

Reported Speech

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This lesson will help you to:

- ❖ be able to reproduce or report a message, idea or action to a third person without using the exact speech of the speaker.
- ❖ be able to differentiate between speaking directly to a person and to be able to convey an idea message or action to a third person in one's own words.

QUICK CONCEPT VIEW

As we have grown up we have also improved our language and are talking and exchanging our views with friends and people around us. Now let us also know the correct way to narrate something that has happened to someone else or carry a message forward to another person.

This narration can be of two types: Direct narration or Direct speech and Indirect narration or Reported speech.

When you meet your friend Vanya after the weekend on Monday, and tell her all that you did or whatever happened during the weekend, this is "Direct narration".

For example: "I went to watch cinema with my parents".

"We had ice cream on my way back".

"My cousins Jay and Jiya came to meet me on Sunday".

"Have you completed the Maths assignments"?

These are all examples of Direct speech where you are directly speaking your thoughts to someone in front of you.

Now your teacher has told you to tell your mother that there will be a parent/teacher meet next Saturday or she has asked you to submit the English project by Friday.

How do you say this to your mother? There's a proper way for doing so.

You will say:

- ❖ The teacher said that there will be a parent/teacher meet next Saturday.
- ❖ My teacher has asked me to submit the English project by Friday.
- ❖ This is an example of "Indirect speech" or "Indirect narration" or "Reported speech".

Here, you are reporting a message or thought to someone else and that too without using the exact words of the speaker and in your own words. Well, isn't that interesting!

POINTS TO REMEMBER

In Direct speech we use inverted commas or quotation marks (" ") to quote the exact words of the speaker. The part outside it consists of a subject and a verb that reports the part within. Example: The teacher said "Let's read a new chapter."

Here, the teacher is the subject and said is the reporting verb.

Now we also need to keep in mind certain rules while changing from Direct to Indirect or Reported Speech:

(a) The inverted commas are removed.

Reema said, "I'm going to the market." (Direct speech)

Reema said that she was going to the market.

(Indirect speech)

(b) The reporting verb said is used along with the conjunction that.

"It's cold", said Mohit. (Direct speech)

Mohit said that it was cold. (Indirect speech)

(c) (i) The present tense verbs in the direct speech change to past tense verbs in the indirect speech.

(ii) The first person pronouns are changed to third person pronouns.

My mother said, "I'm all right." (Direct speech).

My mother said that she was all right. (Indirect speech)

Here simple present becomes simple past and first person pronoun changes to third person pronoun.

The watchman said. "I am guarding the front gate."

The watchman said that he was guarding the front gate.

Here, present continuous becomes past continuous.

Jeevan said, "I've finished my work."

Jeevan said that he had finished his work.

Here, present perfect has become past perfect.

You must also remember that:

Reporting verb changes according to what is reported. When you report questions you use reporting verbs like asked, questioned. When you report commands you use verbs like ordered, commanded. When you report requests you use reporting verbs like requested, pleaded. When you exclaim you use the reporting verb exclaimed.

A few other changes that we will have to keep in mind to report meaningfully are:

"now" becomes 'then'

'here' becomes 'there'

'ago' becomes 'before'

'this' becomes 'that'

'these' becomes 'those'

'today' becomes 'that day'

'tomorrow' becomes 'the next day'

'yesterday' becomes 'the day before'

'last night/week' becomes 'the night/week before

You all love making-up stories and narrating them, don't you? Well, Reported speech is useful in story-telling as well as in conveying messages or reporting an incident.

The conjunction "that" is never used when you report a question. Instead, you use an "if" or a 'whether' with the reporting verb.

For universal truths and habitual actions like: The sun rises in the east. Honesty is the best policy, etc. the present tense in the direct speech is not changed to the past tense.

Now let me see how much you have understood about reported speech.

1. What are the two types of narration?
2. When do we use the indirect speech?
3. Which punctuation mark is used while writing indirect speech?
4. When is the reporting verb used? Can you give some examples of reporting verb?