

## reported speech: sentences and questions

### reported sentences

| direct statements         | reported statements                                     | 4 33 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 'I like travelling.'      | She said (that) <b>she liked</b> travelling.            |      |
| 'I'm leaving tomorrow.'   | He told her (that) <b>he was leaving the next day</b> . |      |
| 'I'll always love you.'   | He said (that) <b>he would</b> always love me.          |      |
| 'I passed the exam!'      | She told me (that) <b>she had passed</b> the exam.      |      |
| 'I've forgotten my keys.' | He said (that) <b>he had forgotten his</b> keys.        |      |
| 'I can't come.'           | She said (that) <b>she couldn't</b> come.               |      |
| 'I may be late.'          | He said (that) <b>he might</b> be late.                 |      |
| 'I must go.'              | She said (that) <b>she had to</b> go.                   |      |

- We use reported speech to report (i.e. to tell another person) what someone said.
- When the reporting verb (*said, told*, etc.) is in the past tense, the tenses in the sentence which is being reported usually change like this:  
present > past  
*will* > *would*  
past simple / present perfect > past perfect



#### When tenses don't change

When you report what someone said very soon after they said it, the tenses often stay the same as in the original sentence.

**Adam** 'I **can't come** tonight.'

*I've just spoken to Adam and he said that he **can't come** tonight.*

**Jack** 'I really **enjoyed** my trip.'

*Jack told me that he **really enjoyed** his trip.*

- Some modal verbs change, e.g. *can* > *could*, *may* > *might*, *must* > *had to*. Other modal verbs stay the same, e.g. *could*, *might*, *should*, etc.
- You usually have to change the pronouns, e.g. 'I like jazz.' *Jane said that **she** liked jazz.*
- Using **that** after *said* and *told* is optional.

- If you report what someone said on a different day or in a different place, some other time and place words can change, e.g. *tomorrow* > *the next day*, *here* > *there*, *this* > *that*, etc.

'I'll meet you **here tomorrow**.' He said he'd meet me **there the next day**.



#### say and tell

Be careful – after *said* don't use a person or an object pronoun:

*He said he was tired.* NOT *He said me...*

After *told* you must use a person or pronoun:

*Sarah told Cally that she would call her.* NOT *Sarah told that she...*

*He told me he was tired.* NOT *He told he was...*

### reported questions

#### direct questions reported questions 4 34

'Are you married?' She asked him if **he was** married.

'Did she phone?' He asked me whether she **had phoned**.

'What's your name?' I asked him what his name **was**.

'Where do you live?' They asked me where I **lived**.

- When you report a question the tenses change as in reported statements.
- When a question doesn't begin with a question word, add *if* (or *whether*).  
'Do you want a drink?' He asked me **if / whether** I wanted a drink.
- You also have to change the word order to subject + verb, and not use *do / did*.

## 2 GRAMMAR reported speech: sentences and questions

a Circle the correct answer. Tick (✓) if both are correct.

- 1 Matt said yesterday that he will / would come shopping.
- 2 We asked the sales assistant how much *it was* / *was it*.
- 3 My sister *said me* / *told me* that she had spent all her money in the sales.
- 4 I asked Lucy where *she bought* / *did she buy* her clothes.
- 5 You told me that you *may* / *might* go shopping on Saturday.
- 6 My brother asked me *if I can* / *if I could* lend him £50 until next weekend.
- 7 Kate said that she *had to* / *must* go to the supermarket.
- 8 I asked my sister *whether* / *that* the dress suited me, and she said I looked great!
- 9 Helena asked me what *I wanted* / *did I want* from the shops.
- 10 Nick said that he couldn't pay me back, because he *has forgotten* / *had forgotten* his wallet.

b Change the direct speech into reported sentences and questions.

1 I haven't been to the sales yet.

2 I hate buying clothes.

3 How much did you pay for your jacket?

4 I'll check the price online.

5 Where's the shoe department?

6 Does the shirt fit you?

- 1 Jackie said (that) she hadn't been to the sales yet.
- 2 My boyfriend told me \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 They asked me \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 You said \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 I asked her \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 The sales assistant asked me \_\_\_\_\_.