



Direct and Indirect Speech

Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand the difference between direct and indirect speech.
- They will learn how to convert direct speech into indirect speech and vice versa.

Direct and Indirect Speech

Read the following sentences.

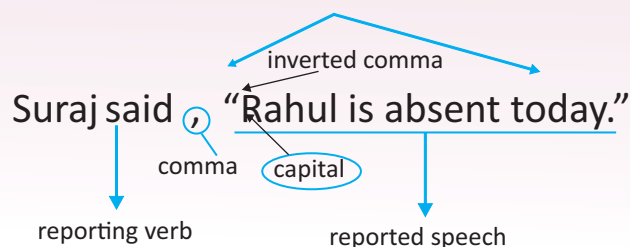
- Suraj said, "Rahul is absent today."
- Suraj said that Rahul was absent that day.

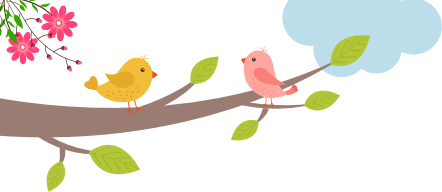


The above two sentences express the two ways in which we may report the words of a speaker. In the first sentence, we give the exact words used by the speaker. This is called the **Direct speech**.

In the second sentence, we do not give the exact words of the speaker but give the substance of what he said. This is called **indirect speech**.

- When the exact words spoken by someone are reproduced, we call it direct speech.
- Direct speech is put within inverted commas.
- A comma is used to separate the direct speech from the rest of the sentence.
- The first word of the direct speech begins with a capital letter.
- The verb which introduces the direct speech is called reporting verb.





- When the words spoken by a person are reported by someone else in their own words, it is called **indirect** or **reported speech**.
- In indirect speech, the reported words are not placed within inverted comma.
- No comma is placed after said.
- The reported speech is introduced by the conjunction **that**.
- The verb which introduces the direct speech is called reporting verb.

Rules for Changing Direct Speech into Indirect Speech

1. If the reporting verb is in the present or future tense the verb in the reported speech is not changed at all.

Examples :

- Deepak **says**, "This **is** a book." (Direct)
Deepak **says** that this **is** a book. (Indirect)
- Raj **says**, "There **are** seven days in a week." (Direct)
Raj **says** that there **are** seven days in a week. (Indirect)
- The teacher **says**, "Vishal **is** a hardworking boy." (Direct)
The teacher **says** that Vishal **is** a hardworking boy. (Indirect)
- Father **says**, "We **will** eat together." (Direct)
Father **says** that we **will** eat together. (Indirect)
- Mr Dhar **will say**, "He **is** honest." (Direct)
Mr Dhar **will say** that he **is** honest. (Indirect)
- Disha **will say**, "There **is** nobody in the room." (Direct)
Disha **will say** that there **is** nobody in the room. (Indirect)

2. If the reporting verb is in the past tense the verb in the reported speech is also changed to the past tense.

3. **The simple present becomes the simple past.**

- Dev **said**, "Ruhi **plays** ludo." (Direct)
Dev **said** that Ruhi **played** ludo. (Indirect)





- Ritesh **said**, “Nisha **eats** an apple daily.” (Direct)
Ritesh **said** that Nisha **ate** an apple daily. (Indirect)

4. The present continuous becomes the past continuous.

- Priya **said**, “I **am doing** my homework.” (Direct)
Priya **said** that she **was doing** her homework. (Indirect)
- He **said**, “Shreya **is singing** a song.” (Direct)
He **said** that Shreya **was singing** a song. (Indirect)

5. The present perfect becomes the past perfect.

- Rakesh said, “Deepak **has done** his homework.” (Direct)
Rakesh said that Deepak **had done** his homework. (Indirect)
- The girl said, “We **have eaten** our dinner.” (Direct)
The girl said that they **had eaten** their dinner. (Indirect)

6. May is changed into might; can is changed into could.

- Prateek said, “Vikram **may** come.” (Direct)
Prateek said that Vikram **might** come. (Indirect)
- Nilu said, “I **can** do the task.” (Direct)
Nilu said that she **could** do the task. (Indirect)

7. The simple past becomes the past perfect.

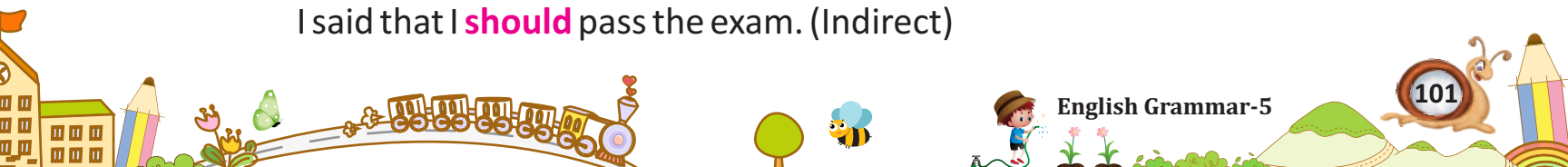
- He said, “I **drank** a cup of coffee.” (Direct)
He said that he **had drunk** a cup of coffee. (Indirect)
- She said, “Kavita **sang** a song.” (Direct)
She said that Kavita **had sung** a song.” (Indirect)

8. The past continuous becomes the past perfect continuous.

- He said, “Lalit **was doing** his homework.” (Direct)
He said that Lalit **had been doing** his homework. (Indirect)

9. ‘Shall’ is changed into ‘should’; ‘will’ is changed into ‘would’.

- He said, “They **will** do the work.” (Direct)
He said that they **would** do the work. (Indirect)
- I said, “I **shall** pass the exam.” (Direct)
I said that I **should** pass the exam. (Indirect)





10. If the reported speech contains some universal or habitual fact, then the reported speech remains unchanged.

- My father said, "God is good and kind to all."
My father said that God is good and kind to all.
- The teacher said, "The Sun sets in the west."
The teacher said that the Sun sets in the west.
- He said, "A week has seven days."
He said that a week has seven days.

1. Pronouns of the first person in direct speech are changed to the same person as the subject of the introductory verb in indirect speech.

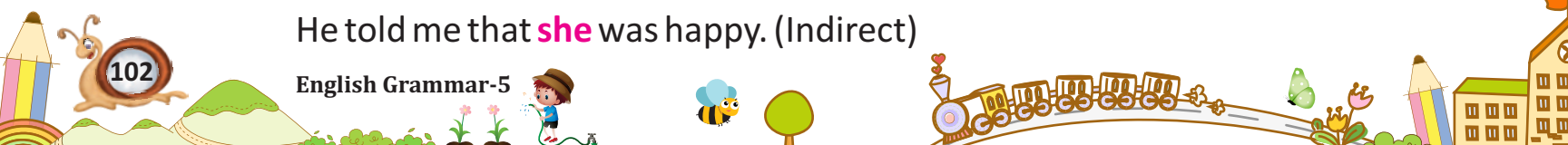
- Rohit said, "**I** am happy." (Direct)
Rohit said that **he** was happy. (Indirect)
- Kajol said, "**I** have drawn a picture." (Direct)
Kajol said that **she** had drawn a picture. (Indirect)

2. Pronouns of the second person in direct speech are changed in indirect speech to the same person as the noun or pronoun which comes after the introductory verb.

- He said to **me**, "**You** are wrong." (Direct)
He told **me** that **I** was wrong. (Indirect)
- Sahil said to **Rahil**, "**You** are a naughty boy." (Direct)
Sahil told **Rahil** that **he** was a naughty boy. (Indirect)
- Kajol said to **Madhuri**, "**You** are a pretty girl." (Direct)
Kajol told **Madhuri** that **she** was a pretty girl. (Indirect)
- Ashok said to **him**, "**You** have not done your work." (Direct)
Ashok told **him** that **he** had not done his work. (Indirect)

3. Pronouns of the third person in direct speech remain the same in indirect speech.

- Dinesh said to me, "**He** is tall." (Direct)
Dinesh told me that **he** was tall. (Indirect)
- He said to me, "**She** was happy." (Direct)
He told me that **she** was happy. (Indirect)





- ◉ If the reporting verb is in the past tense, words denoting nearness of time and position are replaced by suitable words denoting distance.

this	that
these	those
here	there
now	then
today	that day
tonight	that night
yesterday	the previous day
tomorrow	the following day
last night	the previous night
next week	the following week

A. Change the following sentences into indirect speech.



1. Simran said, "I am happy."

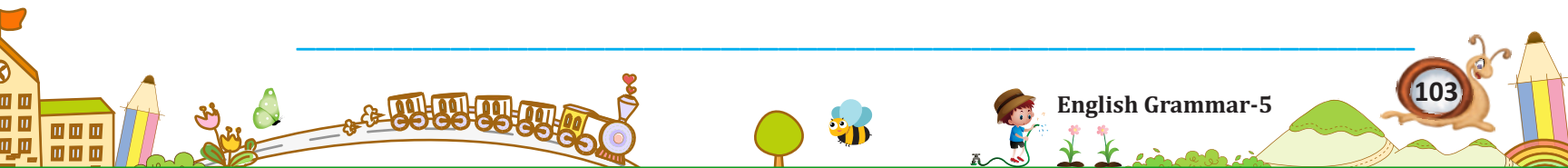
2. I said, "I am very busy."

3. Madhu said, "Gautam works hard."

4. Deepika said, "Rupali is singing a song."

5. The teacher said, "He worked hard."

6. My mother says, "Honesty is the best policy."





Points to Remember

- When the exact words spoken by someone are reproduced, we call it **Direct Speech**.
- Direct speech** is put within inverted commas.
- The first word of the direct speech begins with a **Capital Letter**.
- When the words spoken by a person are reported by someone else in their own words, it is called **Indirect or Reported Speech**.
- In **Indirect Speech**, the reported words are not placed within inverted comma.



My Activity Corner



Skills/Level
SPEAKING/A2



Organise a game/quiz on direct and indirect speech and involve everyone in the class.



My EeeBee Interactive Activities



Listening



Speaking



Reading



Writing



Grammar



Vocabulary

WRITE YOUR SCORE

Practice your LSRW Skills



on Communication Lab

