranger.

The Principal asked Rhea i) _____. Puzzled, the girl told the principal ii) _____ back. At this the principal asked her iii) _____ had come in. Rhea replied that she was a stranger who iv) _____. Then principal told Rhea v) _____.

d) Maggie : Tom, how much money did you give for the rabbits.

Tom : Five shillings and six pence.

Maggie : I think I've got more than that in my box upstairs. I'll ask mother to give it to you.

Tom : What for? I don't want your money. I've got far more money.

Maggie : I want to buy some more rabbits.

Maggie asked Tom i) _____. Tom replied promptly ii) _____. Maggie told him iii) _____ she would ask mother to give that money to him. Tom said iv) _____. Maggie told him that v) _____.

e) Doctor : Hello, How are you feeling now?

Patient : I am much better, sir.

Doctor : Are you not fully well? Don't you take proper rest?

Patient : I am not fully well as I cannot have proper rest because of the busy schedule.

Doctor : Take some tonic to regain your health, ok?

The doctor asked i) _____ the patient replied ii) _____ the doctor asked iii) _____ the patient replied iv) _____ Finally, the doctor advised the patient v) _____.

f) Read the dialogues between the two girls and fill in the blanks.

Gina : Why do you look so worried?

Madhu : I have not prepared well for the exams. I have read only general articles.

Gina : Don't worry. There will be no questions from MCB. Reading general articles from magazines or newspapers will help you develop reading skills.

Madhu : Thank you, I am very relieved. Thank you indeed.

Gina asked Madhu i) _____. Madhu told with concern that ii) _____ and that she had read only general articles. Gina assured her not to worry as iii) _____. Madhu looked relieved at Gina's assurance and thanked her for her consoling words.