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REPORTED SPEECH & DIRECT SPEECH

There are two ways to report what someone says or thinks.

- **1. Direct speech** shows a person's exact words. **Quotation marks** ("...") are a sign that the words are the same words that a person used. For example:
 - Maria: Where are you going? John: I'm going home.

Direct speech:

Maria asked, "Where are you going?" John replied, "I am going home."

2. Reported speech puts the speaker's words or ideas into a sentence **without quotation marks**. Noun clauses are usually used. For example:

Maria:	Where are you going?
John:	I'm going home.

Reported speech:

Maria asked John where he was going. John said that he was going home.

Note: *That* is optional in reported speech. Both of the following sentences are correct.

The boy said that he was lost. The boy said he was lost.

Many changes must be made to a sentence when you use reported speech. These will be explained in this handout.

- o Verb tenses
- Questions and word order
- Pronoun changes
- Place and time word changes
- Infinitives
- Verb forms with suggest and recommend

VERB TENSE IN REPORTED SPEECH

When you report what someone said in the past, you usually shift back a verb tense from the tense the speaker used:

simple present ——	→ simple past
past	→ past perfect
present perfect —	→ past perfect
will	→ would
can ———	→ could

Quotation

Reported speech

"I <i>am</i> hungry."	She stated that she <i>was</i> hungry.
"I saw them leave."	Pat said he <i>had seen</i> them leave.
"Where <i>have</i> they <i>gone</i> ?"	James wondered where they had gone.
" <i>Will</i> you <i>help</i> me?"	I asked John if he <i>would help</i> me.
"I <i>can</i> 't <i>remember</i> you name."	Lisa said she <i>could</i> n't <i>remember</i> my name.

Note: If the information in the reported speech is still true, you may use the same tense.

Quotation	Reported speech
"The exam <i>will be</i> next week."	Dr. Jones said the exam <i>will be</i> next week.
"I <i>want</i> to see that movie."	Kim said that she <i>wants</i> to see that movie.

QUESTIONS IN REPORTED SPEECH

Word order: The word order in a reported question is the same as in a statement. The subject comes before the verb.

Question:	Are you ready?
Statement:	I am ready.
Question in reported speech:	She wanted to know if I was ready.

Punctuation: If the sentence is a statement, end it with a period (.) even if it contains a reported question.

Statement containing a reported question: She asked me what I thought of the new movie. Question containing a reported question: Did she ask what you thought of the new movie?

YES/NO QUESTIONS

To change a yes/no question to a noun clause in reported speech, introduce the noun clause with *if* or *whether*. *Whether or not* may also be used.

Quotation	Reported Speech
"Did you turn off the coffee pot?"	I asked Amy <i>if she had turned off the coffee pot.</i>
"Is supper ready?"	Eli wanted to know <i>whether supper was ready</i> .
"Will you be at the party?"	Paul asked me <i>whether or not I would be at the party.</i>
"Should I tell her the news?"	Jack wanted to know <i>if he should tell Maria the news.</i> Jack wondered <i>whether he should tell Maria the news or not.</i> Jack asked <i>whether he should tell Maria the news.</i>

INFORMATION QUESTIONS

To change an information question to a noun clause in reported speech, *begin the noun clause with the question word*, and remember to use *sentence word order*.

Quotation	Reported Speech
"Where do they live?"	Abdul wanted to know where they live.
"When did you call?"	Sharon asked me when I had called.
"What time is it?"	Do you know <i>what time it is</i> ?
"Why did you say that?"	Pedro asked me why I had said that.
"How do you pronounce your name?"	Please tell me how you pronounce your name.
"Where will you stay?"	Have you decided where you will stay?

PRONOUNS

Since the person who is reporting what someone said is usually different from the person who made the original statement, pronouns in reported speech often change.

Quotation	Reported Speech
"I am hungry."	George said <i>he</i> was hungry.
"Where will <i>you</i> be?"	Bill wanted to know where <i>I</i> would be.
"Have <i>you</i> seen <i>my</i> glasses?"	Karen asked me if <i>I</i> had seen <i>her</i> glasses.

PLACE AND TIME

Changes in place and time words depend on changes in the situation between direct and reported speech.

Quotation

Reported Speech

"I don't like *this* book."

Jaime said he didn't like *that* book.

"I'll see you *tomorrow*." (spoken on Thursday) Michiko said she would see me *today*.

Michiko said she would see me *today*. (spoken on Friday) Michiko said she would see me *yesterday*. (spoken on Saturday)

INFINITIVES

Infinitives (to + the simple form of the verb) may sometimes be used instead of noun clauses.

Commands can be reported two ways:

- 1. a noun clause with a modal (usually *should*)
- 2. an infinitive

Quotation	Reported Speech
" <i>Call</i> me when you get home."	She said that we <i>should call</i> her when we get home. She said <i>to call</i> her when we get home.
" <i>Plan</i> ahead."	My father told me that I <i>should plan</i> ahead. My father told me <i>to plan</i> ahead.

Requests for action or permission can be reported two ways:

- *1.* a noun clause with *if*
- 2. an infinitive

Quotation

Reported Speech

Action: "*Will you carry* the box for me?"

She asked me *if I would carry* the box for her. She asked me *to carry* the box for her.

Permission: "*Can I make* an appointment?"

The student asked *if he could make* an appointment. The student asked *to make* an appointment.

RECOMMEND AND SUGGEST

The subjunctive, or base, form of the verb (no tense, without *to*) is used in reported speech when the main verb is *recommend* or *suggest*.

Quotation	Reported Speech
"You <i>should arrive</i> early."	John <i>recommended</i> that we <i>arrive</i> early.
" <i>Don't wait</i> to apply."	Anna <i>recommended</i> that I not <i>wait</i> to apply.
"Kathy <i>should call</i> me."	I will <i>suggest</i> that Kathy <i>call</i> you.

