

Direct and Indirect Speech

A Comprehensive Grammar Reference

COMPLETE CONCEPT EXPLANATION

1. Definition

When we report what someone has said, we can do so in two ways:

- Direct Speech reproduces the exact words spoken by someone, enclosed within inverted commas (quotation marks). The reported words represent the original utterance without any grammatical change.
- Indirect Speech (also called Reported Speech) conveys the meaning of what was said without quoting the exact words. The words are woven into the sentence of the reporter, and several grammatical changes — in tense, pronouns, time/place adverbials, and sentence structure — take place.

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
She said, "I am happy."	She said that she was happy.
He said, "I will come tomorrow."	He said that he would come the next day.
"Do you know her?" she asked.	She asked if I knew her.

2. Key Terminology

Every sentence in reported speech consists of two parts:

- Reporting Verb (also: introducing verb / principal clause verb) — the verb used by the reporter: said, told, asked, exclaimed, requested, ordered, suggested, etc.
- Reported Speech (also: reported clause / subordinate clause) — the words being reported. In direct speech it is inside inverted commas; in indirect speech it forms a that-clause or an infinitive or an indirect question.

3. Types / Classification of Sentences Reported

The rules for conversion differ based on the type of sentence being reported. There are five main types:

- Assertive (Declarative) Sentences — statements (positive or negative)
- Interrogative Sentences — questions (Yes/No questions and Wh- questions)
- Imperative Sentences — commands, requests, orders, advice, prohibitions
- Exclamatory Sentences — expressions of strong emotion (joy, sorrow, surprise, etc.)
- Optative Sentences — wishes and prayers

4. Rules for Converting Direct to Indirect Speech

Rule Group A — Tense Backshift

RULE 1	When the reporting verb is in the PAST tense, the tense of the reported verb shifts one step back into the past (tense backshift).
Ex. 1	Direct: She said, "I am studying." → Indirect: She said that she was studying.
Ex. 2	Direct: He said, "We have finished ." → Indirect: He said that they had finished .
Ex. 3	Direct: They said, "It will rain ." → Indirect: They said that it would rain .

Tense Backshift Reference Table:

Direct Tense	Indirect Tense	Direct Example	Indirect Example
Simple Present	Simple Past	"I work here."	He said he worked there.
Present Continuous	Past Continuous	"She is sleeping."	He said she was sleeping.
Present Perfect	Past Perfect	"They have arrived."	She said they had arrived.
Present Perfect Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous	"He has been running."	She said he had been running.
Simple Past	Past Perfect	"I met her."	She said she had met her.
Past Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous	"We were working."	He said they had been working.
Past Perfect	Past Perfect (unchanged)	"She had left."	He said she had left.
Simple Future (will)	would	"I will help."	He said he would help.
Future Continuous	would + be + -ing	"I will be waiting."	She said she would be waiting.
Future Perfect	would + have + PP	"We will have finished."	She said they would have finished.

RULE 2	
When the reporting verb is in the PRESENT or FUTURE tense, NO tense change occurs in the reported speech.	
Ex. 1	Direct: "I love music." Reporting verb PRESENT → Indirect: She says that she loves music. (no change)
Ex. 2	Direct: "He is tired." Reporting verb FUTURE → Indirect: She will say that he is tired. (no change)
Ex. 3	Direct: "The earth revolves around the sun." Universal truth — reporting verb past → Indirect: He said the earth revolves around the sun. (no change)

RULE 3	Universal truths, scientific facts, habitual actions, and historical facts do NOT undergo tense backshift even when the reporting verb is past tense.
Ex. 1	He said that the sun rises in the east. (NOT: rose — universal truth)
Ex. 2	She said that water boils at 100°C. (NOT: boiled — scientific fact)
Ex. 3	The teacher said that the Mughal Empire fell in 1857. (historical fact — simple past retained)

Rule Group B — Modal Verb Changes

RULE 4	Certain modal verbs change in indirect speech when the reporting verb is past tense. Others remain unchanged.
Ex. 1	Changing modals: can→could, may→might, will→would, shall→should, must→had to Example: "I can swim." → She said she could swim.
Ex. 2	Unchanged modals: could, would, should, might, ought to, used to, need (modal), dare Example: "She might come." → He said she might come. (no change)
Ex. 3	"You must report immediately." → He said I had to report immediately. (must → had to when expressing obligation)

Rule Group C — Pronoun Changes

RULE 5	First-person pronouns change according to the SUBJECT of the reporting verb; second-person pronouns change according to the OBJECT of the reporting verb; third-person pronouns remain unchanged.
Ex. 1	"I love my work." (subject = Rohan) → Rohan said that he loved his work. (I→he, my→his)
Ex. 2	He said to me, " You are wrong." → He told me that I was wrong. (you→I, object of reporting verb)
Ex. 3	" She came with him ." → He said that she had come with him . (third-person: no change)

Pronoun Reference Chart:

Direct (1st/2nd person)	Indirect (change depends on subject/object of reporting verb)
I	he / she (as per subject of reporting verb)
me	him / her (as per subject of reporting verb)
my	his / her
mine	his / hers
myself	himself / herself
we	they (as per subject of reporting verb)
us	them
our	their
you (as object)	me / us (as per object of reporting verb)
you (as subject)	he / she / they (as per object of reporting verb)
your	my / our / his / her

Rule Group D — Time and Place Adverbial Changes

RULE 6	When the reporting of speech takes place at a different time or place from the original utterance, certain time and place adverbials must change.
Ex. 1	"Come here today." → He asked me to go there that day.
Ex. 2	"I saw her yesterday ." → He said he had seen her the previous day / the day before .
Ex. 3	"I will meet you tomorrow ." → She said she would meet me the next day / the following day .

Direct Speech Adverbial	Indirect Speech Adverbial
now	then / at that time
today	that day
tonight	that night
yesterday	the previous day / the day before
tomorrow	the next day / the following day
last week / month / year	the previous week / the week before
next week / month / year	the following week / the next week
this	that
these	those
here	there
ago	before / previously
thus	so

Rule Group E — Assertive (Statement) Sentences

RULE 7	For assertive sentences: (1) The reporting verb "said" is retained or changed to "said that"; if an object follows, "said to" becomes "told". (2) Inverted commas are removed. (3) The conjunction "that" is added. (4) Tense, pronoun, and adverbial changes apply.
Ex. 1	"Said to" + object becomes "told": He said to me, "I am busy." → He told me that he was busy.
Ex. 2	Without object: She said, "It is raining." → She said that it was raining.
Ex. 3	Negative: He said, "I did not go." → He said that he had not gone . (tense backshift applies to negatives too)

Rule Group F — Interrogative (Question) Sentences

RULE 8	For YES/NO questions: The reporting verb changes to "asked / enquired / wanted to know / demanded to know". The question is introduced by "if" or "whether". The sentence order changes from question form (inverted) to statement form (subject + verb). The question mark is dropped.
Ex. 1	He said to me, "Are you ready?" → He asked me if/whether I was ready.
Ex. 2	"Have they left?" → She asked whether they had left.
Ex. 3	"Did you eat?" → He wanted to know if I had eaten.

RULE 9	For WH- questions: The reporting verb changes to "asked / enquired / wanted to know". The WH- word itself serves as the subordinating conjunction (no "if"/"whether" is added). Sentence order changes to statement form.
Ex. 1	"Where do you live?" → He asked where I lived.
Ex. 2	"What are you doing?" → She asked what I was doing.
Ex. 3	"Why did he leave?" → She enquired why he had left.

Rule Group G — Imperative (Command / Request / Order) Sentences

RULE 10	For imperative sentences: The reporting verb changes to an appropriate verb (ordered, commanded, requested, advised, warned, forbade, urged, begged, etc.) + object + infinitive (to + V1). The imperative form of the verb is replaced by an infinitive. For negative imperatives, "not to + V1" is used.
Ex. 1	He said to me, "Go away." → He ordered me to go away.
Ex. 2	"Please help me." → She requested me to help her.

Ex. 3	"Do not touch that." → She warned me not to touch that.
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Imperative reporting verb selection guide:

Nature of Imperative	Appropriate Reporting Verb
Command / Order	ordered, commanded, directed
Request / Appeal	requested, appealed, entreated, implored
Advice / Suggestion	advised, suggested, recommended
Warning / Caution	warned, cautioned, urged
Forbidding / Prohibiting	forbade, prohibited, told ... not to
Begging / Pleading	begged, beseeched, implored
Instruction / Direction	instructed, directed, told
Invitation	invited, asked

Rule Group H — Exclamatory Sentences

RULE 11	For exclamatory sentences: The reporting verb changes to "exclaimed with joy / sorrow / surprise / disgust / wonder / horror", or "cried out", etc. "What a / How" is replaced by "very" or similar intensifiers. Inverted commas and the exclamation mark are removed. The sentence converts to a statement.
Ex. 1	"What a beautiful painting!" she said. → She exclaimed with admiration that it was a very beautiful painting.
Ex. 2	"How sad!" he said. → He exclaimed with sorrow that it was very sad.
Ex. 3	"Hurrah! We won!" they said. → They exclaimed with joy that they had won.

Exclamation Type / Interjection	Reporting Phrase
Hurrah! / Bravo! / Hooray!	exclaimed with joy / with delight
Alas! / Oh!	exclaimed with sorrow / with grief
What a surprise! / Oh!	exclaimed with surprise / with wonder
Ugh! / How terrible!	exclaimed with disgust / with horror
Well done! / Bravo!	exclaimed with appreciation / applauded
"What a + adjective + noun!"	said that it was a very + adjective + noun
"How + adjective!"	said that it was very + adjective

Rule Group I — Optative Sentences (Wishes and Prayers)

RULE 12	For optative sentences: The reporting verb changes to "wished", "prayed", "expressed a wish / hope that". The subjunctive or "might" form may appear. The exclamation mark is removed.
Ex. 1	"May you live long!" said the priest. → The priest prayed that I might live long.
Ex. 2	"May God bless you!" she said. → She wished that God might bless me.
Ex. 3	"Would that I were a king!" he said. → He wished / expressed a wish that he were a king.

Rule Group J — Special Cases

RULE 13	When the direct speech contains "let" for suggestions (Let us / Let's), the reporting verb becomes "suggested" and the structure changes to "suggested + that + subject + should / suggested + -ing / suggested + gerund".
Ex. 1	"Let us go for a walk." → He suggested that we should go for a walk. (OR: He suggested going for a walk.)
Ex. 2	"Let's start the meeting." → She suggested starting the meeting. (OR: ... that they should start ...)
Ex. 3	"Let him speak." (command, not suggestion) → He told them to let him speak.
RULE 14	
When the reported clause already contains past perfect, it does NOT shift further. Similarly, "would", "could", "should", "might", "ought to" do NOT shift further back.	
Ex. 1	"She had already left." → He said that she had already left . (past perfect remains past perfect — no further shift)
Ex. 2	"I could not do it." → She said she could not do it. ("could" does not change to "would could" or anything else)
Ex. 3	"You ought to apologise." → He said I ought to apologise. (no change)
RULE 15	
When the direct speech is introduced by "said" with a named subject and no object, and the nature of the speech is clear from context, more expressive reporting verbs (remarked, observed, pointed out, added, admitted, denied, claimed, boasted, complained, confessed, argued) should be used for precision.	
Ex. 1	"I was not there," said Riya. → Riya denied that she had been there.
Ex. 2	"I am the best player in the team," said Arjun. → Arjun boasted that he was the best player in the team.

Ex. 3	"The service was terrible," said the customer. → The customer complained that the service had been terrible.
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5. Common Errors in Direct and Indirect Speech

✗ INCORRECT	✓ CORRECT
<i>He said me that he was busy.</i>	<i>He told me that he was busy.</i>
<i>She asked that where he was going.</i>	<i>She asked where he was going.</i>
<i>He asked whether would I come.</i>	<i>He asked whether I would come.</i>
<i>She said, "The sun rose in the east."</i>	<i>She said that the sun rises in the east. (universal truth)</i>
<i>He told that she was sick.</i>	<i>He said that she was sick. (no object → "said", not "told")</i>
<i>He said to me, "Can I help you?"</i>	<i>Indirect: He asked me if he could help me. (not: if can he)</i>
<i>She asked that if he was ready.</i>	<i>She asked if he was ready. (no "that" before "if/whether")</i>
<i>He suggested that we go for the walk.</i>	<i>He suggested that we should go for a walk. / He suggested going for a walk.</i>
<i>"I had met her" → He said he met her.</i>	<i>"I had met her" → He said he had met her. (past perfect stays)</i>
<i>She ordered me that to leave.</i>	<i>She ordered me to leave. (no "that" with imperatives)</i>

6. Memory Tricks and Mnemonics

- PAST REPORTING → BACK SHIFT one tense. Think: "Past pushes back."
- PRESENT / FUTURE REPORTING → NO change. Think: "Present preserves."
- SAID + object → TOLD (said to → told). Mnemonic: "Said to is forbidden — use told."

- Questions: YES/NO → IF/WHETHER; WH- word → WH- word (no if/whether). Mnemonic: "YES needs IF; WH stays WH."
- Imperatives → TO-infinitive. Mnemonic: "Commands are TO do something."
- Pronoun Rule: 1st person mirrors the SUBJECT, 2nd person mirrors the OBJECT of the reporting verb. Mnemonic: "First follows Subject (S), Second follows Object (O)."
- Universal truths: tense stays. Mnemonic: "Facts don't age — they stay present."
- Modal freeze list: could, would, should, might, ought to, used to — these NEVER change.

RULES SUMMARY — Quick Revision Reference

All 15 rules at a glance — one sharp example per rule for rapid revision.

#	RULE	EXAMPLE
1	Past reporting verb → tense backshift one step.	"I play." → He said he played.
2	Present/Future reporting verb → no tense change.	"I play." → She says he plays.
3	Universal truths/scientific facts → present tense retained.	"Water boils at 100°C." → He said water boils at 100°C.
4	can→could, may→might, will→would, shall→should, must→had to (under past reporting).	"I can do it." → She said she could do it.

5	1st person pronoun → changes per subject of reporting verb; 2nd person → per object.	<i>"I came." (Riya) → Riya said she had come.</i>
6	Time and place adverbials change (now→then, today→that day, here→there, tomorrow→next day, etc.).	<i>"Come here now." → She asked me to go there then.</i>
7	Assertive: "said to" → "told"; add "that"; apply tense/pronoun/adverbial changes.	<i>"I am sick." → He told me he was sick.</i>
8	Yes/No questions: reporting verb → asked; introduce with if/whether; statement order.	<i>"Are you coming?" → She asked if I was coming.</i>
9	Wh-questions: WH-word acts as conjunction; statement order; no if/whether.	<i>"Why are you late?" → He asked why I was late.</i>
10	Imperatives: reporting verb reflects nature; imperative → to + V1; negatives → not to + V1.	<i>"Leave." → She ordered me to leave.</i>
11	Exclamatory: reporting verb + emotion phrase; "What a/How" → "very"; statement form.	<i>"How sad!" → He exclaimed with sorrow that it was very sad.</i>
12	Optative: reporting verb → prayed / wished; "may" → "might".	<i>"May you prosper!" → She prayed that I might prosper.</i>
13	"Let us/Let's" (suggestion) → suggested + that + should / suggested + gerund.	<i>"Let us go." → He suggested that we should go.</i>
14	Past perfect and frozen modals (could, would, should, might, ought to) do not shift further.	<i>"I could swim." → He said he could swim.</i>
15	Use precise reporting verbs (denied, boasted, warned, complained, etc.) where context is clear.	<i>"I never lied!" → He denied having lied.</i>

PRACTICE QUESTIONS — PART 1 (Questions Only)

All 60 questions are presented below. Attempt before looking at answers in Part 2.

Category 1 — Spot the Mistake (Q1–Q15)

Each sentence below has an error in reported speech. Identify the exact mistake and provide the corrected version.

- Q1.** He said me that he would come the next day.
- Q2.** She asked that whether he had eaten.
- Q3.** The teacher said that the earth moved around the sun.
- Q4.** He told that the match had been exciting.
- Q5.** She said to me, "Are you ready?" → She asked me that was I ready.
- Q6.** He said, "I am leaving now." → He said he was leaving then. But his friend reported: "He said to them that he is leaving now."
- Q7.** My mother said to me, "You must work hard." → My mother said me that I must work hard.
- Q8.** She asked, "Who did this?" → She asked that who had done that.
- Q9.** He said, "Let us celebrate." → He said that let us celebrate.
- Q10.** The officer said, "Do not enter without permission." → The officer told not to enter without permission.
- Q11.** She said, "May God bless you!" → She said that may God bless me.
- Q12.** He said, "I had already finished the work." → He said that he had already been finishing the work.
- Q13.** She said to him, "Could you help me?" → She said to him that could he help her.
- Q14.** "Alas! My dog died." he said. → He exclaimed with sorrow that his dog was died.

Q15. He said to her, "I shall meet you tomorrow." → He told her that he will meet her the next day.

Category 2 — Fill in the Right Word (Q16–Q30)

Choose the most grammatically precise option to complete the reported speech. More than one option may appear plausible — select the most accurate.

Q16. She said, "I can swim." → She said that she _____ swim.

- a) can
- b) could
- c) would
- d) shall

Q17. He said to me, "Are you leaving?" → He asked me if I _____ leaving.

- a) am
- b) was
- c) were
- d) had been

Q18. "We have completed the project," they said. → They said that they _____ the project.

- a) have completed
- b) had completed
- c) completed
- d) would complete

- Q19.** She said, "I saw him yesterday." → She said that she _____ him _____.
- a) saw / yesterday
 - b) had seen / the previous day
 - c) saw / the day before
 - d) seen / that day
- Q20.** "Do not open the door," he said to us. → He _____ us _____ the door.
- a) said / not to open
 - b) told / not to open
 - c) asked / to not open
 - d) ordered / not opening
- Q21.** "May you succeed!" she said. → She _____ that I _____ succeed.
- a) prayed / might
 - b) wished / may
 - c) said / would
 - d) hoped / could
- Q22.** "The water boils at 100°C," the teacher said. → The teacher said that water _____ at 100°C.
- a) boiled
 - b) had boiled
 - c) boils
 - d) would boil
- Q23.** He said, "Let us postpone the meeting." → He _____ postponing the meeting.
- a) told
 - b) ordered

- c) suggested
- d) requested

Q24. "I will not tolerate this," she said. → She said that she _____ tolerate that.

- a) will not
- b) would not
- c) shall not
- d) could not

Q25. "Where have you kept the files?" asked the manager. → The manager asked where I _____ the files.

- a) have kept
- b) had kept
- c) kept
- d) was keeping

Q26. He said to her, "You ought to see a doctor." → He advised her that she _____ see a doctor.

- a) ought to
- b) should
- c) must
- d) Both a and b are correct

Q27. "Hurrah! We have qualified!" shouted the players. → The players exclaimed _____ they had qualified.

- a) with sorrow that
- b) with joy that
- c) with surprise that
- d) with pride and that

- Q28.** "Who broke the window?" she asked. → She asked _____ had broken the window.
- a) if who
 - b) that who
 - c) who
 - d) whether who
- Q29.** He said, "I could have helped you." → He said that he _____ helped me.
- a) could have
 - b) would have
 - c) might have
 - d) should have
- Q30.** "Come here immediately," the supervisor said. → The supervisor instructed me to go _____ immediately.
- a) here
 - b) there
 - c) to him
 - d) anywhere

Category 3 — Choose the Correct Sentence (Q31–Q45)

Only one of the four options is grammatically correct reported speech. Identify it and be prepared to explain why each other option is wrong.

- Q31.** Direct: He said, "I am going to the market."
- a) He said that he is going to the market.

- b) He said that he was going to the market.
- c) He told that he was going to the market.
- d) He said me that he was going to the market.

Q32. Direct: She asked, "Will you help me?"

- a) She asked if I will help her.
- b) She asked that would I help her.
- c) She asked whether I would help her.
- d) She enquired if I helped her.

Q33. Direct: "Do not waste time," the teacher said to the students.

- a) The teacher told the students that do not waste time.
- b) The teacher said the students not to waste time.
- c) The teacher warned the students not to waste time.
- d) The teacher told the students to not waste time.

Q34. Direct: "What a brilliant idea!" she exclaimed.

- a) She exclaimed that what a brilliant idea it was.
- b) She exclaimed with admiration that it was a very brilliant idea.
- c) She said that it was a brilliant idea.
- d) She exclaimed with admiration that the idea was brilliant very.

Q35. Direct: He said, "I had met her before the accident."

- a) He said he met her before the accident.
- b) He said he had been meeting her before the accident.
- c) He said he had met her before the accident.
- d) He told he had met her before the accident.

- Q36.** Direct: "Let us go for a picnic," she said.
- She said that let us go for a picnic.
 - She proposed that we go for a picnic.
 - She suggested that we should go for a picnic.
 - She said we go for a picnic.
- Q37.** Direct: My friend said to me, "Where do you live?"
- My friend asked me where did I live.
 - My friend asked me where I lived.
 - My friend asked me that where I lived.
 - My friend enquired me where do I live.
- Q38.** Direct: "May God help you!" the old man said to me.
- The old man prayed that may God help me.
 - The old man prayed that God may help me.
 - The old man prayed that God might help me.
 - The old man wished God helps me.
- Q39.** Direct: She said to me, "You should exercise daily."
- She told me that I should exercise daily.
 - She said me I should exercise daily.
 - She advised me to exercise daily.
 - Both a and c are correct.
- Q40.** Direct: The scientist said, "The speed of light is 3×10^8 m/s."
- The scientist said that the speed of light was 3×10^8 m/s.

- b) The scientist said that the speed of light is 3×10^8 m/s.
- c) The scientist told that the speed of light is 3×10^8 m/s.
- d) The scientist said that the speed of light had been 3×10^8 m/s.

Q41. Direct: He said, "I must finish this by evening."

- a) He said that he must finish that by evening.
- b) He said that he had to finish that by that evening.
- c) He told that he had to finish this by the evening.
- d) He said he would finish that by evening.

Q42. Direct: "Did she call you?" he asked me.

- a) He asked me whether she called me.
- b) He asked me had she called me.
- c) He asked me if she had called me.
- d) He enquired me if she had called me.

Q43. Direct: She said to him, "Please wait for me."

- a) She said to him to please wait for her.
- b) She requested him to wait for her.
- c) She told him please wait for her.
- d) She asked him that he should wait for her.

Q44. Direct: He said, "I can speak three languages."

- a) He said that he can speak three languages.
- b) He said that he could spoke three languages.
- c) He said that he could speak three languages.
- d) He told that he could speak three languages.

- Q45.** Direct: "Why are you crying?" she asked the child.
- a) She asked the child why was she crying.
 - b) She asked the child that why she was crying.
 - c) She asked the child why she was crying.
 - d) She asked the child if why she was crying.

Category 4 — Analyse, Rewrite & Explain (Q46–Q60)

These questions demand close grammatical reasoning: paragraph correction, comparative analysis of competing rules, clause identification, and deep explanation. Write complete answers.

- Q46.** Convert the following into indirect speech and identify every grammatical change made: "I am very happy here today," said Priya to her friends.
- Q47.** A student writes: "He said that he has been working there since two years." Identify all errors and rewrite correctly, explaining each correction.
- Q48.** Convert into direct speech: The coach advised his team that they should not underestimate their opponents and should play with full concentration.
- Q49.** Explain with examples the difference between using "if" and "whether" in indirect questions. When can both be used, and when can only "whether" be used?

- Q50.** Convert the following paragraph into indirect speech. Identify every change made: "Come in," said the interviewer. "Take a seat. Have you applied here before? We are looking for experienced professionals. Do not be nervous."
- Q51.** Compare and contrast the indirect speech conversion of: (a) "Can you help me?" (b) "Could you help me?" Explain why the indirect forms differ or are the same.
- Q52.** Rewrite the following passage correcting all errors in reported speech: She said to him that "can you come tomorrow?" He replied he will. She told him she is glad.
- Q53.** Direct: "I, myself, verified every record," he said. Identify the pronoun changes needed in indirect speech and explain the logic behind each.
- Q54.** What is the difference between: (a) He said he worked there. (b) He said he had worked there. In what scenario would each be the correct indirect form?
- Q55.** A teacher says: "Water freezes at 0°C and iron melts at 1538°C." A student reports: "The teacher said that water froze at 0°C and iron melted at 1538°C." Is the student correct? Justify your answer with reference to the appropriate rule.
- Q56.** Convert into indirect speech and label the reporting verb, the reported clause, and the subordinating conjunction: "Why did you not inform me?" asked the principal to the student.
- Q57.** Compare direct and indirect speech forms for all three types of sentences — assertive, interrogative, and imperative — using a single imagined scenario in which a doctor speaks to a patient.

Q58. Analyse this complex sentence and convert into direct speech: She warned him not to touch the live wire, asked why he was working alone, and suggested that he should wait for the electrician.

Q59. A candidate argues: "In the sentence He told me that I should have informed him earlier, the modal should have remains unchanged because it is a frozen modal." Is this argument correct? Evaluate critically.

Q60. Two students disagree: Student A says "must" always becomes "had to" in indirect speech; Student B says "must" sometimes remains "must". Who is correct? Provide a rule with three examples that resolve this disagreement.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS — PART 2 (Detailed Answers)

Category 1 — Spot the Mistake: Answers (Q1–Q15)

Ans. Q1:

Error: "Said me" — "said" cannot take an indirect object directly.

Correct Form: *He told me that he would come the next day.*

Explanation: "Said" must become "told" when followed by a personal object (me, him, her, us, them). "Said to me" → "told me". The tense change (will→would) and adverbial change (tomorrow→next day) are correctly done.

Ans. Q2:

Error: "Asked that whether" — "that" must not precede "if/whether".

Correct Form: *She asked me whether he had eaten.*

Explanation: The subordinating conjunction for Yes/No questions is either "if" or "whether" — never "that whether". Only one conjunction is used. Also, "asked" is appropriate.

Ans. Q3:

Error: "Moved around" — wrong. This is a universal truth; present tense must be retained.

Correct Form: *The teacher said that the earth moves around the sun.*

Explanation: Scientific facts and universal truths do not undergo tense backshift even when the reporting verb is past tense. "Moves" must remain in simple present.

Ans. Q4:

Error: "He told that" — "told" requires an object; without one, "said" must be used.

Correct Form: *He said that the match had been exciting.*

Explanation: "Told" is transitive in reported speech and must be followed by a personal object (told me, told her). Without an object, "said" is correct. The tense change (was→had been) and removal of inverted commas are correct.

Ans. Q5:

Error: "She asked me that was I ready" — double error: "that" before a question word is wrong; inverted word order is wrong.

Correct Form: *She asked me if/whether she was ready.*

Explanation: For Yes/No indirect questions: (1) No "that" before "if/whether". (2) Statement order (subject + verb) is required, not question order (verb + subject). Correct form: She asked me if/whether I was ready.

Ans. Q6:

Error: "He is leaving now" — wrong tense and wrong adverbial.

Correct Form: *He told them that he was leaving then.*

Explanation: The reporting is in past tense ("said"), so the present continuous "is leaving" must shift to past continuous "was leaving". The adverbial "now" must change to "then" as the location and time of reporting differs.

Ans. Q7:

Error: "Said me" — no object without "to"; also, "must" should become "had to".

Correct Form: *My mother told me that I had to work hard.*

Explanation: "Said to me" → "told me". Pronoun: "you" (2nd person, object of reporting verb "me") → "I". "Must" expressing obligation shifts to "had to" under past reporting.

Ans. Q8:

Error: "Asked that who" — WH- questions take the WH-word directly as conjunction; no "that".

Correct Form: *She asked who had done that.*

Explanation: "Who" itself serves as the subordinating conjunction in indirect WH-questions. Adding "that" before it is incorrect. The verb "did this" → "had done that" (tense backshift + pronoun change).

Ans. Q9:

Error: "He said that let us celebrate" — this is a suggestion; wrong reporting structure.

Correct Form: *He suggested that they should celebrate. / He suggested celebrating.*

Explanation: "Let us" expresses a suggestion, so the reporting verb must be "suggested", not "said". The structure must be either "suggested + that + subject + should + V1" or "suggested + gerund (-ing form)".

Ans. Q10:

Error: "Told not to enter" — "told" requires a personal object; here there is none explicitly stated.

Correct Form: *The officer ordered them not to enter without permission.*

Explanation: When the object is implicit but must appear in indirect speech, it must be stated: "them" (the people addressed). The negative imperative correctly uses "not to + V1". The verb should be "ordered" or "directed", not "told" without an object.

Ans. Q11:

Error: "She said that may God bless me" — optative sentences use "might" in indirect speech.

Correct Form: *She prayed that God might bless me.*

Explanation: "May" in optative sentences becomes "might" in indirect speech. The reporting verb "said" must become "prayed" or "wished". Pronoun "you" (object = me) → "me". "God" remains unchanged (third person).

Ans. Q12:

Error: "Had already been finishing" — past perfect does not shift to past perfect continuous.

Correct Form: *He said that he had already finished the work.*

Explanation: Past perfect in direct speech ("had already finished") remains past perfect in indirect speech. It does not shift further to continuous. "Had already been finishing" is grammatically wrong here.

Ans. Q13:

Error: "She said to him that could he help her" — question word order retained wrongly.

Correct Form: *She asked him if/whether he could help her.*

Explanation: In indirect questions, the word order must be statement order (subject + verb). "Could you" becomes "he could" — not "could he". Also, "said to him" becomes "asked him" for questions. "Can" → "could" under past reporting.

Ans. Q14:

Error: "Was died" — wrong passive construction; "died" is intransitive and cannot form a passive.

Correct Form: *He exclaimed with sorrow that his dog had died.*

Explanation: "Was died" is a grammatical impossibility. "Die" is intransitive and cannot be used in the passive voice. Also, the past tense "died" shifts to past perfect "had died" under past reporting. Pronoun "my" (subject = he) → "his".

Ans. Q15:

Error: "Will meet" — "shall" under past reporting becomes "would", not "will".

Correct Form: *He told her that he would meet her the next day.*

Explanation: "Shall" → "would" under tense backshift. "Said to her" → "told her". "I" (subject = he) → "he". "You" (object = her) → "her". "Tomorrow" → "the next day / the following day".

Category 2 — Fill in the Right Word: Answers (Q16–Q30)

Ans. Q16:

Correct Answer: **b) could**

"Can" → "could" under past reporting (reporting verb "said" is past). Option a) "can" would be correct only if the reporting verb were present tense. Option c) "would" implies future intent — wrong here. Option d) "shall" is a different modal entirely.

Ans. Q17:

Correct Answer: b) was

"Are you leaving" → "if I was leaving". The present continuous "are...leaving" shifts to past continuous "was...leaving". Option a) "am" — no tense shift, wrong. Option c) "were" — used only in conditional/subjunctive; not standard here. Option d) "had been" — would need past perfect continuous trigger.

Ans. Q18:

Correct Answer: b) had completed

Present perfect "have completed" → past perfect "had completed" under past reporting. Option a) retains present perfect — wrong. Option c) simple past "completed" is incorrect — present perfect shifts to past perfect, not simple past. Option d) future — wrong.

Ans. Q19:

Correct Answer: b) had seen / the previous day

Simple past "saw" → past perfect "had seen". Time adverbial "yesterday" → "the previous day / the day before". Option a) wrong tense and adverbial. Option c) "saw" is wrong. Option d) "that day" is used for "today", not "yesterday".

Ans. Q20:

Correct Answer: b) told / not to open

Negative imperative: "Do not open" → "not to open". The reporting verb takes an object, so "said" → "told".
Option a) "said" without "to" needs "told". Option c) "to not open" — split infinitive; less acceptable. Option d) "not opening" — gerund is incorrect here.

Ans. Q21:

Correct Answer: a) prayed / might

"May" in optative sentences → "might". Reporting verb for blessings/wishes → "prayed". Option b) "wished / may" — "may" should change to "might". Option c) "said / would" — wrong reporting verb and wrong modal. Option d) "hoped / could" — wrong modal.

Ans. Q22:

Correct Answer: c) boils

Scientific fact (water boiling point) — universal truth; tense stays in present regardless of past reporting verb.
Options a) and b) apply incorrect tense backshift. Option d) "would boil" is future — wrong.

Ans. Q23:

Correct Answer: c) suggested

"Let us" = suggestion → reporting verb is "suggested". Options a) "told" and b) "ordered" are for imperatives.
Option d) "requested" implies asking a favour for oneself — contextually wrong.

Ans. Q24:

Correct Answer: b) would not

"Will not" → "would not" under past reporting. Option a) "will not" — no backshift, wrong. Option c) "shall not" is a different modal. Option d) "could not" changes the meaning entirely.

Ans. Q25:

Correct Answer: b) had kept

Present perfect "have kept" → past perfect "had kept". Option a) retains present perfect — wrong. Option c) simple past "kept" — incorrect shift. Option d) past continuous "was keeping" — different aspect and wrong.

Ans. Q26:

Correct Answer: d) Both a and b are correct

"Ought to" does not change in indirect speech (it is a frozen modal). "Should" is also acceptable as an equivalent advisory modal. Both a) "ought to" and b) "should" are grammatically correct reported forms. Option c) "must" would imply obligation rather than advice.

Ans. Q27:

Correct Answer: b) with joy that

"Hurrah!" expresses joy → "exclaimed with joy". Option a) "sorrow" — wrong emotion. Option c) "surprise" — wrong emotion. Option d) "with pride and that" — grammatically incorrect structure.

Ans. Q28:

Correct Answer: c) who

In Wh-questions, the WH-word serves as the subordinating conjunction directly. No "if", "that", or "whether" is added. Options a) and d) add unnecessary conjunctions. Option b) "that who" is doubly wrong.

Ans. Q29:

Correct Answer: a) could have

"Could have" is a frozen modal construction — it does not change in indirect speech. Options b) "would have", c) "might have", d) "should have" all change the meaning. The original ability + hypothetical sense of "could have" must be retained.

Ans. Q30:

Correct Answer: b) there

The adverbial "here" in direct speech changes to "there" in indirect speech when the reporting takes place at a different location. Option a) "here" — no change made, wrong. Options c) and d) are incorrect substitutions.

Category 3 — Choose the Correct Sentence: Answers (Q31–Q45)

Ans. Q31:

Direct: *He said, "I am going to the market."*

Correct Answer: b) He said that he was going to the market.

Why correct: Reporting verb "said" is past → present continuous "am going" shifts to past continuous "was going". Pronoun "I" (subject = he) → "he".

Why others are wrong: a) "is going" — no tense shift despite past reporting verb. c) "told that" — "told" requires a personal object; none is present. d) "said me" — "said" cannot take a direct personal object; must be "told me".

Ans. Q32:

Direct: *She asked, "Will you help me?"*

Correct Answer: c) She asked whether I would help her.

Why correct: "Will" → "would". "You" (object = me/I) → "I". "Me" → "her". Statement order: "I would help" (not "would I"). Conjunction "whether" is correct.

Why others are wrong: a) "will help" — no tense shift. b) "that would I help" — "that" before "whether" is wrong; inverted order wrong. d) "helped" — simple past is wrong; "would help" is correct.

Ans. Q33:

Direct: *"Do not waste time," the teacher said to the students.*

Correct Answer: c) The teacher warned the students not to waste time.

Why correct: Negative imperative: "Do not + V1" → "not to + V1". The teacher gives a warning → "warned" is precise. "Said to the students" → "the students" as object.

Why others are wrong: a) "that do not waste" — imperatives do not use "that" + imperative structure. b) "said the students" — "said" cannot take a personal object here. d) "to not waste" — split infinitive; "not to waste" is the standard form.

Ans. Q34:

Direct: *"What a brilliant idea!" she exclaimed.*

Correct Answer: b) She exclaimed with admiration that it was a very brilliant idea.

Why correct: "What a + adj + noun" → "it was a very + adj + noun". Reporting verb = "exclaimed with admiration". Statement form with "that".

Why others are wrong: a) Retains "what a" — wrong structure in indirect speech. c) "She said" — incorrect reporting verb for exclamations; also loses the exclamatory force. d) "brilliant very" — adverb placement is wrong.

Ans. Q35:

Direct: *He said, "I had met her before the accident."*

Correct Answer: c) He said he had met her before the accident.

Why correct: Past perfect "had met" does not shift further — it is already the deepest past tense. "I" (subject = he) → "he". "Her" remains unchanged (third person).

Why others are wrong: a) "met" — simple past is incorrect; past perfect must be retained. b) "had been meeting" — changes the aspect; past perfect continuous is wrong. d) "He told" — without a personal object, "told" is incorrect; "said" is right.

Ans. Q36:

Direct: *"Let us go for a picnic," she said.*

Correct Answer: c) She suggested that we should go for a picnic.

Why correct: "Let us" = suggestion → "suggested that + subject + should + V1". This is the clearest correct form.

Why others are wrong: a) "said that let us" — wrong; direct structure retained; no conversion. b) "proposed that we go" — "proposed" is marginally acceptable but "that we go" without "should" is less standard. d) "said we go" — wrong reporting verb and wrong structure.

Ans. Q37:

Direct: *My friend said to me, "Where do you live?"*

Correct Answer: b) My friend asked me where I lived.

Why correct: "Where" acts as subordinating conjunction. Statement order: "I lived" (not "did I live"). Tense: "do live" → "lived" (simple past). "Said to me" → "asked me".

Why others are wrong: a) "where did I live" — question order retained wrongly. c) "that where" — "that" before a WH-word is incorrect. d) "enquired me" — "enquired" is intransitive and cannot take a personal object without "of"; "asked" is better.

Ans. Q38:

Direct: "May God help you!" the old man said to me.

Correct Answer: c) The old man prayed that God might help me.

Why correct: "May" in optative → "might". Reporting verb → "prayed". "You" (object = me) → "me". "God" unchanged.

Why others are wrong: a) "may God help" — "may" must change to "might"; structure is direct. b) "may help" — still wrong modal. d) "wished God helps" — wrong modal verb form and wrong tense.

Ans. Q39:

Direct: She said to me, "You should exercise daily."

Correct Answer: d) Both a and c are correct.

Why correct: Option a) "She told me that I should exercise daily" — correct: "said to me" → "told me"; pronoun change; "should" is a frozen modal and stays. Option c) "She advised me to exercise daily" — correct: expressive reporting verb with infinitive structure. Both are grammatically valid.

Why others are wrong: b) "said me" — "said" cannot take a personal object directly.

Ans. Q40:

Direct: The scientist said, "The speed of light is 3×10^8 m/s."

Correct Answer: b) The scientist said that the speed of light is 3×10^8 m/s.

Why correct: Scientific fact (speed of light) — universal truth → present tense retained regardless of past reporting verb.

Why others are wrong: a) and d) apply incorrect tense backshift to a scientific fact. c) "told that" — without a personal object, "told" is incorrect.

Ans. Q41:

Direct: *He said, "I must finish this by evening."*

Correct Answer: **b) He said that he had to finish that by that evening.**

Why correct: "Must" expressing obligation → "had to" under past reporting. "This" → "that". "By evening" → "by that evening". Pronoun "I" → "he".

Why others are wrong: a) "must" — should shift to "had to". c) "told that" — no object present for "told". d) "would finish" — changes meaning to future intention, not obligation.

Ans. Q42:

Direct: *"Did she call you?" he asked me.*

Correct Answer: **c) He asked me if she had called me.**

Why correct: Yes/No question → "if/whether". Tense: "did call" → "had called". "You" (object = me) → "me". Statement order: "she had called me".

Why others are wrong: a) "called" — simple past; "did call" should shift to "had called". b) "had she called" — question order retained wrongly. d) "enquired me" — "enquire" is intransitive and does not take a personal object.

Ans. Q43:

Direct: *She said to him, "Please wait for me."*

Correct Answer: **b) She requested him to wait for her.**

Why correct: "Please + imperative" = request → reporting verb "requested". "Wait" → "to wait". "Said to him" → "him" (object). "Me" → "her" (subject = she).

Why others are wrong: a) "to please wait" — "please" is a politeness marker, not to be retained in indirect speech. c) "told him please wait" — wrong structure; imperatives need infinitive form. d) "that he should wait" — grammatical but "that + should" is used more for advice; "to wait" is standard for requests.

Ans. Q44:

Direct: *He said, "I can speak three languages."*

Correct Answer: c) He said that he could speak three languages.

Why correct: "Can" → "could" under past reporting. Pronoun "I" → "he". No other changes needed.

Why others are wrong: a) "can" — no tense shift, wrong. b) "could spoke" — "could" is followed by the base form, not past tense. d) "told that" — no object for "told".

Ans. Q45:

Direct: *"Why are you crying?" she asked the child.*

Correct Answer: c) She asked the child why she was crying.

Why correct: "Why" is the subordinating conjunction. Statement order: "she was crying". Tense: "are crying" → "was crying". "You" (object = the child, feminine) → "she".

Why others are wrong: a) "why was she crying" — question order retained wrongly. b) "that why" — "that" before a WH-word is incorrect. d) "if why" — "if" is used only for Yes/No questions, not WH-questions.

Category 4 — Analyse, Rewrite & Explain: Answers (Q46–Q60)

Ans. Q46:

Direct: "I am very happy here today," said Priya to her friends.

Indirect: Priya told her friends that she was very happy there that day.

Changes made:

1. "Said to her friends" → "told her friends" (said + object → told)
2. "I" → "she" (1st person, subject = Priya, feminine → she)

3. "am happy" → "was happy" (simple present → simple past; past reporting verb)
4. "here" → "there" (place adverbial change)
5. "today" → "that day" (time adverbial change)
6. Inverted commas removed; conjunction "that" added.

Ans. Q47:

Original (with errors): He said that he has been working there since two years.

Error 1: "has been working" — Reporting verb is "said" (past). Present perfect continuous should shift to past perfect continuous: "had been working".

Error 2: "since two years" — "since" is used with a point in time ("since 2020"), not a duration. For a duration, use "for": "for two years".

Corrected sentence: He said that he had been working there for two years.

Ans. Q48:

Indirect: The coach advised his team that they should not underestimate their opponents and should play with full concentration.

Direct speech reconstruction:

"Do not underestimate your opponents and play with full concentration," the coach said to his team.

Note: Two imperatives are joined. "Should not underestimate" → "Do not underestimate" (negative imperative). "Should play" → "Play" (affirmative imperative). "Their opponents" → "your opponents" (pronoun reversal). "Advised" → direct uses imperative form.

Ans. Q49:

"If" vs "Whether" in indirect questions:

Both "if" and "whether" introduce Yes/No indirect questions:

- He asked if I was ready. ✓
- He asked whether I was ready. ✓

Only "WHETHER" can be used in these specific situations:

1. Before "or not" in the same clause: She asked whether or not I agreed. (NOT: if or not)
2. After a preposition: The question of whether she would attend was raised. (NOT: if)
3. As the subject of the sentence: Whether he comes is uncertain. (NOT: if)
4. In infinitive constructions: She didn't know whether to stay. (NOT: if)

"If" CANNOT be used in these cases. In straightforward Yes/No indirect questions, both are interchangeable, though "whether" is considered more formal.

Ans. Q50:

Direct: "Come in," said the interviewer. "Take a seat. Have you applied here before? We are looking for experienced professionals. Do not be nervous."

Indirect speech (all changes labelled):

The interviewer asked me to come in [imperative → to-infinitive]. He asked me to take a seat [imperative]. He then enquired whether I had applied there before [Yes/No question: "Have you" → "whether I had"; "here" → "there"]. He added that they were looking for experienced professionals [statement: "are looking" → "were looking"; "We" → "they"]. He also advised me not to be nervous [negative imperative: "Do not be" → "not to be"].

Ans. Q51:

Direct: "Can you help me?"

Indirect: She asked if I could help her. ("can" → "could"; tense backshift)

Direct: "Could you help me?"

Indirect: She asked if I could help her. ("could" remains "could" — frozen modal, no further shift)

The indirect forms appear identical: "...if I could help her." The difference lies in the meaning of the original:

- "Can" asks about present ability → shifts to "could" showing the ability was reported as past.

- "Could" is a more formal/polite request — in indirect speech it remains "could" as a frozen modal.

In many contexts the output is the same, but the grammatical route differs. If preserving the distinction matters, context from the original speaker's intent signals the difference.

Ans. Q52:

Original passage (with errors):

She said to him that "can you come tomorrow?" He replied he will. She told him she is glad.

Corrected version:

She asked him whether he could come the next day. He replied that he would. She told him that she was glad.

Corrections:

1. "Said to him that" + direct speech — mixing direct and indirect is wrong; choose one form.
2. "Can" → "could" (past reporting + tense backshift).
3. "Tomorrow" → "the next day" (time adverbial).
4. "He will" → "he would" ("will" → "would").
5. "She is glad" → "she was glad" (present → past under past reporting).

6. All inverted commas and question marks removed. Conjunctions "whether" and "that" added.

Ans. Q53:

Direct: "I, myself, verified every record," he said.

Pronoun changes:

1. "I" (1st person, subject of reporting verb = he) → "he"
2. "myself" (reflexive, 1st person) → "himself" (reflexive matches the new subject "he")

Indirect: He said that he himself had verified every record.

Logic: First-person pronouns always change to match the grammatical person of the subject of the reporting verb. Reflexive pronouns must also shift accordingly. "Myself" → "himself" because the subject is now "he". The emphasis carried by "myself" is preserved by "himself".

Ans. Q54:

(a) He said he worked there.

This is the indirect form of: "I work there." (simple present → simple past under past reporting)

(b) He said he had worked there.

This is the indirect form of: "I worked there." (simple past → past perfect under past reporting)

The distinction is critical:

- Sentence (a) implies that working there is a current fact reported in the past.
- Sentence (b) implies that the working happened before the time of speaking, and is now further in the past.

Using (b) when the original was simple present would imply a completed past action — potentially changing the meaning. This is why careful attention to the original tense is essential before applying backshift.

Ans. Q55:

Direct: "Water freezes at 0°C and iron melts at 1538°C," the teacher said.

The student's version: "The teacher said that water froze at 0°C and iron melted at 1538°C." — THIS IS INCORRECT.

Reason: Both "water freezes at 0°C" and "iron melts at 1538°C" are scientific facts / universal truths. Rule 3 states that universal truths and scientific facts do not undergo tense backshift even when the reporting verb is in the past tense.

Correct indirect form: The teacher said that water freezes at 0°C and iron melts at 1538°C.

The tenses must remain in simple present because the facts are eternally true and not dependent on time of reporting.

Ans. Q56:

Direct: "Why did you not inform me?" asked the principal to the student.

Indirect: The principal asked the student why he/she had not informed him.

Labelled components:

- Reporting verb: "asked"
- Reported clause: "why he/she had not informed him" (the entire subordinate clause)
- Subordinating conjunction: "why" (the WH-word itself serves as the conjunction; no "if" or "whether" is added)

Additional changes:

- "Did you not inform" → "had not informed" (simple past → past perfect; tense backshift)
- "You" (object = the student) → "he/she" (depending on gender)
- "Me" (subject = the principal) → "him"
- Question mark dropped; statement order used.

Ans. Q57:

Scenario: A doctor speaks to a patient.

ASSERTIVE (Statement):

Direct: The doctor said to the patient, "You have a mild infection."

Indirect: The doctor told the patient that he/she had a mild infection.

[said to + object → told; tense: have → had; you → he/she]

INTERROGATIVE (Question):

Direct: The doctor asked the patient, "Are you allergic to penicillin?"

Indirect: The doctor asked the patient whether he/she was allergic to penicillin.

[said → asked; Yes/No question → whether; are → was; you → he/she; statement order]

IMPERATIVE (Command/Request):

Direct: The doctor said to the patient, "Take this medicine twice a day."

Indirect: The doctor instructed the patient to take that medicine twice a day.

[said to → instructed; imperative → to-infinitive; this → that]

This scenario shows how the same speaker's words require three completely different conversion strategies based on sentence type.

Ans. Q58:

Indirect (complex): She warned him not to touch the live wire, asked why he was working alone, and suggested that he should wait for the electrician.

Direct speech reconstruction:

"Do not touch the live wire. Why are you working alone? Let us wait for the electrician." / "Wait for the electrician."

Breakdown:

1. "warned him not to touch" → Direct: "Do not touch the live wire." (negative imperative; "warned" signals caution)
 2. "asked why he was working alone" → Direct: "Why are you working alone?" (WH-question; tense reverse: was working → are working; he → you)
 3. "suggested that he should wait" → Direct: "Let us wait for the electrician." or "You should wait for the electrician." (suggestion with should → let us, or direct advisory)
-

Ans. Q59:

The candidate's argument: "should have" remains unchanged because it is a frozen modal.

Evaluation: PARTIALLY CORRECT but poorly articulated.

"Should have" is a modal perfect construction. "Should" itself is a frozen modal (it does not shift further in indirect speech). "Have" in "should have" is part of the modal perfect structure (modal + have + past participle) — it does not shift independently.

So the construction "should have + past participle" stays intact in indirect speech. In this sense, the candidate is correct that the form does not change.

However, the reasoning is incomplete: it is not merely that "should" is frozen — it is that the entire modal perfect construction "should have + past participle" is already at the furthest point of past reference and cannot shift further back. The proper rule is: "modal + have + past participle is never further shifted."

Conclusion: The form in the sentence is correct, but the rule must be stated precisely.

Ans. Q60:

Both students are partially right. The complete rule resolves the disagreement:

"Must" has two distinct meanings, and the indirect speech treatment differs:

1. OBLIGATION / DUTY (must = have to):

"Must" → "had to" when reporting obligation under a past reporting verb.

Example: "You must submit the form today." → He said I had to submit the form that day.

2. LOGICAL NECESSITY / DEDUCTION (must = certainly is):

"Must" remains "must" (no change) when expressing logical inference.

Example: "He must be tired after such a long journey." → She said he must be tired after such a long journey.

3. PROHIBITION (must not):

"Must not" → "must not" (retained) when expressing prohibition (a standing rule or law).

Example: "You must not cheat in the examination." → The invigilator warned that students must not cheat.

Student A is correct for Category 1 (obligation). Student B is correct for Categories 2 and 3. Neither student's claim covers all cases. The complete picture requires distinguishing the semantic function of "must" before applying a rule.

