

Also known as Indirect Speech, Reported Speech is essential in everyday spoken English to basically “report” on what another person has said.

What do you usually do on Saturdays?

S1: “I play football with friends”

S2: “I visit my grandmother.”

S3: “I go to the movies”

How to “report”: Juan said (that) **he played** football with friends

PRESENT to PAST SIMPLE

What **are** you **doing** for the holidays?

S1: “I’m going to Mexico”

S2: “I’m spending the holidays at my grandmother’s”

Juan said he **was going** to Mexico

PRESENT CONTINUOUS to PAST CONTINUOUS

What **did** you **do** last weekend?

S1: “I saw Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows”

S2: “I went shopping for Christmas gifts”

Juan said he **had gone** Christmas shopping.

PAST SIMPLE TO PAST PERFECT

Where **will be** your ideal weekend?

S1: “My ideal weekend will be with my friends in Mallorca”

Juan said that his ideal weekend **would be** with my friends in Mallorca

FUTURE TO CONDITIONAL

1

Reported Speech Card Games

For some students, the best way to learn Reported Speech is by reading the statements they have to report. This is why we often write them on the board. Try these card games instead! For the first game, prepare a set of index card each with a direct speech statement on one side and the indirect statement on the other. Divide students into pairs. Student A picks up a card and reads the direct statement. Student B must report on what they just said. Student A checks B's reply on the back of the card. The team with the most correct points wins.

You may also try this other, easier version. Write the direct statements on index cards and their indirect versions on another set of cards. Divide the class into two teams. Each student must pick up a card and find the matching statement. You can make this more challenging by using statements that are similar but in different tenses.

2

What Did They Ask You?

Ask students to brainstorm a list of people who might ask them questions: a police officer, their mother/father, a teacher, a taxi driver, etc... Then a student reports something that someone asked, without revealing who it was: This person asked me if I had my driver's license. Students must guess it was the police officer: The police officer asked you if you had your driver's license.

3

Words to Live by

Give students snippets of things that famous people have said about their lives and experiences. Students read them out loud and then take turns reporting what someone said: Einstein said peace could not be kept by force. He said it could only be achieved by understanding.

4

Celebrity Buzz

Hand out several copies of entertainment magazines or the showbiz section of the newspaper. Students must read through them and find at least one juicy bit of celebrity gossip to report to the rest of the class: Miley Cyrus said she was officially engaged to her boyfriend. To make this into a game, ask students to withhold the celebrity's name and have the other students guess: Which famous celebrity said she was engaged to boyfriend Liam Hemsworth?

5

Story Time

Take advantage of story time by asking students to report on what some of the main characters said/asked: What did the Evil Queen ask the magic mirror? She asked him who the fairest of them all was.

6

Student Reporter

Any budding reporters will have the chance to show off their reporting skills with this fun activity. Divide students into pairs. One student will be the reporter and the other will be someone worthy of an exclusive interview: the mayor, a famous actress, a rich entrepreneur, an Olympic athlete, etc... The celebrity answers a series of questions and the reporter reports back to the class: In an exclusive interview, the mayor promised he would rid the streets of crime.

7

Dear Abby

Ask each student to write Dear Abby letter asking for advice on a problem; ask them to use Reported Speech in their letter: My parents said we were moving to another country but I don't want to move. Students then exchange letters and reply to a classmate's problem: Don't be afraid to tell your parents how you feel. Students get their original problem letters back and report to the class on what Dear Abby said: Dear Abby told me not to be afraid to tell my parents how I feel. With this activity you are giving your students two opportunities to use Reported Speech.

8

I Heard it Through the Grapevine

One student whispers something to a classmate: I love chocolate more than anything else. This student whispers it to another: Juan said he loved chocolate more than anything else. The whispering continues through the grapevine, until it reaches the last student who must then say the original statement in direct speech. If there are differences, they must find out who made the mistake: Karen said Juan loved chocolate more than life itself. - I said he loved it more than anything else.

9

Comic Strip Gaps

To prepare for this activity cut out comic strips from a newspaper or print some you find online. Then use some liquid paper to white out what some of the characters say in their speech bubbles. Write these lines down on separate cards. Students pick up a card and try to match it to a character: Garfield said he wanted to eat lasagna.