

## Reported speech: questions and commands

<p><b>Reported speech</b></p> <p>In reported speech, the verb moves back a tense, e.g. present simple &gt; past simple, present continuous &gt; past continuous, etc.  <i>'Are you a student?'</i> He asked me if I was a student.  <i>'Is Lisa watching TV?'</i> She asked me if Lisa was watching TV.</p> <p>The past perfect tense and modal verbs <i>should, could, might</i> and <i>ought to</i> don't change in reported speech.  <i>'What should I do?'</i> She asked me what she should do.</p> <p><b>Reported questions</b></p> <p>We use <i>ask, want to know</i> or <i>wondered</i> to report questions. We change the interrogative form to the affirmative form, and we put the subject before the verb.  <i>'Where are you?'</i> He wanted to know where I was.              A yes/no question is introduced by <i>if</i> or <i>whether</i>.  <i>'Can I borrow your bike?'</i> She wondered if/whether she could borrow my bike.</p>
--

**1 Rewrite the questions in reported speech.**

- 'Will the flight be delayed?'  
Jill wanted to know .....
- 'Where have you been all night?'  
My parents wanted to know .....
- 'Will I pass my exam?'  
Mark wondered .....
- 'Did you remember the invitations?'  
Sue asked me .....
- 'How long have you been learning German?'  
Karl wondered .....

<p><b>Reported commands</b></p> <p>We use <i>told/asked</i> + object + (<i>not</i>) to + infinitive.  <i>'Please help me.'</i> He asked her to help him.  <i>'Don't shout at me.'</i> She told him not to shout at her.</p>
---

**2 Rewrite the commands in reported speech.**

- 'Keep to the left.'  
The police officer told the cyclist to **keep to the left**.
- 'Please don't smoke in this area.'  
The waitress asked them .....
  - 'Sit down and be quiet.'  
The teacher told the class .....
  - 'Don't forget to post the letter.'  
Jane told her boyfriend .....
  - 'Don't talk during the exam.'  
The examiner told us .....
  - 'Please switch off your mobile phone.'  
The air hostess asked him .....

**3 Rewrite the sentences in reported speech. Use the correct form of the verbs from the box.**

order warn remind offer advise
--------------------------------

- 'Put down your gun, Paul.'  
The police officer **ordered Paul to put down his gun**.
- 'I think you should have a holiday, Kate.'  
He .....
  - 'Don't touch that electric wire, John. It's dangerous!'  
She .....
  - 'Would you like me to help you, Brad?'  
She .....
  - 'Jamie, don't forget that it's Julie's birthday on Friday.'  
She .....

## Reported speech: statements

### Reported speech: statements

In reported speech, the verb moves back a tense, e.g. present simple > past simple, present continuous > past continuous, etc.

*'I like heavy metal music' He said that he **liked** heavy metal music.*

*'I'm studying French and Spanish.' She said that she **was studying** French and Spanish.*

The past perfect tense and modal verbs *should*, *could*, *might* and *ought to* don't change in reported speech.

*'You **should** ask him out.'* She said that I **should** ask him out.

The two most common reporting verbs are *say* and *tell*.

We use *say* + *that* + clause.

He **said that** he was going out with Jane that night.

We use *tell* + object pronoun + *that* + clause.

He **told me that** he was going out with Jane that night.

#### 1 Rewrite the sentences in reported speech.

1 'She goes out with her friends every night.'  
Sue's father said that .....

2 'I bought the tickets yesterday.'  
She said that .....

3 'They're going to Florida next week.'  
Tim told me that .....

4 'He won't be in the office tomorrow.'  
The secretary said that .....

5 'Jenny has passed her driving test.'  
Jenny's brother told me that .....

6 'Carl might come to the football match this afternoon.'  
He told me that .....

#### 2 Read the interview. Then complete the summary.

**Interviewer** I hear you have a very unusual job.

**Mr Fogarty** That's right.

**Interviewer** So what do you do?

**Mr Fogarty** Well, I'm investigating the Loch Ness monster. Every day I go to Loch Ness and wait for the monster to appear.

**Interviewer** And have you ever seen the monster?

**Mr Fogarty** Yes, I have. It was very foggy and I tried to take a photograph, but unfortunately my camera didn't work.

**Interviewer** Do you think you'll see it again?

**Mr Fogarty** I might see it again if I'm lucky.

**Interviewer** And what do people think about your job?

**Mr Fogarty** Many people think it's a strange job to have. They don't believe in the Loch Ness monster, but I know it's out there somewhere.

The interviewer asked Mr Fogarty what he did. He explained that he **was investigating** the Loch Ness Monster. He said that every day he <sup>1</sup> ..... to Loch Ness and <sup>2</sup> ..... for the monster to appear. He claimed that he <sup>3</sup> ..... the monster. He said that it <sup>4</sup> ..... very foggy and he <sup>5</sup> ..... to take a photograph, but unfortunately his camera <sup>6</sup> ..... He said that he <sup>7</sup> ..... it again if he <sup>8</sup> ..... lucky. He admitted that many people <sup>9</sup> ..... his job was strange. He said that they <sup>10</sup> ..... in the Loch Ness monster, but he <sup>11</sup> ..... it was out there somewhere.

<b>ANSWER KEY</b>
-------------------

**Reported speech: statements**

- 11 Sue's father said that she went out with her friends every night.
- 2 She said that she had bought the tickets the day before.
- 3 Tim told me that they were going to Florida the following week.
- 4 The secretary said that he wouldn't be in the office the following day.
- 5 Jenny's brother told me that she had passed her driving test.
- 6 He told me that Carl might come to the football match that afternoon.

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 21 went         | 7 might see       |
| 2 waited        | 8 was             |
| 3 had seen      | 9 thought         |
| 4 had been      | 10 didn't believe |
| 5 had tried     | 11 knew           |
| 6 hadn't worked |                   |

**Reported speech: questions and commands**

- 11 Jill wanted to know if/whether the flight would be delayed.
  - 2 My parents wanted to know where I had been all night.
  - 3 Mark wondered if/whether he would pass his exam.
  - 4 Sue asked me if/whether I had remembered the invitations.
  - 5 Karl wondered how long I had been learning German.
- 
- 21 The waitress asked them not to smoke in that area.
  - 2 The teacher told the class to sit down and be quiet.
  - 3 Jane told her boyfriend not to forget to post the letter.
  - 4 The examiner told us not to talk during the exam.
  - 5 The air hostess asked him to switch off his mobile phone.
- 
- 31 He advised Kate to have a holiday.
  - 2 She warned John not to touch the electric wire.
  - 3 She offered to help Brad.
  - 4 She reminded Jamie that it was Julie's birthday on Friday.