

Reported Speech Memory Challenge

Choose one of the things in the list below and try to remember what was said during one real example of that kind of situation, e.g. the conversation at breakfast this morning. Tell your partner what the situation was, when it was and who was there, then tell them (exactly) seven things that people said. You don't need to worry about the language that you use at this stage, as long as your partner understands what was said, so direct speech is also fine. If you can't remember seven things that people (really) said, your partner gets one point for each sentence that is missing, e.g. one point if you only said six sentences.

Your partner can ask you questions when you finish (if they like), then they should say (exactly) seven sentences reporting back what everyone said during that conversation. At this stage, to get a point all sentences must match what you said and be in correct reported speech (= indirect speech, e.g. "He said that...", not direct speech). Your partner doesn't get a point if what they report doesn't match what you said, if they report what was said in direct speech (perhaps copying what you said without thinking about it), or they didn't make all the necessary changes when making the reported speech sentence (e.g. still saying "I" instead of "you" or using "is" when that thing is not true now and so "was" must be used in reported speech).

When they have made seven sentences or have given up making more sentences, tell them how many points they have scored and any reported speech that they missed or got wrong. Then change roles and play the same game with a different situation below. Continue changing roles and playing the same game until your teacher stops you.

Useful phrases for reporting what someone said

"A man/ A woman/ Someone/ Someone there/ Someone working there..."
 "The man/ The woman/ He/ She..."
 "... asked if/ whether..."
 "... asked when/ where/ who/ why/ which/ how/ how many/ how much/ how long..."
 "... asked... to..." / "... told... to..."
 "... told... (that)..."
 "... said (that)..."

Possible questions to ask about what people said

"Why did... say/ ask/ tell...?"
 "How did you reply (to...)?"
 "Did you agree about...?"
 "Had you discussed... before?"
 "What did you talk about after that?"
 "What did... say (about...)?"

Useful language for playing the game

"Yes, that's right. (One point)."
 "That's right, but not in (correct) reported speech. You should have said (something like) ..."
 "..."
 "That's not quite right. Actually... said..."

Possible conversations to report

- A (business) meeting
- A celebration (wedding, graduation party, retirement party, housewarming party, etc)
- A ceremony (e.g. graduation ceremony or wedding ceremony)
- A club event
- A committee (e.g. a local resident's association meeting)
- A complaint
- A conversation exchange
- A conversation with a relative/ a colleague/ a teacher/ a classmate/ a bus driver/ cabin crew/ a coach/ an immigration officer/ a boss/ a doctor/ an in-law/ a friend/ a police officer/ a shop assistant/ station staff/ a passer-by/ an acquaintance/ a stranger/ a foreign visitor/ a tourist/...
- A date/ A group date
- A debate
- A discussion on a website (e.g. in the comments section)
- A lesson/ A workshop/ A lecture
- A meal
- A negotiation
- A networking event (e.g. a cocktail party at a conference)
- A party (e.g. a housewarming party)
- A phone call
- A picnic/ A barbecue
- A political event
- A presentation
- A protest/ A demonstration
- A pub conversation
- A request
- A Skype conversation
- A speech
- A teleconference/ A video conference
- A trade fair/ A trade show/ A conference
- An academic discussion
- An apology
- An argument/ A quarrel/ A disagreement/ A fight
- An email exchange
- An enquiry (= asking for information)
- An offer
- At a religious place (mosque, cathedral, shrine, temple, church, synagogue, etc)
- At a sporting event (football match, horse race, etc)
- At the airport (at the check-in desk, at security, at immigration, at customs, etc)
- Being introduced to some people
- During a performance (opera, musical, play, etc)
- During a tour (of a palace, of a manor house, of a museum, of a town, etc)

- During an interview (job interview, etc)
- Going out for drinks
- Group brainstorming
- In a bank
- In a bar
- In a café
- In a car (e.g. a taxi)
- In a classroom
- In a hotel
- In a post office
- In a restaurant
- In a shop (e.g. in a duty free shop, in a department store or in a convenience store)
- In reception
- In someone else's house/ In someone else's garden
- In the elevator/ In the elevator hall
- In the street
- In tourist information
- In your office
- On a bus
- On a plane
- On holiday
- Staying at someone's house
- The first day at...
- Trying to sell something
- Volunteering
- While gambling
- While taking part in a sport/ While taking part in a game

Extension

Play the same game, but also guessing five other things that people said which your partner didn't report. These phrases must also be true and in correct reported speech to get a point.