

English Home Language, Grade 10-12, Direct and Indirect (Reported) Speech

Direct and indirect (reported) speech

- **Direct speech** refers to the actual words spoken or written by someone. When someone else uses these exact words, that person 'quotes' them.
- The words are put in quotation marks and all other punctuation marks used in the sentence will be captured inside these quotation marks.
- When someone else reports what someone said without using the exact words, they use **indirect** or **reported speech**.

Direct speech:

- Nosipho said, "My family will be going to a soccer match next Saturday."

Reported speech:

- Nosipho said that her family would be going to a soccer match the following Saturday.

Here are the differences between the two sentences:

- The comma and the quotation marks are not used in reported speech.
- The form of the **verb changes** in reported speech. (In this example, 'will' changes to 'would'.
- The **time word changes**. (In this example, 'next' changes to 'the following'.)

Worked Examples

Rewrite the following sentence in reported speech:

The young lady said, "I can't give my baby a good life here."

Correct answer: The young lady said that she couldn't give her baby a good life there.

Grace Machel said, "It is something you give a young girl that can never be taken away."

Correct answer: Grace Machel said that it was something you gave a young girl that could never be taken away.

He wanted to say, "I will never forget you or your parents and the sacrifices you have made."

Correct answer: He wanted to say that he would never forget him (OR her) or his (OR her) parents and the sacrifices they had made.

Yesterday Robert Phipps said, "Mary, your eyes are the windows to your soul."

Correct answer: The previous day (OR The day before) Robert Phipps told Mary that her eyes were the windows to her soul.

