

like a loaf of bread. Someone else got the contract. So you see it really would be wiser for me to stay in and work this evening.'

Exercise 3

Convert the following dialogue into a paragraph of reported speech, containing 10–15 sentences. Suitable reporting verbs, all used with *that*, include *indicated, warned, emphasised, assured, considered, ventured to suggest*.

- She (having just finished playing a piece on the piano): That was a Chopin Prelude. Difficult but rewarding.
- He: Marvellous! I can never hope to play like that. But it inspires me to go on learning. Do you know a good teacher around here who'd give me lessons?
- She: Well, suppose I offered to teach you. What would you say?
- He: Oh, if only you would! I'd rather you taught me than anyone else.
- She: I'll teach you only if you attend my lessons regularly and practise hard.
- He: Yes, of course. You have such a good reputation as a teacher. But I didn't ask you because I didn't think you'd have time.
- She: Remember, I never teach anyone who's not prepared to practise hard, no matter who or what they are.
- He: Don't worry. I'll practise as if it were a matter of life and death. And I won't cut your lessons.
- She: Good. It's time we started the first lesson, then. Come over to the piano. (Begin: *Expressing her satisfaction, she . . .*)
- He: Er – well – er – I'd have liked to start now but I'm afraid I can't. I've got some important business to attend to. Also, hadn't we better settle the price first? It would be unbusinesslike if we didn't.
- She: Hmm! If you don't mind my saying so I think you're in danger of starting off on the wrong note. Business may come before pleasure, but with me it doesn't come before music. You'll have to share that opinion with me if I'm to invite you to the piano again.

12B Possible changes in auxiliary verbs

will, shall, should

could, might

must, need not

Introductory note: In the Examples that follow, the auxiliary verbs that **change** are in *italics*; those that do **not** change are underlined; those that **may** and often do change if the speaker or writer so wishes are in *underlined italics*.

Examples

DIRECT SPEECH	→	REPORTED SPEECH	
1 'What'll you do,' I asked Helen, 'if Ken's too late to drive you to the airport?'	→	I asked Helen what she'd do if Ken was too late to drive her to the airport.	a
2 'Sheila,' said Helen, 'what shall I do if your friend Ken is late?'	→	Helen asked Sheila what she should/was to do if her friend Ken was late.	b
3 'After all,' I said to Sheila, 'he might/could have trouble with his car.'	→	I reminded Sheila that he might/could have trouble with his car.	c
4 'Ken should/ought to be here in good time,' replied Sheila. 'He's seldom late.'	→	Sheila replied that Ken should/ought to be there in good time, as he was seldom late.	d
5 'You must have strange ideas about Ken to think that,' said Helen.	→	Helen told Sheila (that) she must have strange ideas about Ken to think that.	e
6 'You mustn't think Ken's always late,' I whispered to Helen.	→	I whispered to Helen that she mustn't think Ken was always late.	f
7 'I must catch that plane,' said Helen, 'whatever happens.'	→	Helen said (that) she had to catch the plane whatever happened.	g, h
8 'So if Ken's late,' she went on, 'I must order a taxi.'	→	She went on to say that if Ken was late she would have to order a taxi.	g, h
9 'You must tell me first,' said Sheila.	→	Sheila told Helen (that) she had to/was to tell her first.	g, h
10 'Helen mustn't order a taxi without telling me first,' she repeated to me.	→	She repeated to me that Helen wasn't to order a taxi without telling her first.	g, h
11 'Helen needn't worry,' she added. 'Ken won't be late.'	→	She added that Helen didn't need to/have to worry, as Ken wouldn't be late.	g, j
12 'You needn't worry if Ken's late,' I whispered to Helen, 'because I can take you to the airport.'	→	I whispered to Helen that she wouldn't need to/have to worry if Ken was late because I could take her to the airport.	g, j
13 'I didn't need to go back to my office after lunch, so I and my car are now at your disposal,' I said.	→	I told her (that) I hadn't needed to go back to my office after lunch, so that I and my car were now at her disposal.	k

- 14 'Well,' thought Helen, 'I needn't have worried after all.' → Helen then realised (that) she needn't have worried after all. k
- 15 'I couldn't tell you before,' I said. → I told her (that) I hadn't been able to tell her before. l
- 16 'You see, I didn't know whether I could take you or not.' → I pointed out that I hadn't known whether I could take her or not. l

Explanation

- a As already noted in 12Ac, the future *will/shall*, which is commonly contracted to 'll (1), changes to the conditional *would/should*, which is commonly contracted to 'd.
- b **But** in questions asking for instructions or advice (2) and not just for information (1), uncontracted *shall* is used (1Br), which changes to uncontracted *should* or, less commonly, *was/were to*. This difference in usage allows us to distinguish between the meanings of sentences that are otherwise identical. Compare Example 2 with the following:
Helen asked Sheila what she'd do if her friend Ken was late
(= 'Sheila,' said Helen, 'what'll you do if your friend Ken is late?').
- c Might (11Aa, e) does not change (3). Could or could not does not change when it is used for possibility (3) or impossibility (11Ae-g).
- d Should and ought to do not change (4) whether they are used for expectation (11Ca) or duty and advisability (11Ea).
- e Must used for conclusions (11Cd) does not change (5).
- f Must (not) used weakly with the meaning of *should (not)* to express advisability (6) rather than obligation does not change.
- g Must (not) and need not, used respectively for obligation (11Da) and absence of obligation (11Dg), do not always change but very often do so, especially when what is reported is all in the past, or 'history'. These possible changes are given in Examples 7-12, where we may suppose that the conversation was reported when Helen had caught her plane, whereas 'Helen said she must catch her plane' is likely to carry the idea that she has not yet caught it.
- h Since must has no tenses (11Dd), it is its approximate equivalents *have to* and *will have to* that, through backshift (12Ab), can provide the changes in reported speech (7,8). Must expressing a command (9) has the additional equivalent of *is (etc.) to* (11De), which in the negative is a substitute for mustn't (10). Negatives include, of course, such words as *no one* or *never*:
- No one must order a taxi.
She said no one was to (not had to) order a taxi.

- j Similarly, need not (11Dg) may be the equivalent of *does not need to/have to* or *will not need to/have to*, which provide the basis for the changes in reported speech (11, 12).
- k Whereas *did not need to* changes to *had not needed to* (13), need not have does **not** change (14). (If you have forgotten the difference in use and meaning between these two past forms of *need not*, see 11Dh.)
- l Could (not) often changes when it is the equivalent of the PAST tense meaning *was (not) able to* (15), but could (not) does **not** change when it expresses NON-FACT and is the equivalent of the conditional *would (not) be able to* (16) or of *was/were (not) able to* (see 11Ad):
 'If I couldn't (= wasn't/weren't able to) take you to the airport I wouldn't tell you I could (= was)' → He told her that if he couldn't take her to the airport he wouldn't tell her he could.
- m Similarly, could (not) used for permission or prohibition does not change when it means *would (not) be allowed to* (11Aa) but may change when it means *was (not) allowed to* (11Ab, c):
 'At my school we couldn't keep pets' → He said that at his school they hadn't been allowed to keep pets.

Exercise

Report the following, using if you can only one sentence for each number. Verbs such as *insist*, *inform* and *explain* can be used both as reporting verbs and for direct speech as shown. Others, such as *continue*, *answer* and *lie* cannot, and you will need to find alternative verbs or phrases.

- 1 It's sad but we'll have to get rid of Molly if she doesn't mend her ways,' said Harry McArthur. 'After all, we can't afford to be too soft-hearted about our typists and secretaries if we're to have an efficient firm.'
- 2 'I must,' he continued, 'have told her at least three times about using the office phones. She should listen when I tell her things. She must never call America without my permission.'
- 3 'I think she may have done it again,' said Georgina. 'What shall I tell her if she has?'
- 4 'You needn't tell her anything,' answered Harry, 'because I'll deal with the matter myself.'
- 5 'I couldn't ask Mr McArthur about the phone,' said Molly, 'because he'd gone out to lunch. So I thought I could use my own discretion in the matter.'
- 6 'She must be very stupid to say things like that,' said Georgina. 'Shall I tell her she's got the sack?'
- 7 'No one must tell her anything,' insisted Harry. 'Only that she must come and see me. It looks very much as if she'll have to be told her services are no longer required.'

- 8 'According to regulations,' he went on, 'she must have a minimum of two weeks' notice or salary in lieu. She's quite a nice kid, so I'll be as generous as I can.'
- 9 'Although I'm afraid you must go,' he informed her, 'you needn't worry too much because I'll give you a good reference and three weeks' pay.'
- 10 'Could I have the reference now?' asked Molly. 'Then I could start looking for another job at once.'
- 11 'Perhaps your father could help you find a job,' I said when I heard of her predicament. 'You should pay him a visit.' 'I might do just that,' she replied, 'although it would cost a lot.'
- 12 'I didn't need to pay the whole fare when I booked the flight,' she told me later, 'so I needn't have worried so much about money. But I couldn't get through to my father last night to tell him of my plans. Could you possibly phone him from your office for me?'
- 13 'She couldn't have arranged to come at a worse time,' complained her father on the phone. 'I can't possibly meet her at the airport on Friday. I'll have just come back from Canada and there'll be several business matters I must see to before the weekend.'
- 14 'It's the only cheap flight Molly could get on,' I explained. 'She tried to contact you but couldn't. So what shall I tell her to do?'
- 15 'You shouldn't spoil the girl,' he retorted. 'She ought to be capable of coming to see me without all this help from strangers. What's she coming for, anyway?'
- 16 'I haven't the least idea,' I lied. 'But isn't it just possible that your daughter might wish to see you again after a gap of several years?'

12C Suggestions, requests and commands

Introductory note: So far in this section, requests have been limited to the use of the imperative or *must (not)*, and to their reporting with *told* or *said* followed by the infinitive, *was/were (not) to* or *had to* (12Ab, Bg). However, there are other ways of getting people to do or not to do things and of reporting them, varying from the gentle *ask* or *suggest* to the stern *order* or *warn*, and the more useful of these are given in the Examples and Explanation below. The words in italics in the Examples are those whose general sense and meaning correspond in direct and reported speech.

Examples

DIRECT SPEECH	→	REPORTED SPEECH
1 'Could you,' said Sheila to a passing driver, 'give me a lift		Sheila <i>asked</i> a passing driver a to give her a lift into town, as

- into town? My car has broken down.'
- 2 'Hop in,' said the driver. —→ The driver *told her to hop in.* b
- 3 'What about stopping for a coffee?' said the man after a few moments. —→ After a few moments, the man *suggested* stopping/that they should stop for a coffee. c
- 4 'I *very much* hope,' said Sheila, 'that you'll drive straight on so I can keep an important appointment.' —→ Sheila *urged* the man to drive straight on so she could keep an important appointment. e
- 5 But the man stopped the car. 'If I were you,' he said, 'I'd hand over that bag of yours without a struggle.' —→ Having nevertheless stopped the car, the man *advised* Sheila to hand over her bag without a struggle. d
- 6 However, it was the man who was soon struggling. 'For God's sake let me go!' he cried. 'You're breaking my arm!' —→ However, it was the man who was soon struggling and *begging/imploring/entreating* Sheila to let him go, as she was breaking his arm. e
- 7 'Now,' *snapped* Sheila, 'you'll drive me first to a garage and afterwards to my weekly appointment at the judo school.' —→ Sheila then *ordered* him to drive her first to a garage and afterwards to her weekly appointment at the judo school. b
- 8 'Whatever you do,' she said, 'don't try any more monkey business.' —→ She *warned him not to try/against* trying any more monkey business. f

Explanation

- a A more forcible alternative to *ask* (1) is *request*, but it is too formal to be included among the above Examples:
 'Please be sure to be punctual at all my lectures,' she *told* her students.
 —→ She *requested* her students to be punctual . . .
- b A more forcible alternative to *tell* (2) is *order* (7), or sometimes *command*. Although *order* is more common in military and similar contexts, it may be suitable in other contexts, such as this one. Instead of *order* . . . *not* we generally use *forbid* (17A):
 'No talking!' *ordered* the headmaster —→ The headmaster *forbade* them to talk.
- c We have already met *suggest* (3) and its use with or without *should* in 11Fa and, when we are less positive and talking only about possibilities, its use with *might* in 12Ap. When our suggestions are based upon a possibility of choice we may use *recommend* (17Db):

'Why not try the Greek restaurant further up the street?'

She *recommended* (us to try/trying/that we should try) the Greek restaurant. . . .

Note that *recommend*, unlike *suggest* but like all the other verbs in this section, may be used with an object + infinitive (17C).

- d For more serious matters, which may involve telling people **not** to do things, we normally use *advise* (5) instead of *suggest* or *recommend* (but see 17Db).
- e When we ask urgently, in order to try and persuade someone to do or not to do something, we use *urge* (4). If this is not strong enough, and we wish to convey anguish, pain or tears, we use *beg*, *implore* or *entreat* (6). *Plead with* (followed by object + infinitive) is also possible, but more in the context of a highly emotional situation of some duration.
- f When someone *tells* or *advises* us **not** to do something wrong, imprudent or dangerous, the appropriate introductory verb is *warn* (8). This verb is also used with *that* to give us notice of possible danger or inconvenience:
 'Take care,' he said, 'the roads will be icy.' → He *warned* (us) that the roads would be icy.
 'The trouble is,' she said, 'the supermarket closes in half an hour.'
 → She *warned* (us) that the supermarket closed in half an hour.

Exercise 1

Report the following direct speech using the introductory verbs shown in the Examples or mentioned in the Explanation.

- 1 'Let's send away for this electric kettle advertised in the paper as a special offer,' said my wife.
- 2 It was about three weeks later that I said: 'Will you plug it in while I get the cups?'
- 3 'You mustn't,' I said, 'fill it with the switch on, whatever you do.'
- 4 'Stand back,' I cried, 'while I disconnect it!'
- 5 'Don't ever touch that kettle again,' I said. 'It's live.'
- 6 'Don't you think,' said my wife, 'we should get a lawn-mower the next time there's a special offer?'
- 7 'If I were you,' said the girl from next door, who'd just come in, 'I'd get the whole house rewired.'
- 8 'I do hope you'll follow such an excellent piece of advice,' said my wife.
- 9 'Mind your own business!' I snapped, still tense after the affair of the kettle.
- 10 'Don't ever speak to me like that again,' she said, 'if you want any more meals cooked.'
- 11 'I'm sorry, dearest,' I said. 'Please, please forgive me.'
- 12 'How about eating out this evening?' I then said, by way of a peace offering.

- 13 'Oh, yes!' said our neighbour. 'Why not go to the new Chinese restaurant? I've heard it's excellent.'
- 14 'Mind you,' she went on, 'you'll have to reserve a table.'
- 15 'And you'd better put on a tie,' she said, eyeing me disapprovingly.
- 16 'Yes,' said my wife, 'go upstairs and change into something decent.'
- 17 'You're not to come out with me looking like that,' she said.
- 18 'If I were you,' said our neighbour, 'I'd telephone the restaurant first.'
- 19 'Hurry up,' said my wife, 'whichever you do first.'
- 20 I suddenly felt a great need for peace and quiet. 'Look,' I said, 'why don't you two go out instead of me?'

Exercise 2

Oral practice (general revision): Without using the book yourself, get someone to say the following to you and then report, as if to a third person, what you have heard, beginning *She/He* as shown below. Since the reporting is immediate, do not change the reference to time such as *this morning* or to place, such as *here* (see 12Ae).

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Excuse me for being late this morning; I was held up by the traffic. | → | <i>She asked me to excuse her for being late this morning; she said she was held up by the traffic.</i> |
| I'd have got here quicker if I'd come on a bicycle. | → | <i>She said she'd have got here quicker if she'd come on a bicycle.</i> |
| I should leave early this evening if I were you. | → | <i>She advised me to leave early this evening.</i> |

- 1 Where do you come from? Are you staying here long?
- 2 Is this the first time you've been here?
- 3 I've been living here for over a year and quite like the place.
- 4 But I'd rather live in London. Wouldn't you?
- 5 You must find this place rather dull compared with your home town.
- 6 What can we do this evening if we decide to go out?
- 7 We could go to the cinema if there are any good films on.
- 8 How about going to a concert? Do you like music?
- 9 You needn't decide now; you can let me know later.
- 10 Shall I come round to your house or wait for you here?
- 11 Will you be ready if I call for you at six o'clock?
- 12 Don't forget to bring an umbrella, as it may rain.
- 13 I wish my car was in order, so I could have given you a lift.
- 14 It's being repaired, and won't be ready until the end of the week.
- 15 I wish I knew more about cars than I do.
- 16 I could save a lot of money if I was able to do the maintenance myself.
- 17 I had to come here by bus this morning, as I'm without my car.
- 18 Did you walk or drive to work this morning?
- 19 You mustn't drive on the right here whatever you do.

- 20 If you've been to Japan, you'll know that they drive on the left there too.
- 21 Do you think I'd like your country if I visited it?
- 22 Tell me the things I should make a point of seeing.
- 23 I must try and save some money so that I can visit you.
- 24 I must go now, as I have to correct some homework.
- 25 You mustn't forget that you have some homework to do for tomorrow.