DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH



Get Going

Teacher: Please file the report by evening.

Rani: Alright, ma'am.

Now, report this dialogue in your own words. Choose the correct option.

- **Option 1:** The teacher said to Rani, 'Please file the report by evening.'
- **Option 2:** The teacher asked Rani to file the report by evening.



REMEMBER

Answer: Both the options are correct.

- **Option 1** is in direct speech. It quotes the exact words of the speaker.
- **Option 2** is in indirect speech. It reports what the speaker said without using the actual words.

MORE EXAMPLES

Direct speech: Rohit **said**, '**I am** doing my homework.'
Indirect speech: Rohit **said** that **he was** writing a letter.

Direct speech: Sheena **said**, 'I **have been studying in this school** for two years.'
Indirect speech: Sheena **said** that she **had been studying** in that school for two years.

General rules for changing direct speech into indirect speech

1. Remove the quotation marks from the direct speech.

2. Use reporting verbs such as ‘told’, ‘said’, ‘mentioned’ to introduce the report speech.

3. Use the conjunction ‘that’ after the reporting verb.



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Change the pronouns.

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
I	he/she
you	he/she/they
me	him/her
us	them
you	we/us
my	his/her
mine	his/hers
your	our
our	their

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Change adverbs of nearness into those of distance.

Examples:

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
now	then
here	there
this	that
these	those
today	that day
yesterday	the day before
tomorrow	next day
last week/month	previous week/month

If the reporting verb is in the past tense (said), change the tense.

Examples:

Tense in direct speech	Tense in indirect speech	Example sentence in direct speech	Reported speech
Simple present	Simple past	Mohit said, ‘ I love mangoes.’	Mohit said that he loved mangoes.
Present continuous	Past continuous	Rani said, ‘ I am having my dinner now.’	Rani said that she was having her dinner then.
Present perfect	Past perfect	Gurpreet said ‘I have painted these pictures.’	Gurpreet said that he had painted those pictures.
Present perfect continuous	Past perfect continuous	Rati said, ‘I have been trimming these hedges.’	Rati said that she had been trimming those hedges.

Special rules for Imperative Sentences

1. Remove the quotation marks.
2. Use ‘to’ if it is an affirmative sentence. (without don‘t)
3. Use ‘not to’ if the sentence begins with ‘Don‘t’.
4. Don‘t use ‘that’ and ‘please’.
5. If the direct speech contains a request or a command, the reporting verb (say, said) change to tell, request, order, command, etc.

Examples:

1. ‘Don‘t talk in the class,’ said the teacher to the students.

The teacher asked the boys not to talk in the class.

2. ‘Please give me something to eat,’ said the old man to them.

The old man requested them to give him something to eat.

Special rules for Interrogative Sentences (Questions)

1. Remove the question mark.
2. Use ‘if’ or ‘whether’ if the sentence inside the quotation marks begins with a helping verb.
3. Use the given interrogative word (what, when, where, why, who, whom, whose, which, now, etc.) if it does not begin with the helping verb.
4. Don‘t use ‘that’.
5. Change the reporting verb (say, said) into ‘ask’ or ‘enquire’ in its correct tense.

Example:

‘Will you give a present to Roma?’ I said to Prakash.
I asked Prakash if he would be giving a gift to Prakash.

Special rules for Exclamatory Sentences

1. Change the exclamatory sentences into statements.
2. Remove the quotation marks and exclamation mark.
3. Use the conjunction ‘that’.
4. Omit interjections such as *Oh!*, *Alas!*, *What!*, *Hurrah!*, etc.
5. Add the word ‘very’ to the adjective or adverb if necessary.
6. Change the reporting verb (say, said) to ‘exclaimed’.

Example:

‘Oh! What a beautiful painting!’ said Rupa.

Rupa exclaimed joyfully that it was a beautiful painting.

A few riders

If the direct speech contains a universal truth, the tense of the direct speech remains unchanged even if the reporting verb is in the past tense.

- The teacher said, ‘The sun rises in the East’.
- The teacher said that the sun rises in the East.

If the reporting verb is in the present tense, the tenses in the direct speech do not change.

- Arun says, ‘Mr Singh is a good teacher.’
- Arun says that Mr Singh is a good teacher.

Your Turn to Try

Change the following direct speech into indirect.

1. ‘Are you going to the library?’ Romi asked me.
2. ‘Please call me this evening,’ Rita said to Sumi.
3. Alka said, ‘How difficult this sum is!’
4. ‘Stop that noise!’ Ratul said to the workmen.
5. The man asked me, ‘Could you please tell me the way to the nearest ATM?’
6. The king asked the wizard, ‘What do you want?’
7. ‘I forgot to take my medicines last week,’ Disha admitted to the doctor.
8. Mohan said to his teacher, ‘ I have been working on the project.’
9. The shopkeeper said, ‘We don’t stock textbooks.’
10. Manu asked Harish, ‘Can you pick us up on the way?’