

6 Worksheet on Grammar – Reported Speech / Reporting Verbs

Text: Party Games – Using Europe in British Politics (pp. 51f.), from: David Beal, *Britain in Europe*, Viewfinder Topics (München: Langenscheidt, 2010).

A REPORTED SPEECH

1 BASICS

- In reported speech, the reporter is generally someone other than the original speaker.

👉 Use the correct pronouns to reflect these changes.

"We will meet you here."

They said that they would meet me there.

- Reports are often given in a different place and at a later time. 👉 Change the original tenses and the adverbs of time and place accordingly.

"We will meet you here."

They said that they would meet me there.

- 👉 Change the sentence structure in reported questions.

"Where do you work?"

He wanted to know where I worked.

- 👉 Use an infinitive construction to report orders or requests.

"Drive carefully!"

He told him to drive carefully.

For details, check the "Viewfinder Reference Library" (on the CD-ROM that comes with the Resource Book): Section A → Basic Skills → A.2.2.2 Improving your grammar (A Life-Raft of English Structure) → a) Verbs → Reported / Indirect Speech.

2 REPORTING VERBS AND STRUCTURES

“He said that [...]” (say), “he told me that [...]” (tell) are perfectly correct for reporting what somebody said. Try to use reporting verbs which more accurately describe what someone said (*insist, invite, remind, deny* etc.).

Watch out! Reporting verbs can take a variety of structures, e.g.:

verb + infinitive <i>agree, decide, offer, refuse</i>	(He refused <u>to take off</u> his shoes.)
verb + object + infinitive <i>advise, encourage, invite, recommend, remind, warn</i>	(She reminded <u>him to take off</u> his shoes.)
verb + gerund <i>deny, recommend, suggest</i>	(She recommended <u>taking off</u> his shoes.)
verb + object + preposition (+ gerund) <i>accuse, blame, congratulate</i>	(She accused <u>him of having taken off</u> his shoes.)
verb + preposition + gerund <i>apologise, insist</i>	(He insisted <u>on taking off</u> his shoes.)
verb + (that) <i>admit, agree, decide, explain</i>	(He decided <u>to take off</u> his shoes.)

There are also verbs that characterise the way in which something is said, e. g. call, cry, mumble, murmur, scream, shout, shriek, yell etc.

B EXERCISES

1 REPLACE THE WORD “SAID” WITH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING VERBS: AGREE, BRAG, CLAIM, PROTEST, SHOUT, SUGGEST, WHISPER

1. “I can speak English fluently,” she said.
2. “Let’s go out tonight,” he said.
3. “Be quiet, Tom,” said the girl.
4. “That purse belongs to me,” she said.

5. "No, it wasn't my fault," the little boy said.
6. "I will always love you," said his girlfriend.
7. "If the weather is good enough, we'll go", they said.

2 NOW REWRITE THE ABOVE SENTENCES IN REPORTED SPEECH

3 REWRITING "PARTY GAMES"

- a) Rewrite ll. 1 to 18 (p. 51) in reported speech. Use at least 5 different reporting verbs.
- b) From reported speech to direct speech – write down the original dialogue.

Jim Hacker told Bernard Woolley to turn it [the radio] off. When asked if the news concerning the compromise candidate was true, Hacker answered that he believed so. Woolley then wondered where they [the BBC] got their information from and Hacker told him that he couldn't imagine. He added that he had never said "compromise", but "moderate". Woolley wanted to know why, incidentally, BBC Television and ITN were covering his speech that evening and Hacker said that he couldn't imagine. When Woolley admitted that he knew that fire and safety policy in government buildings was awfully important, Hacker interrupted him by saying that someone had suggested that he was going to raise other issues as well.

4 BEING A REPORTER

👉 For background knowledge, read the text in the Students' Book before you do this exercise!

You are a newspaper reporter and happen to be sitting in a pub near the Houses of Parliament when you hear three MPs, one Labour, one Conservative and one Liberal Democrat, discussing Britain's relationship with the European Union. You realise that what you have heard will make a good story. Write a report on the conversation using reported speech. The following verbs might be useful for you: add, admit, agree, consider, counter, criticise, say, share [a] view. However, you may use other verbs as well!

Conservative MP: In my opinion, these Europeans are becoming impossible. First they took money from us for their wine lake, then they stopped us exporting our lamb and now they want to ban the British sausage.

Liberal Democrat MP: That's rubbish! All they want to do is have clear labelling.

Labour MP: I think it's a bit more complicated than that. Harmonisation will stop us calling our British sausage a sausage.

Conservative MP: Exactly, the best sausage in the world can't be called a sausage. Thank you Europe.

Liberal Democrat MP: The “best sausage in the world” is full of fat, rind, gristle and water.

Labour MP: Well, that's a typical Liberal Democrat exaggeration.

Conservative MP: And it's the taste that counts. Do you really want to eat salami or bratwurst with your fried egg, bacon and tomato?

(Daniela Pröls)