

Lesson No. 09

Direct and Indirect Speech

KEY POINTS

Indirect Speech

The subsections to this lesson are:

- Direct Speech or Quoted Speech
- Indirect Speech or Reported Speech
- Changing Direct Speech to Indirect Speech
- Changes in Indirect Speech
- Reporting Questions

Direct speech (quoted speech) and indirect speech (reported speech) are the two ways to report what someone else has said.

Direct Speech or Quoted Speech

Direct speech is using the actual words that someone has said. We do not make changes to the quotation marks. We use them to enclose the spoken words.

"Be careful! Keep your eyes open. See where you are going," she said.

This is the direct speech. We merely repeat the exact words used by the speaker and keep the exact words within quotation marks.

Examples:

- "Be careful! Keep your eyes open. See where you are going," she said.
- She said, "Be careful! Keep your eyes open. See where you are going."
- "Be careful!" she said, "Keep your eyes open. See where you are going."

Indirect Speech or Reported Speech

We use our own words to report what someone has said without using quotation marks. We change the tense, but not always, in the reported speech because the spoken words already occur in the past by the time we report them. We make other changes as well.

| Direct speech | Indirect speech |
|--|---|
| "Follow me," she told him. | She told him to follow her. |
| "I am leaving my husband," she said. | She said (that) she was leaving her husband. |
| He said, "Stop humming the national anthem." | He told me to stop humming the national anthem. |

The above table shows the past tense used in the indirect speech. In most cases, the tense used in indirect speech follows the tense of the reporting verb. As all the reporting verbs (told, said) are in the past tense, so the words in the indirect speech are also in the past tense. We repeat the pronouns (she, he) because no changes are required.

Changing Direct Speech to Indirect Speech

When we change direct to indirect speech, we usually change the tense of the verbs from the present forms to the past forms. The pronouns are affected too.

Tense of the verbs from the present forms to the past forms.

| Simple present | Simple past |
|-----------------------------|--|
| "I am homesick." | She told me that she was homesick. |
| Present continuous | Past continuous |
| "I am enjoying myself." | He told us he was enjoying himself. |
| Present perfect | Past perfect |
| "I have taken many photos." | She said that she had taken many photos. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Present perfect continuous. | Past perfect continuous |
| "I have been having a wonderful time." | He said that he had been having a wonderful time. |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Simple past/ continuous | Past perfect/ continuous |
| "I ate the whole piece." | He said that he had eaten the whole piece. |
| Past continuous | Past perfect continuous |
| "I was dreaming about you." | She told him she had been dreaming about him. |
| Simple future | Future in the past |
| "I shall never forget you." | He told me that he would never forget me. |

Pronouns from first and second persons to third person.

| | |
|--|---|
| Direct speech - first/second person | Indirect speech - third person |
| "I have cut my finger." | He said that he had cut his finger. |
| "You have to get ready to leave." | He told them that they had to get ready to leave. |

Sometimes, the direct speech that we want to report comes in more than one sentence.

Examples:

Direct: "Don't fight with your sister," my mother said. "Get on with your school homework."

Indirect: My mother told me not to fight with my sister and to get on with my school homework.

Direct: "Be quiet! I'm watching television."

Indirect: She told us to be quiet while she was watching television.

In most cases, when the reporting verb is in the present or future tense, we do not change the tenses of the verbs in the indirect speech.

Examples:

Direct: "I'm tired," she **says** almost every evening. (Simple present)

Indirect: Almost every evening, she **says** (that) she is tired.

Direct: "They are late again." she **has told** us. (Present perfect)

Indirect: She **has told** us (that) they are late again.

Direct: I **will tell** him, "The shop closes at 5.30." (Simple future).

Indirect: I **will tell** him (that) the shop closes at 5.30.

If in direct speech, a statement is always true or an action is still continuing, we do not change the tense when converting it into indirect speech, as a change of tense might give the wrong meaning.

Examples:

Direct: He told us. "The Earth is round."

Indirect: He told us that the Earth **is** round.

Direct: She said, "My brother is living in Australia."

Indirect: She said that her brother **is** living in Australia. (She said that her brother was living in Australia would indicate that her brother is no longer living in Australia which is not true.)

Changes in Indirect Speech

We make changes in time, places, determiners, etc. when reporting the direct speech.

| Direct Speech | Indirect Speech |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Now | Then |
| Today | that day |
| Tonight | that night |
| last night | the previous night, the night before |

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Yesterday | the previous day, the day before |
| Tomorrow | the next day, the day after |
| next week | the following week |
| Here | There |
| this/these | that/those |
| this (determiner) | The |

Modal verbs in indirect speech

| Direct Speech | Indirect Speech |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Will | Would |
| Can | Could |
| May | Might |
| Shall | Should |
| Must | Must |
| ought to | ought to |
| used to | used to |

Examples:

- "I **will** be a vegetarian."
- She said (that) she **would** be a vegetarian.
- "I **can** swim like a fish."
- He said he **could** swim like a fish."
- "We **may** start a new religion."
- They said they **might** start a new religion.
- "I **shall** be judged only by God."
- My grandfather said he **should** be judged only by God.
- "You **must** behave yourself."
- The teacher told me I **must** behave myself.
- "You **ought to** stop talking to yourself."
- My mother said I **ought to** stop talking to myself.
- "I **used to** have many girlfriends."
- My father confessed that he **used to** have many girlfriends.
- If the past form of modal verbs **would, could, might, and should** is used in the direct speech, we do not change them in the indirect speech.

Examples:

- Annie said, "I **would** hate to miss the puppet show **tonight**."
- Annie said she **would** hate to miss the puppet show **that night**.
- Joe said, "We **could** go for a drive after lunch **tomorrow**."
- Joe suggested that they **could** go for a drive after lunch **the next day**.
- Jennifer said to me, "**Might** I ask you to do me a favour **this weekend**?"
- Jennifer asked if I **might** do her a favour **that weekend**.
- Bob said, "You **should** be ashamed of yourselves for what you did **last night**."
- Bob said that they **should** be ashamed of themselves for what they did **the night before**.

Reporting Questions

When a question is reported, it becomes an indirect question. An indirect question does not end with a question mark; it ends with a full stop (period). We do not use quotation marks in indirect questions.

Examples:

- The reporter asked, "When **is** the rain going to stop?"
- The reporter asked the weatherman when the rain **was** going to stop.
- The police officer asked him, "Where **were** you **last Sunday**?"
- The police officer asked him where **he was** the **previous Sunday**.

We often use **if** in indirect questions.

Examples:

- "Do you believe in one god or many gods?"
- His uncle asked if I believe in one god or many gods.
- My neighbour asked me, "Do you feel lonely without your wife and children?"
- My neighbour asked me if I felt lonely without my wife and children.

We can use **whether** or **whether or not** instead of **if**.

Examples:

They asked **whether** I believe in one god or many gods.

My sister asked me **whether / whether or not** I was sad that I had no friend.

ETEA PAST PAPERS (Lesson No. 9 Direct and Indirect Speech)

ETEA MEDICAL PAPER YEAR 2017

- Q 1) He asked me what my name was and what I did.
(a) He said to me, "What was my name and what did I do?"
(b) He said to me, "What is your name and what do you do?"
(c) He said to me, "What my name was and what i did"
(d) He said to me, "What his name was and what did he do?"

ANSWER: (b)

- Q 2) "He is busy, would you like to leave a message?" said the assistant.
(a) The assistant told that he is busy and asked me to leave a message.
(b) The assistant told that he was busy and ask me to leave a message.
(c) The assistant told that he was busy and asked be to leave a message.
(d) The assistant told that he was busy and asked me to leave a message?

ANSWER: (c)

- Q 3) She said " I passed the examination long ago"
(a) She said that had passed the examination long ago
(b) She said that she had passed the examination long before
(c) She told she had passed the examination long before
(d) She asked that she had passed the examination long ago.

ANSWER: (b)

- Q 4) She said " I passed the examination long ago"
(a) She said that had passed the examination long ago
(b) She said that she had passed the examination long before
(c) She told she had passed the examination long before
(d) She asked that she had passed the examination long ago.

ANSWER: (b)

ETEA MEDICAL PAPER YEAR 2016

- Q 5) "I am disappointed that you feel you have to lie to

me, Jason," said his father.

Select the correct indirect speech:

- (a) His father said to Jason that he is sorry to feel disappointed that he has to lie to me.
- (b) Jason's father said to him that he was sorry that he felt he had to lie to me.
- (c) Jason's father said that he was disappointed to know that he felt he had to lie to him.
- (d) Jason's father was disappointed and sorry that he had to lie to him and that he felt it.

HINT: In option (a) there is no change of Tense, Whereas in option (b) the Pronoun "me" is incorrect.

ANSWER: (d)

- Q 6) Anwar said, "Naveed must go tomorrow".

Select the correct indirect speech.

- (a) Anwar declared that Naveed must go the following day.
- (b) Anwar exclaimed that Naveed would have to go the following day.
- (c) Anwar said that Naveed would have to go the following day
- (d) Anwar said that Naveed shall go the following day.

HINT: The reported speech is in "imperative" form, (Imperative sentence)

ANSWER: (a)

ETEA MEDICAL PAPER YEAR 2015

- Q 7) He said to me, "Why have you come late?"

Indirect form of the sentence is:

- (a) He asked me why I had come late.
- (b) He asked me why I came late.
- (c) He asked me why I have come late.
- (d) He told me as to why I had come late.

ANSWER: (a)

- Q 8) He said to me, "What a stupid fellow you are!"

Indirect form of the sentence is:

- (a) He exclaimed that I was very stupid fellow
- (b) He told me that you were a stupid fellow
- (c) He exclaimed that what a stupid fellow I was.
- (d) He did tell me that I had been a stupid fellow.

ANSWER: (a)

- Q 9) He said, "May this child live long!"

Indirect form of the sentence is:

- (a) He prayed that that child may live long.

- (b) He prayed that that child will live long.
- (c) He prayed that that child might live long.
- (d) He said that that child might live long.

ANSWER: (c)

ETEA MEDICAL PAPER YEAR 2013

Q 10) "Have you got a computer?" she said.

Select the correct indirect speech:

- (a) She wanted to find a whether I have a computer.
- (b) She wanted to know whether I had a computer.
- (c) She wanted to know if I could use a computer.
- (d) She was interested to know about my computer.

ANSWER: (b)

Q 11) "I saw him yesterday," she said.

Select the correct in direct speech:

- (a) She told that she had seen him yesterday.
- (b) She said that she had seen him the day before.
- (c) She told that she could see him the previous day.
- (d) She said that she would see him the day before.

ANSWER: (b)

Q 12) "I have been to Spain," he told me.

Select indirect speech:

- (a) He told me that he could visit Spain
- (b) He told me that he has visited Spain.
- (c) He told me that he had been to Spain.
- (d) He told me that he has been to Spain.

ANSWER: (c)

ETEA MEDICAL PAPER YEAR 2011

Q 13) He said, "If I were you, I would protest." can be indirectly reported as:

- (a) If he had been me, he would have protested
- (b) He advised us to protest
- (c) If he were me, he would protest
- (d) If he had been I, he would have protested

HINT: Here the conditional structure of a sentence is given in the reported speech.

ANSWER: (d)