

REPORTED SPEECH

INTRODUCTION.

Exercises in translating passages of direct speech into reported speech should not be treated as mere practice in mental gymnastics. Exercises of this type are really essays in comprehension and flexibility of expression. The following observations are offered as having particular relevance to the exercises that follow:

1. There are many verbs besides say and tell that can be used in reported speech and that are often more expressive than these two rather neutral verbs.
2.
 - a. Some verbs used in direct speech cannot be used in reported speech, and have to be expressed with said and an appropriate adverb of manner indicating the way in which something was said.
 - b. Sometimes the tone of the original can be preserved in the reported version only by the use of said, again with an appropriate adverb of manner.
3. Tenses are not always changed mechanically when speech is reported. It is especially important to remember this when dealing with conditionals.
4. In longer passages particularly, it is most important to preserve the spirit of the original, and this consideration should be before a strict adherence to the form. Students must, therefore, not only understand the content but also appreciate the style and tone of the original if their own version is not to sound flat or unnatural by comparison.

IMPERATIVE

SAY. Usually with the actual words spoken. It is never used with the infinitive in reported speech.

TELL. Never used in a sense of recount, with the actual words spoken. A personal object is always present. Imperatives become infinitive phrases in reported speech preceded by a verb such as tell, order, command, ask, with a (pro)noun for the person addressed.

Bring me a book.

He asked her (him, us, etc.) to bring him a book.

STATEMENT.

When the reporting verb is in the PRESENT SIMPLE, PRESENT PERFECT, or FUTURE SIMPLE tense, there is no change of tense in the words reported. Notice only the necessary change of person.

I am very sorry.
He will tell you
He says (that) he is very sorry.
He has just told me

When the reporting verb is in the PAST SIMPLE or, PAST PERFECT tense, or is in a should/would form, the words reported are viewed in a different perspective. The speech is now remote, and seen as relating a sequence of events happening in the past, the tenses being changed accordingly.

I am a student, and I have studied for three years.
He said (that) he was a student and had studied for three years.

So the following tense changes are automatic after past tense reporting verbs:

DIRECT SPEECH	REPORTED SPEECH
Present continuous	Past continuous
Present simple	Past simple
Present perfect	Past perfect
Past perfect	No change
Past simple	Past perfect
Past continuous	No change (usually)
shall/will	Would
Can	Could
Could	No change
Must	Had to or no change
Should	No change
Ought to	No change
May	Might
Imperative	Infinitive

Adverbs of time and place and a few other expressions also change. Here are some examples (to be taken as convenient equivalents, not as rules):

Speaker's words	Reported Statement
Tomorrow	The next day/the following day
Yesterday	The day before
Here	There
This/that	The
This morning	That morning
today	That day
Tonight	That night
Next/on Tuesday	The following Tuesday
Last Tuesday	The previous Tuesday
The day after tomorrow	In two day's time
Ago	Before/previously

But these equivalents should be used with common sense.

This vehicle isn't safe.

He said that the vehicle was not safe. (the not that unless this is stressed).

And is not always necessary to use any equivalent at all, as the past tense of the introducing verb is often quite sufficient.

I am coming to see you now.

He said he was coming to see me. (then is not wanted)

Must: In ordinary speech must has three possible meanings, each of which has a different form when reported. Can and needn't sometimes behave in a similar way.

1. Necessity or compulsion AT THE MOMENT OF SPEAKING A TRUE PRESENT. This of course becomes a PAST when reported.

I must go now He said he had to go at once.

I needn't go He said he didn't have to go

I mustn't go He said he wasn't to go.

2. Necessity or compulsion in the future; as a substitute for shall/have to. This of course, behaves like a future, and changes to the should/would form in reported speech for must and needn't.

He said he
I must go next week would have to go the following week.
I needn't go next week wouldn't have to go
I mustn't go... wasn't to go
(has no future form)

3. Permanent ruling or prohibition. Here the must remains unchanged.

You mustn't cross the road against the red light.
He told us we mustn't cross the road against the red light.

All natural laws and eternal truths may remain in the SIMPLE PRESENT.

QUESTIONS

The word order of reported speech is the same as the simple STATEMENT; there is no inversion as in a simple question. In questions introduced by a question-word (who, what, how, when, etc), this word serves as a link between the introducing verb and the reported question.

What is your name?
He asked me what my name was.

If the question has no question-word, but is one of the type that can take yes or no for an answer, whether or if is used as a link between the introducing verb and the reported question.

Have you seen him anywhere?
He asked me if I had seen him anywhere.

Shall in REPORTED QUESTIONS requires a special preliminary exercise if its behaviour has not already been learnt. Questions beginning Shall I...? are of two types.

TYPE 1 PURE FUTURE

Shall I ever forget her?

TYPE 2 REQUEST (=Do you want me to?)

Shall I open the window?

In TYPE 1 the Shall I? becomes: ...if he would...

In TYPE 2 the Shall I? becomes: ...if he should...

TYPE 1. Shall I ever forget her?

He wondered if he would ever forget her.

TYPE 2. Shall I open the window?

He asked if he should open the window.

The only point to remember is to change the tense in both parts.

Do you know who is coming?

He asked if I knew who was coming.

Do you know who killed him?

He asked if I knew who had killed him.

Did you wonder why I didn't come?

He asked if I'd wondered why he hadn't come.

But we rarely find a succession of PAST PERFECTS, any other CONTEMPORARY actions being left in the PAST SIMPLE.

Did you wonder why I didn't come when he was wanted?

He asked if I'd wondered why he hadn't come when he was wanted. (didn't come is also heard)

Late response. This is a curious but not uncommon trick of conversation combining the principles of direct and reported speech in one. Sometimes a remark is passed, the exact meaning of which is not fully grasped at the moment; after a short lapse of time the listener reverts the speaker's original subject, asking about the doubtful point, but usually framing his direct question in the tense of a REPORTED QUESTION with a past tense introducing verb. Examples will make it clearer:

Mr A. I'm supposed to go again on Friday.

(pause or more miscellaneous conversation)

Mr B. When were you supposed to go again?

(When did you say you were supposed to go again?)

Mr A. His name is Tanner-Whyte.

(pause or conversation)

Mr B. What was the man's name?

Imperatives take was (were) to, or more rarely had to.

Mr. A. Put it among the papers in the third drawer down.

(Pause for forgetting)

Mr. B. Where was I to put it?

(Where did you say I was to put it?)

And in the past:

Mr. A. They made at least seventeen copies and sold them all.

(pause or more conversation to confuse the mind of Mr. B.)

Mr. B. How many copies had they made?

(How many copies did you say they had made?)

EXCLAMATIONS

Reporting an exclamation is usually best achieved by a circumlocution reflecting the spirit of the original exclamation.

Exclamations are not often reported in spoken English, so too much time shouldn't be wasted in hunting for the best expression. The other forms of REPORTED SPEECH far more important.

Some exclamatory forms are really questions (rhetorical) or imperatives.

"What a lovely garden!"

He remarked what a lovely garden it was.

"Hello! where are you going?"

He greeted me and asked where I was going.

"Oh dear! I've torn my frock!"

She exclaimed bitterly that she had torn her dress.

or: She sighed and said that she had torn her dress.

EXERCISES

Put the following texts into the reported speech with the introducing verbs in the past tense.

1. My name is Arthur Tann. I was born in 1952 and educated at Wallingford Grammar School, where I passed five O-levels. I left school in 1970 and went to work for an insurance company. Then I came to live in Middleford and got a job at the library. I've been there for about three years but I don't think I'll stay there much longer. At the moment I'm living in Gladstone Avenue but I may leave soon. I want to do a Management course but I can't do it until I've passed some A-levels.

2. Do you know a girl called Mary who works at the library? Is she doing a course at the College? Will she marry Bruce? Did you take any A-levels at school? Have you bought those three books yet?

Put the following sentences into reported speech, with the introducing verbs in the past tense:

1. It is cold in here. Is the window open? _____
2. Do you think it will rain? It is very cloudy _____.
3. I must write some letters now. What date is it? _____
4. How do you like Maisie's new dress? I bought it for her at a sale _____.
5. We are going for a country walk. Would you like to come too? _____
6. What time is it? My watch has stopped _____.
7. This is a most interesting book. Have you ever read it? _____
8. What is the matter? You don't look very well _____.
9. That looks difficult to do. Can I help you? _____
10. Are you free tomorrow night? I would like you to come to my party _____.

Put into reported speech.

1. Clean it yourself _____.

2. Wrap it up in a piece of paper_____.
 3. Cut the corners off_____.
 4. Fasten your safety belts_____.
 5. Don't sit on my bed_____.
 6. Wait there until I come_____.
 7. Don't speak until you're spoken to_____.
 8. Leave it on the piano_____.
 9. Don't wipe your dirty fingers on my nice clean tablecloth_____.
-
10. Don't try to be funny_____.
 11. Brush it off when it gets dry_____.
 12. Don't put your elbow on the table_____.
 13. Look where you are going_____.
 14. Mind the steps_____.
 15. Get your hair cut_____.
 16. Go to bed and don't get up until you're called_____.
 17. Eat up your dinner at once or I'll punish you_____.
 18. Write your name clearly at the top and then take down these points as I call them out_____.
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19. Bring in the two accused men and take care they don't get away. (The judge...)_____.
-
20. Don't spend all your money on food and drink. Save some for the future_____.
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Put the following sentences into reported speech, introducing them with a verb in the past tense.

1. I am ill_____.
 2. I met him last year_____.
 3. They will be here soon_____.
 4. She has finished now_____.
 5. I am living in London_____.
 6. He is going to Berlin tomorrow_____.
 7. I've just been to the butcher's_____.
 8. I can come next week_____.
 9. I don't know what he'll say_____.
 10. They went away yesterday_____.
 11. I would do the same myself if I were in your place_____.
 12. I tried to ride a bicycle but I fell off three times_____.
 13. I shall expect to see you next Wednesday_____.
 14. These apples won't keep, they are too soft_____.
 15. I haven't had enough time to finish what I intended to do. I can do some more later on_____.
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16. I expect to hear some news tomorrow; I will tell you if I do so that you needn't worry_____.
17. You must leave the country at once_____.
18. People mustn't fish in this river_____.
19. You must decide what you want to do_____.
20. You must do it all again before next week, although I must confess it's the first bad repair you've done. You'll get a new job to do when you've finished it_____.

Put the following sentences into REPORTED SPEECH with the introducing verb in the past tense. Vary the introducing verb.

1. Are you enjoying yourself?_____
2. Did you see the King yesterday?_____
3. Does she always wear a hat?_____
4. Have you seen my new hat?_____
5. Do I look all right?_____
6. Are the grapes sour?_____
7. Is it time to go?_____
8. Will the taxi be here at eight o'clock?_____
9. Can you hear a noise?_____
10. Ought the light to be on?_____
11. Are my shoes cleaned yet?_____
12. Did the greengrocer have any fresh vegetables?_____
13. Does your car always make a nasty smell?_____
14. May I use your telephone?_____
15. Is it raining heavily?_____
16. Do you sleep in the afternoons?_____
17. Must the door be kept shut?_____
18. Was the train very full?_____
19. Have the children put away their toys?_____
20. Did Bill give you that ring?_____

Put the following sentences into REPORTED SPEECH with the introducing verb in the PAST tense.

1. What a lovely house!_____
2. Hello! What do you want?_____
3. My goodness! You are slim!_____
4. Haven't you ever been here before? (He was surprised...)_____
5. What a dirty face you have!_____

6. Oh! I've cut myself! _____
7. Help me! _____
8. The house is on fire! _____
9. What have you done to your hair? _____
10. What on earth has happened? _____

OTHER ACTIVITIES

It happened a long time ago. The weather was fine and there was plenty of food and good beer to drink. There was a country and like all good countries it had a king. He wasn't a bad old stick either, as kings go, and his queen was a good-looking woman. So he did his kingly in the daytime and his queening in the night and everything passed off very pleasant for everyone concerned. But like all good things it had to come to an end, and soon the king went off to war and the queen was left on her own for years. And naturally enough she got a bit fed up with it, and one night when she was in bed she heard the west wind knocking on her bedroom door. Well she knew what he was after all right, but she let him in all the same, and soon after he'd whispered a few sweet nothings in her ear and succumbed to his passion and one thing led to another and when she woke up next morning she found she was pregnant. So the west wind carried her off to his palace and when her husband came back from the wars and found out that she'd buzzed off he was very upset. Anyway, after a bit he got angry and snatched a thunderbolt out of the sky and threw it and he followed it to the place where it had landed, but his wife wasn't there. So he did the same thing again and again until he arrived at a palace. Well by this time the west wind had got a bit fed up with the queen and he'd left her flat, her and her baby, and when the queen realized that her husband the king had caught up with her she felt so ashamed that she ran away with her child and jumped off the edge of the world, straight into the sea, and as soon as she touched the water she was changed into a great rock.



The lion in love. Shelagh Delaney.

QUESTIONS.

1. What was the king like?
2. What was the queen like?
3. What did the king use to do?
4. What happened after a time?

5. Who went to look for the queen?
6. Did she know what he was there for?
7. Where did the wind take the queen?
8. Why did the queen meet the wind?
9. What happened after the king came back from war?
10. What did he do to find the queen?
11. Was the wind with the queen when the king found her?
12. What did the queen turn into?
13. Vocabulary. Explain the meaning of:

Fed up:	Whispered:
Buzzed off:	Jumped off:
14. Put the story into 80 words using your own words.

DAY-OLD BABY IS SNATCHED FROM HOSPITAL.

She's found safe by police.

A NEWBORN baby snatched from her hospital cot was back in her tearful mother's arms last night. The day-old girl vanished from a side ward after her 23-year-old mother left her alone for 20 minutes.

The distraught mother went home with her husband to wait and hope while a big police search went on. Last night the parents' 22 hours of agony ended. Police acting on a tip-off found the baby safe at a house ten miles from the hospital. A 20-year-old single woman was later helping with inquiries.

Detective Superintendent Ken Cook said: "The child has been well cared for. She has been medically examined and is fit and well. But as a precaution, more thorough medical tests are now being carried out."

Police are understood to have discovered a blue carry-cot and other baby equipment at the house. The mother, who has not been named, was with her baby in a single room off the main ward at New Cross



Hospital in Wolverhampton. She returned from a brief visit to the nearby day room to find the child missing. The baby was last seen just before visiting time on Saturday evening. Police with tracker dogs were joined by mounted officers to search the grounds. Frogmen investigated a nearby canal. The baby was found at a house at Dudley, West Midlands. Detective Superintendent Cook said the woman helping with inquiries was not related to the child's family.

QUESTIONS.

1. How old was the baby's mother?
2. Where was the baby found?
3. Explain what happened in about 50 words.
4. Who else helped with inquiries?
5. What do you think about this fact?
6. Vocabulary. Explain the meaning of:

Frogman:

To be related:

Nearby:

Ward:

Fit:

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

What does the macabre mean? In the macabre, people get damaged. The hero is often the victim. Life is seen through a glass, darkly, bloodily. The macabre is the art from the failure. The failure of imagination and energy to keep in touch with reason and love. The failure of Dr. Faustus, the failure of Macbeth.

What the artist does is to produce "Myths". He takes some vital philosophical problem like evil, disorder, violence. He reasons it out not through logic or experiment like a scientist but through the creation of a world of characters and circumstances that mimic his understanding of the real world through a narrator who may also be a character and he presents events from that world, using signs to create images. And the text that results, the marks on paper, add up a kind of explanation of the problem or conflict he has been exploring. The artist in general is saying, here is an object I have made: a film, a book, a painting: this object is a model, in this little theatre, it might help you understand where we come from, who we are, where we are going. It might help because I, in my imagination, have tried to live in this world myself. My film, my book, my painting is a map of where I've been a model of what happened there.

The map and the model make up a myth. In the macabre the models are madness, mystery and murder in action and the maps are maps of hell.

QUESTIONS.

1. What kind of art is the macabre?
2. What kind of problem does the writer deal with?
3. Does the artist talk about the world? Who through?
4. Why does the product of the artist help us?
5. What are the models in the macabre?
6. Vocabulary. Give synonyms, antonyms or explain the meaning of:
Glass:
Failure:
Kind:
Murder:
Hell:

I don't want to die, cried boy knifed by crazed mother

by ALUN REES

A WOMAN obsessed with the idea that she was evil stabbed her sons to death before killing herself.

A neighbour heard one of the boys screaming 'I don't want to die mummy!' through the wall.

An inquest yesterday was told how Isabelle Williams was 'oppressed and obsessed' with a belief in inherited evil.

She believed she had passed on 'bad genes' to her sons Steffan, 11, and Rhodri, 14. In her tortured mind, if the inherited evil was to die then they had to die too.

Her husband Haydn, 42, fought back tears as he told the inquest: 'She said there was a madness in her and in her family. She said she would never be able to do anything about herself and she was passing on bad genes. She suggested that we all take our own lives because the boys

wouldn't survive without her.'

Mrs Williams, 41, had suffered depression since her teens.

She bought three kitchen knives and waited until her husband was away before killing the children at their home near Swindon in the early hours of March 15.

Forensic pathologist Dr Roger Ainsworth told the Swindon hearing: 'My findings were consistent with Isabelle stabbing Steffan as he lay on the

REPORTED SPEECH

MMLLDC

bed after striking him on the head with a mallet.

Then she attacked Rhodri on the head with the Wiltshire coroner David Masters said: She was oppressed and obsessed with inherited evil. She was firmly of the view that she was a bad person. Psychiatrist Dr Neville

mallet in the other back bedroom and cut his foot with the knife. He escaped to the front bedroom, where he was Shaw said: She spoke of someone close to her who had committed suicide and she felt that it was in her genes.

Verdict: Unlawful killing by Mrs Williams who

stabbed. French-born Mrs Williams, a devout Catholic, then stabbed herself five times in the abdomen.

then killed herself.

DAILY EXPRESS

August, 29, 1996

QUESTIONS

1. Where was Mrs Williams born?
2. What religion was Mrs Williams?
3. What age was Mrs Williams when she started having problems?
4. How did she kill her sons? Did she commit suicide?
5. When did she kill them?
6. Where did the family live?
7. Why was she so interested in killing her sons?
8. Vocabulary: stab, evil, belief, scream.
9. Rewrite the story again in about 80 words.

Drugs can't cure teenage problems

MURDERED schoolgirl Lucy Burchell, 16, was offering herself for sale on the streets of Walsall. Two days before she disappeared she wrote a loving letter to her parents.

I'm sorry for the way I've been acting, I love you both more than anything. I'm sure she meant those words. They were good parents and she had every reason to appreciate them.

**DENISE
ROBERTSON**

Drugs may have been at

STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

the bottom of Lucy's problems. The bright girl, with eight GCSE

passes, liked to get stoned according to a classmate and a drug habit has to be paid for, even if it means selling your body.

I can imagine what went on in Lucy's mind, the urge to experiment, the determination not to get hooked, the certainty that in the end, however bad things got, Mum and Dad would still be there.

REPORTED SPEECH

MMLLDC

Teenagers have a simple faith in things coming right in the end. It won't happen to me is their mantra.

They appear on TV, in the wake of deaths from Ecstasy,

There have always been people with good jobs and loving families who indulge in a drug as though it were a gin and tonic and claim it is life enhancing.

For them, it may be, but they are not vulnerable school children, or unemployed 20-year-olds with nothing in prospect but the next hit.

I would legalise cannabis tomorrow for medical use. The fact that a 29-year-old is being prosecuted for using it to ease the pain of his chronic illness is, in my opinion, wrong

to tell us how they just use it for fun and it's perfectly harmless.

Now drugs adviser Ian Wardle wants TV to help young people take drugs more safely. He criticises programme makers and the law should be changed. Except in such circumstances, drugs do not help.

To live a fulfilled life you need a buzz... from your work, your relationships, your leisure. If you're not getting your buzz, tackle your work or the lack of it, your love life, your lifestyle. Trying to obtain that extra frisson from a substance is not going to work.

While you're leaning on drugs, you won't sort out your problem. You may even not admit these is one. Soon you will be fully occupied feeding your

for showing drug users as the sad, the bad and the mad and blames soaps for only showing the problems of drug abuse.

habit, resorting to whatever comes to hand.

In the long term, drugs don't help. In the short term, they can kill.

AI love you all very much and I always will, no matter what, is how Lucy finished her letter.

I hope those words comfort her parents and I hope the fact that a cherished child could end up dead in the gutter will serve as a warning to us all.

DAILY EXPRESS
29, AUGUST, 1996

QUESTIONS

1. How did Lucy get the money to buy drugs?
2. On what condition would the writer legalise some types of drugs?
3. What wrong ideas do teenagers get when they start consuming drugs?
4. According to the writer, could drugs be compared to a gin and tonic?
5. Vocabulary: harmless, enhance, leisure, gutter.
6. Composition: If you had the power, what would you do with drugs? (80 words)

THE FOOL ON THE HILL

Day after day, _____ on the hill the man with the _____ grin is keeping _____ still,
but nobody wants to know _____, they can see that he's just a fool
and he never _____ an answer
but the fool on the hill sees the _____ going down
and the eyes in his _____ see the world _____ 'round.
Well on the way, head in a _____ the man of a _____ voices
talking perfectly _____, but nobody ever _____ him or the sound
he _____ to make
and he never seems to _____
but the fool on the hill sees the sun going down and the

_____ in his head see the world spinning 'round.
 And nobody seems to like him,
 they can tell _____ he wants to do
 and he never shows his _____
 but the fool on the hill sees the sun going down and the
 eyes in his head see the world spinning 'round.
 He never _____ to them, he knows that they're the _____
 they don't like him
 the fool on the hill sees the sun going down and the
 eyes in his head see the world spinning 'round.

Main features.

Use of simple present.
 Nobody and other indefinite pronouns.

WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS

I look at you all see the love there that's sleeping
 while my guitar gently weeps.
 I look at the floor and I see it needs sweeping
 still my guitar gently weeps.
 I don't know why nobody told you how to unfold your love.
 I don't know how someone controlled you
 they bought and sold you.
 I look at the world and I notice it's turning
 while my guitar gently weeps.
 With every mistake we must surely be learning
 still my guitar gently weeps.
 I don't know how you were diverted,
 you were perverted too.
 I don't know how you were inverted,
 no one alerted you.
 I look at you all see the love there that's sleeping
 while my guitar gently weeps
 I look at you all...
 still my guitar gently weeps.

Main features.

Use of simple past.

Pronunciation of regular simple pasts

Use of present continuous.

Subordinate clauses introduced by HOW, WHY, WHEN, etc.

MIXED TENSES.

Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense.

Dear Sir

1) I (be) _____ interested in the furnished cottage near Dedham which you (advertise) _____ in yesterday's Telegraph, for my husband and I (come) _____ to England in June and (require) _____ accommodation for three months. 2) You please (tell) _____ me exactly where it (be) _____ and give me details of bus and train services in the area. 3) I also (like) _____ to know about the local shops. 4) I (be able) _____ to shop without car? 5) My husband (hope) _____ to hire a car, but I (not drive) _____ and he (not be) _____ free very often to take me shopping, so we (need) _____ a cottage on a bus route. 6) The local shops still (deliver) _____? 7) I (know) _____ they (do) _____ ten years ago.

8) I (be) _____ grateful also if you (tell) _____ me whether you supply sheets etc. and whether a laundry (call) _____ at the house. 9) The rent you (ask) _____ (sound) _____ reasonable for the size of the cottage. 10) How you (like) _____ it paid? Weekly, monthly or in advance?

11) My husband and I (be) _____ abroad for ten years, but before that we (live) _____ near Dedham, which is why we (want) _____ to spend our holidays there. 12) My husband also (write) _____ a book about Constable and (like) _____ to finish it in the area where he, Constable, (paint) _____ most of his pictures.

13) Mr Jones, the bank manager, (know) _____ us since we (live) _____ in the area and I (be) _____ sure he (recommend) _____ us as suitable tenants. 14) I of course (be willing) _____ to sen a deposit.

15) I (be) _____ grateful for an early reply and (enclose) _____ a stamped addressed envelope.

Yours faithfully
Pamela Smith.