

5.5 Grammar

Reporting verbs

I can use a range of reporting verbs correctly.

1 In pairs, look at the title of the article below. What do you think it means? Then read Part 1 of the article. What's the answer?



SPOILT BRAT OR NEGLECTED CHILD?

US teenager Rachel Canning took her parents to court and tried to sue them for financial support. She accused them of abandoning her when she had turned eighteen and refusing to fund her college

education. She **claimed** that they had thrown her out of her home and **explained** that she had been living at a friend's house. Mr Canning refused to accept his daughter's version of events. 10 He denied kicking Rachel out and **assured** the court that she had left voluntarily after an argument about household rules and her choice of boyfriends. He **suggested** that Rachel's friends had encouraged her to take the matter to court. He **insisted** that he and his wife loved and missed their child and 15 **added** that the situation was having a terrible effect on them. He begged his daughter to come home soon.

2 Translate the verbs in blue in Exercise 1. Which five can be replaced with **said**? Which one can be replaced with **told**?
3 Read the GRAMMAR FOCUS. Then find five more reporting verbs in Exercise 1. Which verb patterns do they illustrate?

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Reporting verbs

1 Verbs without a direct object

- verb + that clause: add, admit, agree, claim, deny, explain, insist, promise, propose, recommend, suggest
She **promised that** she would come home.
- verb + to-infinitive: agree, claim, offer, promise, refuse
He **offered to help**.
- verb + -ing form: admit, deny, propose, recommend, suggest
They **suggested talking** to the lawyer.

- verb + preposition + -ing form: apologise for, object to, insist on
I **insisted on paying** for everything.

2 Verbs with a direct object

- verb + object + that clause: assure, convince, inform, promise, remind, warn
She **assured me that** she was OK.
- verb + object + to-infinitive: advise, beg, convince, encourage, invite, order, persuade, remind, urge, warn (not)
He **begged them to leave**.
- verb + object + preposition + -ing form: accuse sb of, blame sb for, congratulate sb on, thank sb for
I **accused her of telling lies**.

4 Read Part 2 of the article and choose the correct answer, A, B, C or D. Do you agree with the judge's decision?

The judge rejected the teenager's demands and **1** everyone in the court that in future, children may consider suing their parents for a smartphone. The judge **2** Rachel and her family to have family counselling. The teenager has **3** to return home and the Cannings have **4** the media to give the family some privacy while they work things out. The parents have **5** to relax the house rules and in return, Rachel has **6** them that she won't leave home again.



Rachel Canning and her father in court

1 A warned B explained C promised D suggested
2 A denied B insisted C advised D reminded
3 A agreed B proposed C reminded D ordered
4 A refused B warned C insisted D urged
5 A convinced B offered C suggested D told
6 A agreed B denied C warned D promised

5 Some reporting verbs can follow two or more patterns. Report each of these sentences in two different ways.

1 'I did not kick my daughter out!' Rachel's father denied ...
2 'We reckon you should take your parents to court.' Rachel's friends suggested ...
3 'We have been terribly upset.' Her parents admitted ...
4 'You should have some family counselling.' The judge recommended ...
5 'OK. We'll relax some of the house rules.' Rachel's parents promised ...
6 'All right. I'll move back in.' Rachel agreed ...

6 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in the box. Use the correct verb pattern. Add **me** if necessary.

[buy have lose not copy owe redecorate]

Recently:

1 my friends have persuaded ____ a haircut.
2 my brother/sister has accused ____ his/her camera.
3 a teacher has warned ____ homework from the Internet.
4 a friend has reminded ____ him/her some money.
5 my grandparents have offered ____ me a laptop.
6 Dad has suggested ____ my bedroom.

7 In pairs, discuss whether the sentences in Exercise 6 are true for you. Use the sentence beginnings to report other things that people have said to you.

Reporting Verbs

say and tell

We usually use the verbs *say* or *tell* to report what someone said:

- *say*

He said (that) he was getting married.

- *say + to + object*

He said to me (that) he was getting married.

- *tell + object*

He told me (that) he was getting married.

...but those aren't the only alternatives, are they?

Verbs without a direct object

- verb + (that) (e.g. *add, admit, agree, claim, complain, deny, explain, insist, promise, propose, recommend, regret, suggest*):

'I wasted a lot of money.'

Sue complained (that) she had wasted a lot of money.

- verb + to-infinitive (e.g. *agree, claim, decide, offer, promise, refuse, threaten*):

'I'll hire two new employees.'

The manager decided to hire two new employees.

- verb + -ing form (e.g. *admit, deny, propose, recommend, regret, suggest*):

'I didn't take the money.'

The cashier denied taking the money.

- verb + preposition + -ing form (e.g. *apologise for, insist on, object to*):

'I'm sorry I was rude.'

I apologised for being rude.

Verbs with a direct object

- verb + object + (that) (e.g. *advise, assure, convince, inform, persuade, promise, remind, tell, warn*):

'The meeting will start in an hour.'

The secretary reminded them (that) the meeting would start in an hour

- verb + object + to-infinitive (e.g. *advise, ask, beg, convince, encourage, invite, order, persuade, recommend, remind, tell, warn, urge*):

'You really should apply for this job.'

Everybody encouraged me to apply for that job.

- verb + object + preposition + -ing form (e.g. *accuse sb of, blame sb for, criticise sb for, congratulate sb on, praise sb for, suspect sb of, thank sb for*):

'It's your fault that the car was damaged.'

Joe's boss blames him for damaging the car.