

1 You use report structures to give information about what people say or think. Common reporting verbs are:**a with that clauses:**

admit agree answer complain explain promise reply say think

He **agreed that** the exercise was difficult. They **explained that** they would be late.

Sally **replied that** she was busy.

b with verb + person object + that clauses:

convince inform remind tell

We **told them that** the work was important. I **reminded everyone that** it was Ben's birthday.

2 You normally change the tense of what the speaker says:**Speaker's words:**

I'm so hungry I could eat a horse!

We've just about finished; just one more page.

The film was absolutely great.

I'll be with you in a couple of minutes.

Reported clause:

He said that he **was** very hungry.

They said they **had** nearly finished.

They said the film **was** great.

They said it **had been** great.

She said she **would be** here soon.

Note that it is not usually necessary to report every word the speaker says, just the main idea.

3 There are some changes with modal verbs:**Speaker's words:**

Can I help you, sir?

OK, it's time. You must stop now.

Reported clause:

The assistant asked if he **could** help me.

The examiner said we **had to** arrive early.

But be careful: *could, would, should, might and ought* to stay the same:

We **might** need some help.

They said that they **might** need help.

4 You can use the present tenses in the report clauses if:**a You want to say that something is still true:**

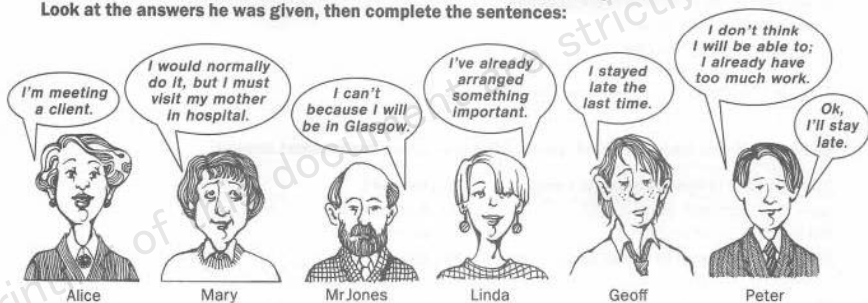
My name is Henry.

He said that his name is Henry. (Or 'was')

b You are talking about a future event:

A Choose which is the correct reported statement:

- I really love jazz music.
 - She said she loved jazz music.
 - She said she would love jazz.
- We were in France for a week.
 - They told us they had been in France for a week.
 - They told us they have been in France.
- He's working hard.
 - She said he worked hard.
 - She said he was working hard.
- I'll phone you.
 - You promised you phoned me.
 - You promised you would phone me.
- But I can't swim!
 - He explained he couldn't swim.
 - He explained he won't swim.
- She has read the book.
 - He told me she read the book.
 - He told me she had read the book.
- You should know the answer.
 - She told me I knew the answer.
 - She told me I should know the answer.

B The manager of a busy office asked his staff to work late one Friday. Look at the answers he was given, then complete the sentences:

- Alice explained that _____ client.
- Mary said _____ hospital.
- Mr Jones told the manager _____ Glasgow.
- Linda replied that _____ important.
- Geoff complained that _____ the last time.
- Peter answered that _____ able to.

C Complete the sentences using *said*, *told*, *asked* or *thought*:

- Someone _____ me the time. I _____ her that I didn't have a watch but _____ that it was about three o'clock.
- When I was walking in the city, someone _____ me if I was a tourist. I _____ him that I lived here, then _____ him if he wanted some help.
- 'Have I _____ you the story of my first holiday abroad?'
- The journalist _____ the policeman had _____ him about the murder.