

# Unit 13

## Reported speech

My brother **said** he would lend me his game console if I passed the test the next day.

But he also **bet** that you would fail the test!

I'll lend it to you if you pass the test tomorrow.



### Grammar in Context

Theme: Study, school life and work

Words by Theme



Read the following email and answer the questions.

**Subject:** How do I choose the right degree programme? Send

Dear Wilson,

[1] How's your work as a student helper on the Information Day for Undergraduate Admissions<sup>1</sup>? I want to plan early for university application, but I'm uncertain which undergraduate programme<sup>2</sup> I should choose. My elder sister said you had given advice to many students on the Information Day. She suggested, 'Why not pick Henry's brain about this?'

[2] My sister added, 'You can choose any subject as long as you're interested in it.' However, I don't know which subject I'm truly interested in. My sister sighed deeply, 'I don't want you to make the same mistake I did.' She's now in her second year for her bachelor degree<sup>3</sup> in computer science. She regretted that she had wasted two years studying something she hated. How can I find out which subject to pursue?

[3] In fact, I'm also concerned about<sup>4</sup> my job prospects<sup>5</sup>. My sister assured me that computer-related subjects would still be very popular in the next ten years; her roommate emphasised that business management is always useful. My sister told me that you are the brightest senior in her faculty<sup>6</sup>, who has been on the dean's list every year. Could you tell me which disciplines offer better job prospects? Thank you in advance.

Best wishes,  
Henry

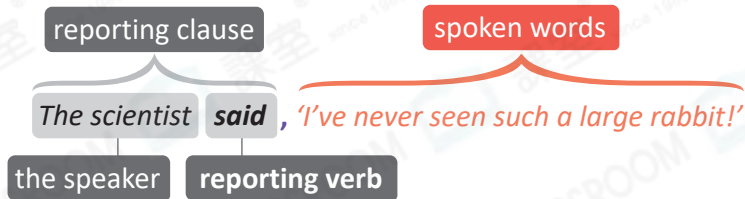
- Underline sentences using reported speech and direct speech in paragraphs 2–3. See the examples in paragraph 1.
- Write the reporting verbs in the table.

said	suggested		



## PART 1A Direct speech

We use direct speech to quote what a speaker exactly says. A direct speech contains the reporting clause and the spoken words. The reporting verb is usually in the simple past tense. The most common reporting verb is *said*.



The reporting clause can be placed in different positions. The use of punctuation and capital letters changes accordingly.

Reporting clause + Spoken words	Dan said, 'My tutorial lesson is demanding.' comma capital letter full stop
Spoken words + Reporting clause	'Let's enter the singing contest,' suggested Monica. capital letter comma full stop 'What a bad day!' exclaimed Mr Lam. capital letter exclamation mark full stop

Spoken words + Reporting clause + Spoken words	<p><b>Main clause + Reporting clause + Dependent clause</b></p> <p>'I like camping,' said Sandra, 'because I can get close to nature.' capital letter comma comma lower case full stop</p>
	<p><b>Main clause + Reporting clause + Main clause</b></p> <p>'Ken received the internship offer,' said Ronald. 'Shall we celebrate with him?' capital letter comma full stop capital letter question mark</p>

### Error Diagnosis

- If the speaker is a pronoun, it must be placed before the reporting verb.
- If the speaker is not a pronoun, it can come before or after the reporting verb.

'Can you print this out?' asked she.

'Can you print this out?' **she asked**.

'Can you print this out?' **asked Susan**.

'Can you print this out?' **Susan asked**.

### Reminder!

Adverbs of manner or prepositional phrases can be used after the reporting clause.

'Don't copy my homework!' Anna shouted **angrily**.

'Put your phone away and keep quiet,' Mr Ho whispered **to his son at the cinema**.

## PART 1B Reporting verbs

We use reporting verbs to tell someone what another person said.

<b>Statement</b>	<i>assure, say, tell, think</i>	<b>Question and answer</b>	<i>ask, wonder, answer, reply, respond</i>
<b>Voice</b>	<i>cry, scream, shout, yell, murmur, mutter, whisper</i>	<b>Feeling and attitude</b>	<i>chuckle, laugh, mock, tease, exclaim, regret, sigh</i>
<b>Argument</b>	<i>admit, assume, believe, claim, declare, emphasise, stress</i>	<b>Purpose</b>	<i>add, announce, beg, bet, complain, confess, explain, reveal, suggest, threaten, warn</i>



### Exercise 1.1

Rearrange the words to complete the sentences in direct speech.

1. Margret did today call in sick

He asked, 'Did Margret call in sick today?'

2. overdone is the design

\_\_\_\_\_ the boss yelled.

3. can't this sum do I it's difficult too

\_\_\_\_\_ complained Joe \_\_\_\_\_

4. dog is her ill she so to the vet it has brought

\_\_\_\_\_ explained Dean \_\_\_\_\_

5. won the match we we celebrate should

\_\_\_\_\_ Jon exclaimed joyfully \_\_\_\_\_



### Exercise 1.2

Alan is drafting a short story. Complete the excerpt with the correct form of the given reporting verbs.

ask assure chuckle confess reply shout wonder yell

'Karen is my worst frenemy!' (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Maria angrily.

'Why?' (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Ben.

'She posted an unflattering photo of me online,'

(3) \_\_\_\_\_ Maria.

Ben (4) \_\_\_\_\_, 'She did it for fun, ha-ha.'

'That's not true!' she (5) \_\_\_\_\_.

'A true friend doesn't spread your ugly photos!'

Ben (6) \_\_\_\_\_, 'Shouldn't Karen ask for your permission before posting?'

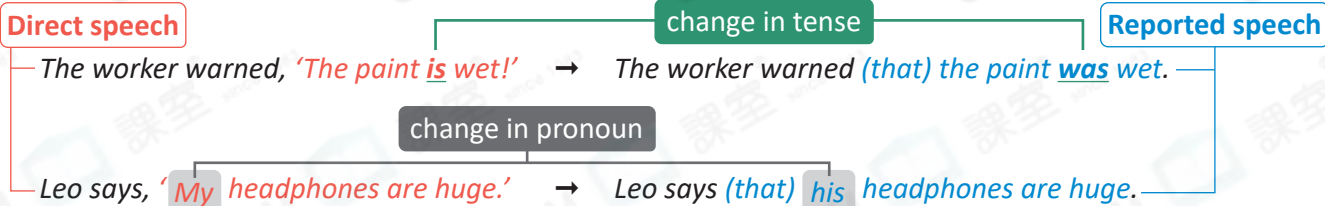
Meanwhile, Karen came up to them and

(7) \_\_\_\_\_ to Maria, 'Sorry Maria, please don't be mad at me.'

Ben (8) \_\_\_\_\_ Maria, 'We now know there are boundaries for jokes.'

## PART 2 Reported speech

Reported speech reports what someone said. The reporting verb is followed by a *that*-clause.



## PART 2A Changing the tenses

When we change direct speech to reported speech, we change the tenses.

Direct speech	Reported speech
Simple present tense ▪ 'The lecture <b>is</b> inspiring,' said Alex.	Simple past tense ▪ Alex said (that) the lecture <b>was</b> inspiring.
Present continuous tense ▪ 'I <b>am preparing</b> lunch,' Ian said to us.	Past continuous tense ▪ Ian said to us (that) he <b>was preparing</b> lunch.
Present perfect tense ▪ 'The price <b>has gone up</b> ,' Samuel told me.	Past perfect tense ▪ Samuel told me (that) the price <b>had gone up</b> .
Simple past tense ▪ 'I <b>missed</b> the interview,' said Martin.	Past perfect tense ▪ Martin said (that) he <b>had missed</b> the interview.
Past continuous tense ▪ 'The workers <b>were protesting</b> ,' Sylvia said.	Past perfect continuous tense ▪ Sylvia said (that) the workers <b>had been protesting</b> .
Simple future tense ▪ 'The class <b>will start</b> soon,' said Miss Chan.	would + bare infinitive ▪ Miss Chan said (that) the class <b>would start</b> soon.
is / am / are going to ▪ 'The semester <b>is going to end</b> ,' the prof said.	was / were going to ▪ The prof said (that) the semester <b>was going to end</b> .
can → could ▪ 'I <b>can defer</b> my studies,' said Thomas. ▪ Thomas said (that) he <b>could defer</b> his studies.	must (=have to) → had to ▪ 'We <b>must wear</b> gloves,' said the teacher. ▪ The teacher said (that) we <b>had to wear</b> gloves.
may → might ▪ 'The meeting <b>may be cancelled</b> ,' said Mr Lo. ▪ Mr Lo said (that) the meeting <b>might be cancelled</b> .	will → would ▪ 'I <b>will give</b> you a ride,' said Bonnie. ▪ Bonnie said (that) she <b>would give</b> me a ride.



### Reminder!

We do not change the tenses in the following situations:

**When the reporting verb is in the simple present tense**

- Joey says, 'I **am** on diet.' → Joey says (that) she **is** on diet.

**When the information is always true or is still true while being reported**

- Nancy said, 'I **don't eat** meat.' → Nancy said (that) she **doesn't eat** meat.

Nancy is still a vegetarian.

**When the time of the event is specified**

- Steve said, 'My parents **got** married in 1985.' → Steve said (that) his parents **got** married in 1985.

**When the verb is in the past perfect tense (the tense in the dependent clause also unchanged)**

- He said, 'My sister **had left** when I **returned**.' → He said his sister **had left** when he **returned**.



## Exercise 2.1

Megan is writing a joke. There are some mistakes. Correct the underlined mistakes and write the correct words in the spaces provided.



### An 'Honest' Interview

Ada always says honesty (1) was the best policy. Last week, she went to a job interview. Before that, her sister reminded her that she (2) has lost several jobs for telling the honest truth.

In the interview, the manager asked Ada about her best quality. Ada replied, 'I (3) was very honest.' The manager then asked Ada what she (4) thinks about his tie. Ada found the tie old-fashioned, so she responded that the tie (5) will look great on her grandfather. The manager asked her whether she (6) is teasing him.

'My sister (7) suggests that I should avoid negative comments by saying something harmless,' explained Ada (8) sincere.

The manager found her absurd but interesting. He maintained a poker face and said, 'To be honest, I think your sister (9) was more suitable for the job.'

'But you (10) call me for this interview ...' Ada (11) interrupts. Finding Ada amusing, the manager decided to give her a chance. He told her that she (12) can work there. 'Sir, for how long?' replied Ada. She added that she (13) had got laid off twice during the probation period in 2022.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_

## PART 2B Changing the pronouns and possessive adjectives

Direct speech	Reported speech	Direct speech	Reported speech
<i>I</i>	<i>he / she</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>him / her</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>he / she / they</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>him / her / them</i>
<i>we</i>	<i>they</i>	<i>us</i>	<i>them</i>
<i>my</i>	<i>his / her</i>	<i>myself</i>	<i>himself / herself</i>
<i>your</i>	<i>his / her / their</i>	<i>yourself / yourselves</i>	<i>himself / herself / themselves</i>
<i>our</i>	<i>their</i>	<i>ourselves</i>	<i>themselves</i>

- Sue told Joe, 'The pen **you** are using is **mine**.'  
 → Sue told Joe (that) the pen **he** was using was **hers**. (a third person to report the statement)  
 → Sue told **me** (that) the pen **I** was using was **hers**. (Joe as the first person to report the statement)
- '**They** resigned on the same day,' said Pat. no change  
 → Pat said (that) **they** had resigned on the same day.
- '**My** supervisor will book the flight ticket for **her** business trip by **herself**,' said James. no change  
 → James said (that) **his** supervisor would book the flight ticket for **her** business trip by **herself**.



DRILL

## Exercise 2.2

Change the direct speech into reported speech.

- Mrs Ma always says, 'My students dislike maths.'  
Mrs Ma always says that her students dislike maths.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Miss Ho said, 'If we don't hurry up, we'll be late.'  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 'You must go to the football field with your money by yourself,' the kidnapper warned James.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 'I have forgotten the password of my student portal,' said Janice.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Chris said, 'I hadn't completed the health declaration form when the plane landed.'  
\_\_\_\_\_

## PART 2C Changing the time markers and certain words

When we change direct speech to reported speech, we change the time markers and certain words.

Direct speech	Reported speech	Direct speech	Reported speech
<i>now</i>	<i>then / at that time / at that moment</i>	<i>yesterday</i>	<i>the day before / the previous day</i>
<i>today</i>	<i>that day</i>	<i>last night</i>	<i>the night before / the previous night</i>
<i>tonight</i>	<i>that night</i>	<i>(two) days ago</i>	<i>(two) days before</i>
<i>this morning</i>	<i>that morning</i>	<i>tomorrow</i>	<i>the next day / the following day / the day after</i>
		<i>next week</i>	<i>the following week / the week after</i>

*I said, 'I killed a cockroach **last night**.'* → *I said (that) I had killed a cockroach **the night before**.*

*come* → *go*

*here* → *there*

*this* → *that*

*these* → *those*

*Eva said, 'My aunt will **come here** soon.'* → *Eva said (that) her aunt would **go there** soon.*



DRILL

## Exercise 2.3

Change the direct speech into reported speech.

- Eric told Lena, 'My dog returned home by itself this morning.'  
Eric told Lena (that) his dog had returned home by itself that morning.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Iris said, 'We made these cakes by ourselves three days ago.'  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 'This cat must come here at the same time next week,' the students believed.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 'Your phone is being repaired now,' the shopkeeper told Gina.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Anna said, 'Our team rejected an invitation yesterday but we accepted one today.'  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 2.4**

You are reading a conversation between two students. Rewrite the dialogue using reported speech.

**Ivy:** (1) We must finish the classroom decoration by ourselves today.

**Andy:** (2) Miss Chan suggested putting up some paintings of our classmates selected by her yesterday. (3) This will save us some time.

**Ivy:** Okay. (4) I am going to paint the background with your watercolours.

**Andy:** (5) I will cut out these letters and put them here.

**Ivy:** (6) Tony has lent me his pair of scissors. You can use it.



- Ivy told Andy that they had to finish the classroom decoration by themselves that day.
- Andy said \_\_\_\_\_.
- Andy said \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ivy said \_\_\_\_\_.
- Andy said \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ivy said \_\_\_\_\_.

**Grammar Wrap-up**

Tim is drafting a short play on study tips. Complete the play by writing ONE word in each blank.

**Tim:** My parents often (1) \_\_\_\_\_ the longer the study time, the better.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ say \_\_\_\_\_

**Sue:** That's not true for me. My sister once (2) \_\_\_\_\_ me, 'Quality matters more.'  
Scientists explained that our average attention span (3) \_\_\_\_\_ 20 minutes.  
That's why I take a 5-minute break every 20 minutes of study. It works.

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Tim:** Really? That sounds unproductive. (*Tim frowns.*)

**Sue:** It really works. My grades have improved. Ray told me that (4) \_\_\_\_\_ had started using this method two months (5) \_\_\_\_\_. He didn't pass any Maths test last year, but he told me he had passed the test the (6) \_\_\_\_\_ week!

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

**Tim:** Did his performance improve just because of this? (*Tim leans forward.*)

7. \_\_\_\_\_

**Sue:** No, actually, he said he had (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (8) \_\_\_\_\_ body during the breaks.

8. \_\_\_\_\_

**Tim:** No wonder our PE teacher always (9) \_\_\_\_\_, 'Stretching is good for both the body and the mind.' He once (10) \_\_\_\_\_ that stretching improves blood flow.

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

**Sue:** In fact, my late grandpa used to emphasise that I (11) \_\_\_\_\_ stretch often to be smart. I used to think it was a joke ... He had a point!

11. \_\_\_\_\_



# Grammar in Pre-DSE Text Type

Theme: Study, school life and work

Matthew is writing a diary entry. Complete the entry by circling the best answers.

Words by Theme



27th July (Fri)

Sunny

It has been one week at my summer job. I was thrilled when I got the job offer<sup>1</sup>. Many people said that I (1) lucky and I (2) get valuable experience<sup>2</sup> (3), but being an administrative assistant is not as easy as I thought.

On the first day, the manager (4) me, 'Do whatever task your colleagues assign to you.' My colleagues are working on different projects, and they have given me a wide range of tasks<sup>3</sup>. At first, I just agreed to every request. However, the requests<sup>4</sup> became increasingly unreasonable the next few days. Jack said that (5) should make all the photocopies by (6); but there were 12 boxes of files! Then, Karl told me that I (7) sort all the files in the office by (8). Christine (9), 'Don't leave unless you've finished replying<sup>5</sup> to all the emails.'

I felt helpless. When I said that I (10) more time, my colleagues<sup>6</sup> (11) me, 'I need more ... more time because I'm too inefficient ...'

I do not want to give up. I believe there is a way to handle the situation. My parents keep saying to me that there (12) always more solutions than problems. Maybe I should talk with my colleagues to work things out.



- (1) A. am  
 B. was  
 C. has been  
 D. may be

- (2) A. must  
 B. will  
 C. would  
 D. have to

- (3) A. here  
 B. there  
 C. anywhere  
 D. somewhere

- (4) A. tells  
 B. told  
 C. said  
 D. says to

- (5) A. he  
 B. I  
 C. you  
 D. we

- (6) A. myself  
 B. yourself  
 C. yourselves  
 D. ourselves

- (7) A. had to  
 B. must  
 C. can  
 D. might

- (8) A. the day after  
 B. one day ago  
 C. today  
 D. the day before

- (9) A. responded  
 B. warned  
 C. admitted  
 D. begged

- (10) A. want  
 B. have  
 C. took  
 D. needed

- (11) A. yelled  
 B. mocked  
 C. threatened  
 D. wondered

- (12) A. was  
 B. were  
 C. have been  
 D. are

When writing stories, we often use direct speech to make the stories livelier and more interesting. We can also use reported speech to retell what was said by the characters.

- 'I know who was lying,' **declared** the detective calmly. (direct speech)
- The surgeon **believed** wholeheartedly that the operation would be successful. (reported speech)

## Version 1

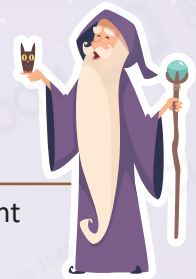
Olivia is writing a short story about a man of wisdom. Read the story and pay attention to the underlined sentences.

### Mr All-knowing

Many years ago, there lived a man in a tree house. People called him 'Mr All-knowing'.

(1) People said he could answer every question. (2) Some people guessed, 'He must

be a fairy.' (3) Some speculated, 'He may be a wizard with superpower.' Others thought that he was just a trickster cheating people out of money.



In fact, Mr All-knowing never asked for money when he answered people's questions. However, he set a condition. (4) 'Every person can ask only one question each year,' he emphasised, 'so that they will only ask important questions.'

(5) In one interview, Mr All-knowing revealed, 'Most people come here to ask about their careers.'

Yet, he refused to disclose any of the questions asked. (6) In another interview, a rich man admitted that Mr All-knowing's answer had helped him earn his first million dollars years before.

(7) When people asked Mr All-knowing about the details, he responded reticently that the millionaire had made the money with his own effort.

Until his death, it remained a mystery how Mr All-knowing was able to answer all questions. (8) He once told a follower that she had the answer to her own question and he was only giving her a clear direction to find it herself.

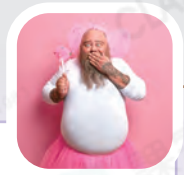


### More to take away

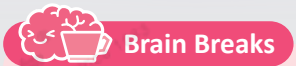
trickster (n.) = a person who cheats or lies to people  
reticently (adv.) = reservedly and hesitantly because you are shy or careful

## Version 2

Rewrite the underlined sentences in Version 1 based on the instructions.



(1) direct speech	People said, 'He can answer every question.'
(2) reported speech	_____
(3) reported speech	_____ _____
(4) reported speech	_____ _____ _____
(5) reported speech	_____ _____
(6) direct speech	_____ _____ _____
(7) direct speech	_____ _____ _____
(8) direct speech	_____ _____ _____



What question would you ask a fortune teller?

