

Grammar 2: reported speech

► CB page 57

About the language

Reported speech and reporting verbs

- If the reporting verb is in the past, the verb in reported speech usually 'goes back' one tense into the past.
- The two most common reporting verbs are **tell** and **say**.

*When we use tell we use an object.**When we use say we do not use an object.**You said (that) you would get tickets for the concert.**He told us (that) he hadn't seen her for several months.*

- Other common reporting verbs include: **admit, explain, suggest, deny, remind** and **warn**:

*She admitted (that) she had sent the letter.**He explained (that) he wouldn't be able to come.**She suggested having a surprise party for Sam.**We denied cheating in the test.**Sonia reminded me to set my alarm clock.**Her mother warned her not to walk through the wood.*

Reported questions

- In **reported wh- questions**, the word order is: question word + subject + verb.

She asked me why Simone was crying.

- In **reported Yes/No questions**, we use: if/whether + subject + verb.

She asked me if/whether he still lived in Hollywood.

Typical mistakes

*He said me that he was going.**changing**She suggested me to change it.**I was**She asked me how was I feeling.**if we had gone**They asked us did we go there.*

1 Use the correct tense to complete these reported speech sentences.

0 'I love chocolate,' she said.

She said she ...loved... chocolate.

1 'They are hoping to be here by noon,' she said.

She said there by noon.

2 'We played really well last week,' he said.

He said the week before.

3 'We were planning to buy a house together,' he said.

4 'I've bought Dimitra a present', she told me.

5 'I've been waiting for you for over an hour,' she said.

6 'I'll finish the assignment by Monday,' she said.

7 'I'm going to stay with some friends on Saturday night,' she said.

8 'I can pick Angelou up at the airport,' he said.

2 Use reporting verbs from the box to rewrite these sentences in reported speech.

admit deny suggest explain
remind warn

0 'Don't forget to buy some more batteries!'

He reminded me to buy some more batteries.

1 'OK! I did borrow your digital camera without asking.'

She

2 'We weren't anywhere near the house when it was burgled.'

The accused man

3 'I had to go to the dentist so I couldn't come to the meeting.'

He

4 'Don't walk home alone at night.'

The camp director the girls

5 'Why don't we have a picnic at the beach?'

Eva

3 Change these direct questions from an interview into reported questions.

0 'Could I ask you where you live?'

She asked me where I lived.

1 'Have you always lived there?'

.....

2 'I'd like to know what you are studying at the moment.'

.....

3 'Could you tell me what you did during the summer?'

.....

4 'Did you enjoy yourself?'

5 'Would you mind telling me if you have got any special plans for the future?'

.....

6 'What are you going to do when you finish studying?'

4 Use of English: key word transformations

Complete the second sentence so that has a similar meaning to the first sentence. Use the word in bold and other words.

0 'I did not speak to your girlfriend!' shouted the boy **deny**

The boy **denied speaking** ... to my girlfriend.

1 'Do you think that 'Superman' is a better film than 'Spider Man'?' **if**

He asked me than 'Spider Man'.

2 'I can't come to your party tomorrow,' said Sarah. **couldn't**

Sarah said that
told
 Jay their connection.

4 'I stole the money,' said the man. **admit**

The man the money.

5 'You'll get burnt if you don't use some sunscreen,' said Sophie. **warned**

Sophie
would
 My father

6 'When will you write to your grandmother?' asked my father. **would**

My father