

16 What's your excuse?

1

SNAPSHOT

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

Ending a phone call

I'm driving right now.
My battery is dying.

Forgetting to meet someone

I remembered the date wrong.
I forgot to check my calendar.

Not doing homework

My computer crashed.
I thought it was due tomorrow.

Getting to class late

I couldn't get a ride.
I missed the bus.

Not accepting a date

I already have plans.
I have a doctor's appointment.



Source: Based on www.answers.yahoo.com

Have you ever heard any of these excuses? Have you ever used any of them?

Which are good excuses? Which are bad excuses?

What other excuses can you make for not accepting an invitation?

2

PERSPECTIVES Who said it?

A Who do you think made these requests? Listen and match.

1. He asked me to play my music more quietly.
2. She told me not to stay out past midnight.
3. She said to drink at least six glasses of water a day.
4. He said not to be late for practice again.
5. She asked me to pick up the kids after school.
6. He told me to bring a dictionary tomorrow.
7. He asked me not to tell anyone about his new girlfriend.

- a. my doctor
- b. my coach
- c. my friend
- d. my neighbor
- e. my mother
- f. my wife
- g. my teacher

B **PAIR WORK** Can you think of another request each person might make?

A: A doctor might also tell a patient to get more exercise.

B: ... or to avoid eating greasy foods.

3

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Reported speech: requests 

Original request

Bring a dictionary tomorrow.

Don't stay out past midnight.

Can you play your music more quietly?

Reported request

He **said to bring** a dictionary tomorrow.He **told me to bring** a dictionary tomorrow.She **said not to stay** out past midnight.She **told me not to stay** out past midnight.He **asked me to play** my music more quietly.

A Amanda is having a surprise party for Albert. Look at what she told the guests. Write each request using *say*, *tell*, or *ask*. Then compare with a partner.

1. Meet at Albert's apartment at 7:30.	She told them to meet at Albert's apartment at 7:30.
2. Can you bring your favorite music?
3. Don't bring any food.
4. Can you bring a small gift for Albert?
5. Don't spend more than \$10 on the gift.
6. Keep the party a secret.

B GROUP WORK Imagine you're planning a class party. Write four requests. Then take turns reading your requests and changing them into reported requests.

Juan: Bring something good to eat to the party!

Sonia: Juan told us to bring something good to eat.

Noriko: Can you help me clean up after the party?

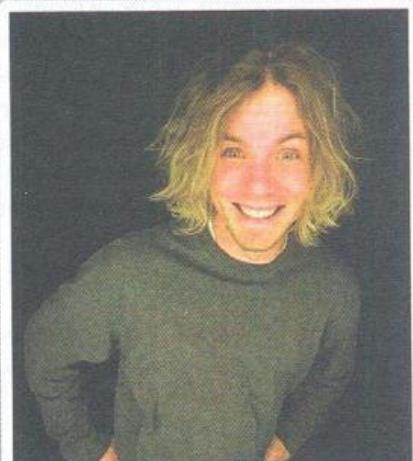
Jin-sook: Noriko asked us to help her clean up.

4

SPEAKING What a request!

A Think of requests that people have made recently. Write two things people asked you to do and two things people asked you *not* to do.

Person	Request
my mom	get a haircut
.....
.....
.....



B GROUP WORK Compare with others. Who has the most interesting or unusual requests?

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5

WORD POWER Verb and noun pairs

A Find words or phrases in the list that are usually paired with each verb. Then compare with a partner.

✓anger
✓an apology
a complaint
✓a compliment
a concern

✓your congratulations
a criticism
an excuse
an invitation
✓a joke

a lie
a reason
your regrets
sympathy
the truth

express	anger	
give	a compliment	
make	an apology	
offer	your congratulations	
tell	a joke	

B PAIR WORK In what situations do you do the things in part A?

Write five sentences about things you *never*, *sometimes*, or *always* do. Then take turns reading your sentences and asking questions.

A: I never tell a lie.

B: Are you sure? What if someone invited you to a party, but you didn't want to go?

6

CONVERSATION Are you doing anything on Saturday?

A Listen and practice.

Albert: Hi, Daniel.

Daniel: Oh, hi, Albert. How are things?

Albert: Just fine, thanks. Uh, are you doing anything on Saturday night?

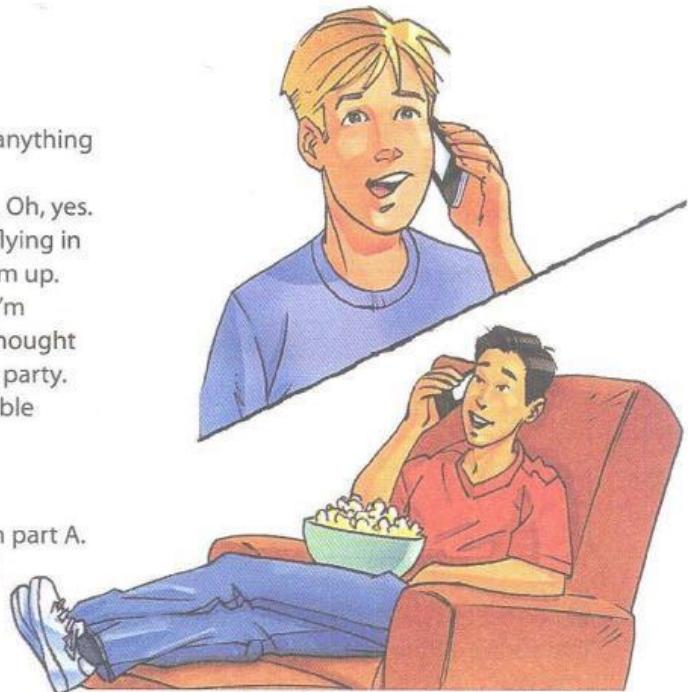
Daniel: Hmm. Saturday night? Let me think. Oh, yes. My cousin just called to say he was flying in that night. I told him I would pick him up.

Albert: Oh, that's too bad! It's my birthday. I'm having dinner with Amanda, and I thought I'd invite more people and make it a party.

Daniel: Gee, I'm really sorry, but I won't be able to make it.

Albert: I'm sorry, too. But that's OK.

B PAIR WORK Act out the conversation in part A. Make up your own excuse for not accepting Albert's invitation.



7

LISTENING He said, she said

A  Listen to Albert inviting friends to his party on Saturday. What excuses do people give for not coming? Match the person to the excuse.

1. Scott	a. She said that she wasn't feeling well.
2. Fumiko	b. He said he was taking his mother to a dance club.
3. Manuel	c. She said she had houseguests for the weekend.
4. Regina	d. He said that he would be out of town.
	e. She said she might go out with friends.
	f. He said he was going away with his family.

B  Listen. What happens on the night of Albert's birthday?



8

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Reported speech: statements 

Direct statements

I'm **not feeling** well.
I **have** houseguests for the weekend.
I **made** a tennis date with Kim.
I **have planned** an exciting trip.
We **can't come** tomorrow.
We **will be** out of town.
We **may go** out with friends.

Reported statements

She **said** (that) she **wasn't feeling** well.
she **had** houseguests for the weekend.
she **had made** a tennis date with Kim.
she **had planned** an exciting trip.
they **couldn't come** tomorrow.
they **would be** out of town.
they **might go** out with friends.

A Sandra is having a party at her house on Saturday. Look at these excuses. Change them into reported speech. Then compare with a partner.

1. Donna: "I have to babysit my nephew that night."
2. William and Brigitte: "We're going out of town for the weekend."
3. Mary: "I've been invited to a wedding on Saturday."
4. James: "I promised to help Dennis move."
5. Anita: "I can't come because I have the flu."
6. Mark: "I'll be studying for a test all weekend."
7. Eva and Randall: "We have to pick someone up at the airport that evening."
8. David: "I may have to work late on Saturday night."

Donna **said** she **had** to **babysit** her **nephew** that **night**. OR
Donna **told** her she **had** to **babysit** her **nephew** that **night**.

B **GROUP WORK** Imagine you don't want to go to Sandra's party. Take turns making excuses and changing them into reported speech.

A: I'm sorry I can't go. I have tickets to a concert that night.
B: Lucky guy! He **said** he **had** tickets to a concert that night.

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9**PRONUNCIATION** Reduction of had and would

A  Listen and practice. Notice how **had** and **would** are reduced in the following sentences.

She said she'd **made** the bed. (She said she **had made** the bed.)
She said she'd **make** the bed. (She said she **would make** the bed.)

B  Listen to four sentences. Check (✓) the reduced form that you hear.

1. <input type="checkbox"/> had	2. <input type="checkbox"/> had	3. <input type="checkbox"/> had	4. <input type="checkbox"/> had
<input type="checkbox"/> would	<input type="checkbox"/> would	<input type="checkbox"/> would	<input type="checkbox"/> would

10**WRITING** A report

A Interview your classmates and take notes. Use your notes to write a report describing what people told you. Use reported speech.

	Name	Response
What did you do last weekend?		
What new TV show have you seen recently?		
Where are you going after class?		
What are your plans this evening?		
What will you do this weekend?		

B **GROUP WORK** Read your report, but don't give names. Others guess the person.

"Someone told me that she'd watched three movies last weekend."

11**SPEAKING** Good intentions

A **GROUP WORK** What are some things you would like to do in the future? Think of three intentions.

A: I'm going to learn how to sail.
B: That sounds fun. Are you going to take lessons?

B **CLASS ACTIVITY** Report the best intentions you heard. Then predict which ones will happen.

"Tatyana said she was going to learn how to sail, but she didn't want to take lessons."

**12****INTERCHANGE 16** Excuses, excuses

Make some plans. Student A, go to Interchange 16A on page 129; Student B, go to Interchange 16B on page 131.

The Truth About *Lying*

Is it ever better to tell a lie than the truth? If so, when?

Most of us are taught to believe that lying is wrong. But it seems that everybody tells lies – not big lies, but what we call “white lies.” If we believe that lying is wrong, why do we do it? Most of the time, people have very good reasons for lying. For example, they might want to protect a friendship or someone’s feelings. So, when do we lie and who do we lie to? A recent study found that the average person lies about seven times a day. Here are some reasons why.

1 Lying to hide something: People often lie because they want to hide something from someone. For example, a son doesn’t tell his parents that he’s dating a girl because he doesn’t think

they will like her. Instead, he says he’s going out with the guys.

2 Lying to make an excuse: Sometimes people lie because they don’t want to do something. For example, someone invites you to a party. You think it will be boring, so you say you’re busy.



3 Lying to avoid sharing bad news: Sometimes we don’t want to tell someone bad news. For example, you have just had a very bad day at work, but you don’t feel like talking about it. So if someone asks you about your day, you just say that everything was fine.

4 Lying to make someone feel good: Often we stretch the truth to make someone feel good. For example, your friend cooks dinner for you, but it tastes terrible. Do you say so? No. You probably say, “Mmm, this is delicious!”

A Read the article. Then complete the summary with information from the article.

It isn’t necessarily to lie. It’s probably OK to lie if you want to protect or The main reasons for lying are to , to , to , or to

B Look at these situations. For each example, write the number of the appropriate reason.

1. Your friend gives you an ugly shirt for your birthday. You say, “Oh, it’s great!”
2. Someone you don’t like invites you to a movie, so you say, “I’ve already seen it.”
3. You lost your job and are having trouble finding a new one. When an old friend calls to find out how you are, you say you’re doing well.
4. You’re planning a surprise party for a friend. To get him to come over at the right time, you ask him to stop by to see your new motorcycle.

C GROUP WORK Can you think of other reasons people tell white lies?
What white lies have you told recently?

What’s your excuse? ■ 111