

12

Telling it how it is

Reported speech • Ways of speaking • You know what they say

STARTER

- Look at the reported speech. What were the girl's words?
She said she was a student.
She asked me what I was doing in London.
She told me she'd arrived on Monday.
- Here are some reported thoughts. What were my thoughts?
I thought she worked in an office.
I knew I'd seen her somewhere before.
I wondered if she'd phone me.

I READ IT IN THE PAPERS ...

Reported speech

- Read the newspaper article. Who is Jack Neal? What did he do? What happened in the end?
- Work with a partner. Complete the article by reporting the words and thoughts 1–10.

T 12.1 Listen and check.



3 I was on the Net yesterday.

5 I'm so happy!

7 He's joking.

9 There has been a mistake.

10 I'll advertise the car again.

Look, Mum! I've bought a car on eBay for £9,000

By a Daily Telegraph Correspondent



A three-year-old boy used his mother's computer to buy a £9,000 car on the Internet auction site eBay.

Jack Neal's parents only discovered their son's successful bid when they received a message from the website.

The message said they (1) had bought a pink Nissan Figaro.

Mrs Neal, 36, said that they (2) _____ it. She explained that she (3) _____ on the Net the day before, but she (4) _____ anything.

'Jack kept telling us that he (5) _____ so happy, and that we (6) _____ soon get a big surprise.'

Mrs Neal, from Sleaford, Lincs, thought Jack (7) _____. He often used the computer, and she was pretty sure that he (8) _____ her password.

Her husband, John, 37, phoned the seller of the car, and explained that there (9) _____ a mistake.

'Fortunately he saw the funny side and said he (10) _____ the car again.'

Mr Neal has told Jack to be more careful, and he has asked his wife to change her password.

1 You have bought a pink Nissan Figaro.

2 We can't understand it.

4 I didn't buy anything.

6 You'll soon get a big surprise!

8 I'm pretty sure he knows my password.

Here are Mr Neal's words to Jack and his wife.
You've got to be more careful, son.
Do you think you could change your password, dear?
 How are these words reported in the article?

Report these sentences.

- 'My Jack is very clever,' his mother said.
Mrs Neal said her son was very clever.
- 'He usually plays computer games,' she told me.
- 'I bought the computer for my work,' his father explained.
- 'I won't use eBay anymore,' Mrs Neal decided.
- 'I don't know how it happened,' said Jack.
- 'I've always liked computers,' he told reporters.
- 'Please tidy your room,' his mother asked Jack.
- 'Go and play football,' his father told him.

T12.2 Listen and check.

Reported questions

Read the newspaper article below. Match the direct questions and thoughts to numbers 1-7 in the article, then report them.

Has there been a road accident?

Why did you do it?

Are you going to arrest me?

What's happening?

Where did the money come from?

Why are you giving away all your money?

Do you know the man?

T12.3 Listen and check. Repeat the reported questions.

GRAMMAR SPOT

1 When we report words or thoughts, we usually move the tense back.

'I'm tired.' She said she **was** tired.

Complete the reported speech.

'I've seen the film before.' She told me _____.

'You'll like it.' She was sure I _____.

2 What does *tell* mean in these two sentences?

She **told me that** she loved me.

She **told me to** go away.

3 When we report questions, there is no inversion, and no *do/does/did*.

'Where do you live?' He **asked me where** I lived.

Report these questions.

'How long are you staying?' She **asked me** ...

'Do you know Mike?' She **wanted to know if** ...

▶▶ Grammar Reference 12.1-12.3 p146

6 Imagine you were stopped by the police and asked these questions. Report them.

'Where are you going?' (*ask*)

They asked me where I was going.

'Where have you been?' (*ask*)

'Do you live in the area?' (*want to know*)

'How old are you?' (*wonder*)

'Were you with friends?' (*want to know*)

'Have you been drinking?' (*demand to know*)

'What time did you leave home?' (*ask if I could remember*)

T12.4 Listen and compare. Look at T12.4 on p131 and practise the conversation with a partner.

Man throws away £20,000 in town centre

Daily Mail Reporter

A mystery man started a riot in a busy town centre yesterday by hurling £20,000 in banknotes into the air.

Traffic was stopped at 11.00 a.m. in Alexandra Road, Aberystwyth, mid-Wales, as money rained down from the sky.

Local shopkeeper Anthony Jones, 55, said 'I couldn't understand it, so I asked my neighbour (1) **what was happening**.' They saw people on their hands and knees grabbing money. 'No one knew (2) _____,' he said. 'They were just stuffing it in their pockets.'

Passer-by Eleanor Morris said, 'I wondered (3) _____, because the traffic was at a complete standstill.'

Flower seller Cadwyn Thomas saw the man, who was wearing a red Welsh rugby shirt. 'I asked him (4) _____ all his money, but he didn't answer. He just laughed.'

Police asked Cadwyn if she (5) _____. 'I told them I'd never seen him before. He certainly wasn't from around here.'

Dyfed-Powys police later confirmed that a forty-year-old man from Aberystwyth had been questioned. 'He refused to tell us (6) _____,' a spokesman said, 'so it's a complete mystery. He wanted to know if we (7) _____ arrest him, but giving away money isn't against the law.'



UNIT 12

12.1 Reported speech and thought

- 1 It is usual for the verb in the reported clause to move 'one tense back' if the reporting verb is in the past tense (e.g. *said*, *told*).

Present → Past

Present Perfect → Past Perfect

Past → Past Perfect

will → *would*

'I'm going.' He said he **was going**.

'She's passed her test.' He told me she **had passed** her test.

'My father died when I was six.' She said her father **had died** when she was six.

'I'll see you later.' She said she'd see me later.

The verb also moves 'one tense back' when we are reporting thoughts and feelings.

I thought she **was** married, but she isn't.

I didn't know he **was** a teacher. I thought he **worked** in a bank.

I forgot you **were coming**. Never mind. Come in.

I didn't realize you **were** here.

I hoped you **would** call.

- 2 There is no tense change if ...

... the reporting verb is in the present tense (*says*).

'The train **will be** late.' He says the train **will be** late.

'I **come** from Spain.' She says she **comes** from Spain.

... the reported speech is about something that is still true.

'Rain forests **are being destroyed**.'

She told him that rain forests **are being destroyed**.

'I **hate** football.'

I told him I **hate** football.

- 3 Some modal verbs change.

can → *could*

will → *would*

may → *might*

'She **can** type well.' He told me she **could** type well.

'I'll help you.' She said she'd help me.

'I **may** come.' She said she **might** come.

Other modal verbs don't change.

'You **should** go to bed.' He told me I **should** go to bed.

'It **might** rain.' She said she thought it **might** rain.

Must stays as *must*, or changes to *had to*.

'I **must** go!' He said he **must/had to** go.

12.2 Reporting verbs

- 1 We rarely use *say* with an indirect object.

She said she was going. NOT ~~She said to me ...~~

- 2 *Tell* is always used with an indirect object in reported speech.

She told	me the doctor us her husband	the news.
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- 3 We can use *that* after *say* and *tell*.

He told her (**that**) he would be home late.

She said (**that**) sales were down from last year.

- 4 Many verbs are more descriptive than *say* and *tell*, for example:

explain	promise	invite	insist	admit
complain	warn	offer	refuse	

Sometimes we report the idea, rather than the actual words.

'I'll lend you some money.' He offered to lend me some money.

'I won't help you.' She refused to help me.

- 5 There are different verb patterns.

verb + *sb* + infinitive

He told me to go away.

They asked me to teach them English.

I invited her to come.

We encouraged him to apply for the job.

She reminded me to post her letter.

verb + infinitive

She promised to help.

They offered to lend me some money.

verb + *that* + clause

He explained that he would be home late.

She complained that she never had any free time.

They admitted that sales were down that year.

I agreed that it would be best to stop trying.

- 6 We use *tell* for reported statements and reported commands, but the form is different.

Reported statements

He told me that he was going.

She told them what had been happening.

Reported commands

He told me to keep still.

The police told people to move on.

- 7 We use *ask* for reported commands and reported questions, but the form is different.

Reported commands

He asked me to open my suitcase.

She asked me to leave.

Reported questions

He asked me what I did for a living.

She asked me why I had come.

- 8 For negative commands, use *not* before *to*.

He told me **not to** tell anyone.

The police warned people **not to** go out.

12.3 Reported questions

- 1 The word order in questions is different in reported speech. There is no inversion of subject and auxiliary verb and there is no *do/does/did*.
'Why have you come here?' I asked her **why she had come here**.
'What time is it?' He wants to know **what time it is**.
'Where do you live?' She asked me **where I lived**.

- 2 If there is no question word (*What*, *Who*, *Why*, *Where*, ...), use *if* or *whether*.

She wants to know | if | whether | she should wear a dress.

- 3 The rules are the same when we report questions that are thoughts.

I didn't know what was happening.

I wondered where she'd bought her dress.

We couldn't understand what they were saying.