

## TEACHERS CORNER – JULY 2016

### REPORTED SPEECH

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Reported speech provides a challenge for most learners of English. The shifting tenses and changes to both pronouns and modal verbs take time to learn and practice to use effectively. This practice is key because reported speech requires accuracy on the part of the speaker. Even minor errors can make it difficult for the listener to understand when the action in the reported speech occurred.

When working with reported speech, it is helpful to have the students work through the sentence by identifying the following grammar aspects of the direct speech that is to be converted to reported speech.

1. Identify the type of sentence. Is it a statement, a command, or a question?
  - a. This will determine the reporting verb used, such as *said*, *told*, or *asked*.
2. Identify the verb tense used in the direct speech as the verb tenses will backshift when being changed to reported speech.
  - a. Note: Although it is not standard, some native speakers may not change present tense into past tense for facts. For example “Mt. Everest is the tallest mountain in the world” can change to “She said Mt. Everest is the tallest mountain in the world.”
3. Identify the pronoun and change it accordingly. For example, “I like soccer” requires a change of pronoun to he or she “She said she likes soccer”.
4. Identify any times and/or places. These will need to be changed when converting to reported speech. For example, “I will come there after class” changes to “She told me she would come here after class.”

In this month’s Teacher’s Corner, we will showcase four activities that can be used to practice reported speech. These activities are designed to give students practice using reported speech in a variety of ways. The activities create opportunities for students to practice reported speech in both spoken and written form.

Week 1 – Reported Speech Overview

Week 2 – Gossip and Rumors

Week 3 – Trace Effects

Week 4 – World News Report

The goal in each of these activities is to provide students opportunities to work through the steps above to convert direct speech to reported speech. Week 1 works with the mechanics of reported speech and centers on an interview activity. Week 2 encourages students to get to know each other better by using a variation of the game “two truths and a lie.” Week 3 provides a variety of reported speech activities that utilize the game *Trace Effects*. Week 4 gives students the chance to work with reported speech to deliver news reports in the classroom.