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Direct to indirect questions exercises

Index of contents Direct and indirect speech is one topic in English grammar that confuses most language learners. It need not necessarily be so; if you understand how it works, you can easily use it in your writing. Direct and Indirect Speech Exercises with Answers When converting direct speech to indirect speech or vice-versa, you will have to take care to convert the verb, pronoun and the adverb appropriately. Go through the following exercises and try them out. Answers are given below each exercise; refer to them to see if your answers are right. Exercise 1: Change into indirect speech Read the following sentences and convert them into indirect speech. Rahul told to me, "When are you leaving?" "Where do you live?" the stranger asked Aladdin. The teacher said to Shelly, "Why are you laughing?" Dhronacharya said to Arjun, "Shoot the bird's eye." "Call the first convict," said the jury. "Call the ambulance," said the man. Bruce said to me, "I shall do the work." My mother said to me, "You were wrong." Mr Richard said to me, "Please wait here till I return." The captain said to me, "Bravo! You have played well." Raj said, "Alas! My pet died." Ruchi said, "I may go there." Bucky said to Steve, "Do you hear me?" The boy said, "Let me come in." Granny said to me, "May God bless you." Answers - Rahul asked me when I was leaving. The stranger asked Aladdin where he lived. The teacher asked Shelly why he was laughing. Dhronacharya ordered Arjun to shoot the fish's eye. The jury ordered to call the first convict. The man urged to call the ambulance. Bruce said to me he would do the work. My mother told me that I was wrong. Mr Richard requested me to wait there till he returned.

TEACHTHIS

ASK POLITELY

A. Read the questions and answer the questions below.

1. Does the English test have grammar questions?

2. Could you tell me if the English test has grammar questions?

3. When does the next train leave the station?

4. Could you tell me when the next train leaves the station?

5. Where is the library?

6. Do you know where the library is?

1. Which questions are more polite?

2. Look at questions e and f. What happens to the verb to be in question f?

3. Look at questions a to d. What happens to the auxiliary verb does in questions b and d?

4. Look at questions a and b. Which word is added to the yes/no question in question b?

B. Change the direct questions into indirect questions. Write one word in each space.

1. a. Where is the train station?
b. Could you tell me _____?

2. a. What time does the bank open?
b. Do you know _____?

3. a. Does this bus go to the zoo?
b. Could you tell me _____ to the zoo?

4. a. What are the best places to visit in town?
b. Do you know _____?

5. a. Does this shop sell bananas?
b. Could you tell me _____ bananas?

C. Create your own indirect questions. Then, ask and answer the questions with your classmates.

1. Could you tell me _____?

2. Do you know _____?

3. Could you tell me if _____?

4. Do you know if _____?

TEACH THIS can be used for educational purposes for classroom use.

Exercise 1: Change into indirect speech Read the following sentences and convert them into indirect speech. Rahul told to me, "When are you leaving?" "Where do you live?" the stranger asked Aladdin.

INDIRECT SPEECH TO DIRECT SPEECH #1

ANSWERS

1. Katie objected, 'It is not fair.'
OR
'It is not fair,' objected Katie.

2. The scientist announced, 'I am working on a cure.'
OR
'I am working on a cure,' announced the scientist.

3. 'It has been raining all day,' noted Toby.
OR
Toby noted, 'It has been raining all day.'

4. 'Sally and Susan have eaten all the biscuits,' remarked Lola.
OR
Lola remarked, 'Sally and Susan have eaten all the biscuits.'

5. 'Mike has been made the captain,' Harry informed Josh.
OR
Harry informed Josh, 'Mike has been made the captain.'

6. 'I dislike aubergine salad,' declared Emuna.
OR
Emuna declared, 'I dislike aubergine salad.'

7. 'I am trying to fix a broken handle,' Suresh told me.
OR
Suresh told me, 'I am trying to fix a broken handle.'

8. 'We are flying over the Andes,' the pilot informed us.
OR
The pilot informed us, 'We are flying over the Andes.'

9. 'I have paid for my shopping,' insisted the customer.
OR
The customer insisted, 'I have paid for my shopping.'

10. The children said, 'We had a boring afternoon.'
OR
'We had a boring afternoon,' the children said.

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English Grammar Indirect Speech to Direct Speech #1 - Answers © 2019 **SWATT** Books **20000** 3

The teacher said to Shelly, "Why are you laughing?" Dhronacharya said to Arjun, "Shoot the bird's eye." "Call the first convict," said the jury. "Call the ambulance," said the man. Bruce said to me, "I shall do the work." My mother said to me, "You were wrong." Mr Richard said to me, "Please wait here till I return." The captain said to me, "Bravo! You have played well." Raj said, "Alas! My pet died." Ruchi said, "I may go there." Bucky said to Steve, "Do you hear me?" The boy said, "Let me come in." Granny said to me, "May God bless you." Answers - Rahul asked me when I was leaving. The stranger asked Aladdin where he lived. The teacher asked Shelly why he was laughing. Dhronacharya ordered Arjun to shoot the fish's eye. The jury ordered to call the first convict. The man urged to call the ambulance. Bruce said to me he would do the work. My mother told me that I was wrong. Mr Richard requested me to wait there till he returned. The captain applauded me, saying that I had played well. Raj exclaimed sadly that his pet died. Ruchi said that she might go there. Bucky asked Steve if he heard him. The boy asked to let him come in. Granny prayed that God might bless me. Convert the following into Direct Speech Read the following passage and convert it into direct speech. One of them told Issac that the latter had forgotten one thing that belonged to a mill. Issac enquired what that was. The friend asked where the miller was. Issac replied that (absence of the miller) was true - and he must look for one. Answers - "But Issac," said one of them, "you have forgotten one thing that belongs to a mill." "What is that?" asked Issac. "Why, where is the miller?" said his friend. "That is true - I must look for one," said Issac. When the actual words/sentences as spoken by the speaker are quoted in a speech, it's called direct speech/narration. When the quoted speech is reported in the form of a narrative without changing the meaning of the actual quotation/words by the speaker, it's called indirect speech/narration. Download this explanation in PDF here. Have a look at this conversation. Me: Excuse me. Could you tell me where the nearest station is? Person in the street: Certainly. It's along that road on the right. Me: Thank you. And do you know if there's a supermarket near here? Person in the street: Yes, there's one next to the station. Me: Thank you very much for your help. I use indirect questions when I'm asking for help in the street, because they are very polite. Indirect questions start with a phrase like 'could you tell me...' or 'do you know...'. For example: Direct question: Where is the bank? Indirect question: Could you tell me where the bank is?

Direct questions	Indirect questions
What is he doing?	Do you know what he is doing?
Where can I sit?	Could you tell me where I can sit?
Where are you from?	I was wondering where you are from.
What is this?	Do you know what this is?
Do you like flying?	Could you tell me if you like flying?
What's your name?	Can I ask you what your name is?

Bruce said to me, "I shall do the work." My mother said to me, "You were wrong." Mr Richard said to me, "Please wait here till I return." The captain said to me, "Bravo! You have played well." Raj said, "Alas! My pet died." Ruchi said, "I may go there." Bucky said to Steve, "Do you hear me?" The boy said, "Let me come in." Granny said to me, "May God bless you." Answers - Rahul asked me when I was leaving. The stranger asked Aladdin where he lived. The teacher asked Shelly why he was laughing. Dhronacharya ordered Arjun to shoot the fish's eye. The jury ordered to call the first convict. The man urged to call the ambulance. Bruce said to me he would do the work. My mother told me that I was wrong. Mr Richard requested me to wait there till he returned. The captain applauded me, saying that I had played well. Raj exclaimed sadly that his pet died.

★ INDIRECT QUESTIONS ★

When we ask for some information we sometimes begin the question with another question. Example: Do you know where Tim is? Could you tell me where Tim is? The order of the question changes, but the meaning stays the same.

EXAMPLE QUESTION: Where is Tim?

ANSWER: Tell me why he's crying.

1. Where is Tim?

2. What time does the train leave?

3. When does the train leave the station?

4. When does the train leave the station?

5. When does the train leave the station?

6. When does the train leave the station?

7. When does the train leave the station?

8. When does the train leave the station?

9. When does the train leave the station?

10. When does the train leave the station?

EXAMPLE QUESTION: What time does the train leave?

ANSWER: Tell me why he's crying.

1. What time does the train leave?

2. What time does the train leave?

3. What time does the train leave?

4. What time does the train leave?

5. What time does the train leave?

6. What time does the train leave?

7. What time does the train leave?

8. What time does the train leave?

9. What time does the train leave?

10. What time does the train leave?

EXAMPLE QUESTION: When does the train leave?

ANSWER: Tell me why he's crying.

1. When does the train leave?

2. When does the train leave?

3. When does the train leave?

4. When does the train leave?

5. When does the train leave?

6. When does the train leave?

7. When does the train leave?

8. When does the train leave?

9. When does the train leave?

10. When does the train leave?

EXAMPLE QUESTION: Where is Tim?

ANSWER: Tell me why he's crying.

1. Where is Tim?

2. Where is Tim?

3. Where is Tim?

4. Where is Tim?

5. Where is Tim?

6. Where is Tim?

7. Where is Tim?

8. Where is Tim?

9. Where is Tim?

10. Where is Tim?

EXAMPLE QUESTION: What time does the train leave?

ANSWER: Tell me why he's crying.

1. What time does the train leave?

2. What time does the train leave?

3. What time does the train leave?

4. What time does the train leave?

5. What time does the train leave?

6. What time does the train leave?

7. What time does the train leave?

8. What time does the train leave?

9. What time does the train leave?

10. What time does the train leave?

EXAMPLE QUESTION: When does the train leave?

ANSWER: Tell me why he's crying.

1. When does the train leave?

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3. When does the train leave?

4. When does the train leave?

5. When does the train leave?

6. When does the train leave?

7. When does the train leave?

8. When does the train leave?

9. When does the train leave?

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Rahul told to me, "When are you leaving?" "Where do you live?" the stranger asked Aladdin. The teacher said to Shelly, "Why are you laughing?" Dhronacharya said to Arjun, "Shoot the bird's eye." "Call the first convict," said the jury. "Call the ambulance," said the man. Bruce said to me, "I shall do the work." My mother said to me, "You were wrong." Mr Richard said to me, "Please wait here till I return." The captain said to me, "Bravo! You have played well." Raj said, "Alas! My pet died." Ruchi said, "I may go there." Bucky said to Steve, "Do you hear me?" The boy said, "Let me come in." Granny said to me, "May God bless you." Answers - Rahul asked me when I was leaving. The stranger asked Aladdin where he lived. The teacher asked Shelly why he was laughing. Dhronacharya ordered Arjun to shoot the fish's eye. The jury ordered to call the first convict. The man urged to call the ambulance.

RULES ON CHANGING DIRECT SPEECH TO
INDIRECT OR REPORTED SPEECH

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
simple present He said, "I go to school every day."	simple past He said (that) he went to school every day.
simple past He said, "I went to school every day."	past perfect He said (that) he had gone to school every day.
present perfect He said, "I have gone to school every day."	past perfect He said (that) he had gone to school every day.
present progressive He said, "I am going to school every day."	past progressive He said (that) he was going to school every day.
past progressive He said, "I was going to school every day."	perfect progressive He said (that) he had been going to school every day.
future (will) He said, "I will go to school every day."	would + verb name He said (that) he would go to school every day.
future (going to) He said, "I am going to school every day."	present progressive He said (that) he is going to school every day.
	past progressive He said (that) he was going to school every day.
Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
auxiliary + verb name He said, "Do you go to school every day?" He said, "Where do you go to school?"	simple past He asked me if I went to school every day." He asked me where I went to school.
imperative He said, "Go to school every day."	infinitive He said to go to school every day.

"Call the ambulance," said the man. Bruce said to me, "I shall do the work." My mother said to me, "You were wrong." Mr Richard said to me, "Please wait here till I return." The captain said to me, "Bravo! You have played well." Raj said, "Alas! My pet died." Ruchi said, "I may go there." Bucky said to Steve, "Do you hear me?" The boy said, "Let me come in." Granny said to me, "May God bless you." Answers – Rahul asked me when I was leaving. The stranger asked Aladdin where he lived. The teacher asked Shelly why he was laughing. Dhronacharya ordered Arjun to shoot the fish's eye. The jury ordered to call the first convict. The man urged to call the ambulance. Bruce said to me he would do the work. My mother told me that I was wrong. Mr Richard requested me to wait there till he returned. The captain applauded me, saying that I had played well. Raj exclaimed sadly that his pet died. Ruchi said that she might go there. Bucky asked Steve if he heard him. The boy asked to let him come in. Granny prayed that God might bless me. Convert the following into Direct Speech Read the following passage and convert it into direct speech. One of them told Issac that the latter had forgotten one thing that belonged to a mill. Issac enquired what that was. The friend asked where the miller was. Issac replied that (absence of the miller) was true – and he must look for one. Answers – "But Issac," said one of them, "you have forgotten one thing that belongs to a mill." "What is that?" asked Issac. "Why, where is the miller?" said his friend. "That is true – I must look for one," said Issac. When the actual words/sentences as spoken by the speaker are quoted in a speech, it's called direct speech/narration. When the quoted speech is reported in the form of a narrative without changing the meaning of the actual quotation/words by the speaker, it's called indirect speech/narration. Download this explanation in PDF here.

Have a look at this conversation. Me: Excuse me. Could you tell me where the nearest station is? Person in the street: Certainly. It's along that road on the right. Me: Thank you. And do you know if there's a supermarket near here? Person in the street: Yes, there's one next to the station. Me: Thank you very much for your help. I use indirect questions when I'm asking for help in the street, because they are very polite. Indirect questions start with a phrase like 'could you tell me...' or 'do you know...'. For example: Direct question: Where is the bank? Indirect question: Could you tell me where the bank is? Notice that in the indirect question I put the verb ('is') after the subject ('the bank'), in the same way as I do with a normal positive sentence ('the bank is over there'), but in the direct question I put the verb 'is' before the subject 'the bank'. This is called inversion, and it is used to make direct questions in many verb tenses in English, but we don't use inversion in indirect questions. This is very similar to the grammar of reported questions. However, we use indirect questions in a different way from reported questions. Indirect questions are a way of being polite. They are very, very common in English, especially when you're talking to someone you don't know. 'Yes / No' Questions To make an indirect 'yes / no' question, we use 'if' and the word order of a normal positive sentence. This is the same as for reported 'yes / no' questions. On the other hand, we don't usually need to 'backshift' (change the tense of the verb) as we do with reported questions. Of course, most tenses make questions by using 'inversion' (changing the word order). To change from a direct 'yes / no' question with inversion to an indirect question, you add 'if' and change the word order back to a normal positive sentence. You don't need to use inversion. 'Yes / no' questions for tenses with inversion: Could you tell me where the station is? Could you tell me where is the station? Turn the following sentences into indirect speech. 1. John said, 'I am very busy now.' 2. He said, 'The horse has been fed.' 3. 'I know her name and address,' said John. 4. 'German is easy to learn,' she said. 5. He said, 'I am writing letters.' 6. 'It is too late to go out,' Alice said. 7. He said to me, 'I don't believe you.' 8. He says, 'I am glad to be here this evening.' 9. He said to me, 'What are you doing?' 10. 'Where is the post office?' asked the stranger. 11. He said, 'Will you listen to me?' 12. John said to Peter, 'Go away.' 13. She said to me, 'Please wait here till I return.' 14. 'Call the witness,' said the judge. 15. The speaker said, 'Be quiet and listen to my words.' Answers 1. John said that he was very busy then. 2. He said that the horse had been fed. 3. John said that he knew/knows her name and address. (Note that the tenses may not change if the statement is still relevant or if it is a universal truth.) 4. She said that German is/was easy to learn. 5. He said that he was writing letters. 6. Alice said that it was too late to go out. 7. He told me that he didn't believe me. OR He said he didn't believe me. 8. He says that he is glad to be here this evening. (When the reporting verb is in the present tense, adverbs of time and place do not normally change in indirect speech.) 9. He asked me what I was doing. 10. The stranger asked where the post office is/was. 11. He asked me if I would listen to him. 12. John ordered Peter to go away. 13. She asked me to wait there till she returned. 14. The judge commanded them to call the first witness. 15. He urged them to be quiet and listen to them. Exercises Explanation Downloads We normally use indirect questions, when we want to be more polite. We begin the question with expressions such as Can you tell me ...? Could you tell me ...? Do you know ...? Would you mind telling me ...? What time is it? (direct question) Could you tell me what time it is? (indirect question) In indirect questions the order is subject + verb. Do you know where I can find a bank? (NOT ... where can I find) Can you tell me what time the shops close? (NOT ... what time do the shops close) There are other expressions that follow the same rule: I don't know what he is doing here. I wonder when he will find the truth. I'm not sure when I can come. I'd like to know where you left the documents. For yes-no questions (when there is NO question word), we can use both if or whether: Do you know if/whether he'll be here soon? We're developing a NEW LEARNING PLATFORM with a subscription plan that includes additional features at an affordable price. One of those features will be PDF downloads. Learn more! Test-English is delighted to announce our partnership with Gymglish to deliver short, personalized and fun online English lessons. Learn more!