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Indirect speech

Student bundle

Table of contents

[Introduction 2](#_Toc38461618)

[Indirect speech 2](#_Toc38461619)

[Time for some practise 2](#_Toc38461620)

[Language task 2](#_Toc38461621)

[Attachments 4](#_Toc38461622)

[Indirect speech overview 4](#_Toc38461623)

[1) When do we use indirect speech? 4](#_Toc38461624)

[2) How do we form indirect speech? 4](#_Toc38461625)

[3) Change of pronouns, demonstratives and adverbs of place and time 6](#_Toc38461626)

[Bibliography 8](#_Toc38461627)

# Introduction

Tina says: ‘I like sunflowers.’

Tina says that she likes sunflowers.

‘It is raining.’

He said that it was raining.

Look at the sentences above.

* What does each sentence mean?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

* Which differences do you notice?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Watch the following video to introduce the indirect speech (a.k.a. reported speech) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cetrtFDN2Zg>

# Indirect speech

Now open the PDF Power Point on the indirect speech. Try to fill in the blanks in your overview. You can find your overview attached at the back of this bundle.

# Time for some practise

Try to do exercises on each website for 5 minutes, first with your hand-out and then try to do it without your hand-out.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Exercises on the indirect speech** | |
| Website to practise the indirect speech. It gives a clue/explanation on a wrong answer. | <https://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/exercises_list/reported.htm> |
| Multiple choice exercises. | <https://agendaweb.org/verbs/reported_speech-exercises.html> |
| Transforming direct speech into indirect speech. | <https://www.myenglishpages.com/site_php_files/grammar-exercise-reported-speech.php> |
| PDF work sheets | See document: attachment 1, 2 and 3. |

# Language task

News report on a classmate’s activities.

First of all, you make a brainstorm to create minimum 10 maximum 16 good questions you can ask a classmate about their Easter break. Then you pair up with one of your classmates.

After that you interview each other. You can either write the questions in a document and ask for their classmate to write their answer OR you can do a videocall, interview each other and write down their answers.

Afterwards you transform the answers of your classmate into the indirect speech and give a short news report of the interview.

Then watch this news segment of the BBC: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdbrDm1SrqE>. Pay special attention to some typical things in the news. (opening, highlights, finale, introducing the next segment: the weather forecast, sports, politics, debate, …)

After you have watched the news segment of the BBC, write down a short intro and outro for your BBC news segment where you report the answers of the interview you did with your classmate. You film yourself with a webcam, phone, camera, ….

Some example questions you can use to get you started:

* Which kind of activities have you done during Easter break?
* What kind of books or films have you seen?
* What games have you played?
* Have you tried something new?
* What is your favourite food to eat during a holiday?
* What was the highlight of your holiday?
* Were you scared due to Corona?
* How are you feeling now?

**Don’t only use the questions above. Be creative!**

# Attachments

## Indirect speech overview

## When do we use indirect speech?

You use indirect speech when you talk about what somebody else has said without literally quoting them. Indirect speech focuses more on the content of what someone said rather than their exact words.

## How do we form indirect speech?

* Reporting verb and reported clause?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ……………………. verb | Reported ……………….. |
| She explained | (that) she couldn’t take the job until January. |

In indirect speech, the structure of the reported clause depends on whether the speaker is reporting a statement, a yes or no question or a question word question.



* No backshift[[1]](#footnote-1)

We don’t need to change the tense in indirect speech if what a person said is ………………………...

You don’t change the tense if the **reporting** **verb** is in a present tense (e. g. *He says*).

* Backshift

| direct | → | indirect |
| --- | --- | --- |
| …………………… | → | past simple |
| present continuous | → | past continuous |
| present perfect simple | → | ……………………….. |
| ……………… …………. | → | past perfect continuous |
| past simple | → | past perfect simple |
| past continuous | → | ……………. ……………. |
| ……………….. | → | would |
| **past perfect** | **↔** | **past perfect (no change)** |
| can | → | could |

‘Backshift’ refers to the changes we make to the original verbs in indirect speech (reported clause) because time has passed between the moment of speaking and the time of the report.

* Dropping *that*

The conjunction *that* is often dropped, especially after common reporting verbs like: say and …………..

* Says VS said

Jim: I am good at sports.  
1) Ana: He says he **is** good at sports.  
2) Ana: He said he **was** good at sports.

In the first case (He says ...), Ana is reporting quite soon after she has heard Jim say this. Or, she has heard Jim say this quite often (habitually), and she is emphasizing that Jim expresses this opinion of himself often.  
  
In the second case (He said ...), Ana is reporting now what she heard on a previous occasion.  
  
Most of the time when we report speech we use the past (He said).

## Change of pronouns, demonstratives and adverbs of place and time

* Pronouns

Changes to personal pronouns in indirect reports depend on whether the person reporting the speech and the person(s) who said the original words are the same or different.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Change of pronouns | |
| Direct speech | Indirect speech |
| I  You  We  Me  ………  Us | He/she  I/she/she/we/they  …………..  Him/her  Him/her/us/them  Them |
| My  Your  Our  …………  Yours  Ours | ……….  My/his/hers/our/their  Their  His/hers  Mine/his/hers/ours/theirs  ………….. |

* Demonstratives & Adverbs of place and time

We often change demonstratives (this, that) and adverbs of time and place (now, here, today, etc.) because indirect speech happens at a later time than the original speech, and perhaps in a different place.

| direct | -> | indirect |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *this* | *→* | *that* |
| *these* | *→* | ………………….. |
| *now* | *→* | *Then/ at that moment* |
| …………… | *→* | *the day before* |
| *tomorrow* | *→* | *the next/following day* |
| *two weeks ago* | *→* | *two weeks before* |
| *here* | *→* | *there* |

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1. ‘Backshift’ refers to the changes we make to the original verbs in indirect speech because time has passed between the moment of speaking and the time of the report. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)