

It is said that . . . He is said to . . . (be) supposed to . . .

A

Study this example situation:

Henry is very old. Nobody knows exactly how old he is, but:

It is said that **he** is 108 years old.

or **He** is said to be 108 years old.

Both these sentences mean: People say that he is 108 years old.



HENRY

You can use these structures with a number of other verbs, especially:

thought believed considered reported known expected alleged understood

Compare the two structures:

- Cathy works very hard.
It is said that she works 16 hours a day. or She is said to work 16 hours a day.
 - The police are looking for a missing boy.
It is believed that the boy is wearing a white sweater and blue jeans. or The boy is believed to be wearing a white sweater and blue jeans.
 - The strike started three weeks ago.
It is expected that it will end soon. or The strike is expected to end soon.
 - A friend of mine has been arrested.
It is alleged that he kicked a police officer. or He is alleged to have kicked a police officer.
 - Those two houses belong to the same family.
It is said that there is a secret tunnel between them. or There is said to be a secret tunnel between them.
- These structures are often used in news reports.
- It is reported that two people were injured in the explosion. or Two people are reported to have been injured in the explosion.

B

(Be) supposed to

Sometimes it is supposed to . . . = it is said to . . . :

- Let's go and see that movie. It's supposed to be very good. (= it is said to be very good)
- Mark is supposed to have kicked a police officer. (= he is said to have kicked)

But sometimes supposed to has a different meaning. Something is supposed to happen = it is planned, arranged, or expected. Often this is different from what really happens:

- I'd better hurry. It's almost 8:00 and I'm supposed to meet Ann at 8:15. (= I have arranged to meet Ann; I said I would meet her)
- The train was supposed to arrive at 11:30, but it was an hour late. (= the train was expected to arrive at 11:30 according to the schedule)

You're not supposed to do something = it is not allowed or advisable for you to do it:

- You're not supposed to park your car here. (= You're not allowed to park here.)
- Mr. Bruno is much better after his operation, but he's still not supposed to do any heavy work. (= his doctors have advised him not to)

Exercises

42.1 Write these sentences in another way, beginning as shown. Use the underlined word in your sentence.

- It is expected that the strike will end soon.
The strike is expected to end soon _____.
- It is thought that the prisoner escaped by climbing over a wall.
The prisoner is thought to have escaped by climbing over a wall _____.
- It is reported that many people are homeless after the floods.
Many people _____.
- It is alleged that the man robbed the store of \$3,000 in cash.
The man is _____.
- It is reported that the building was badly damaged by the fire.
The building _____.
- a) It is said that the company is losing a lot of money.
The company _____.
- b) It is believed that the company lost a lot of money last year.
The company _____.
- c) It is expected that the company will lose money this year.
The company _____.

42.2 People say a lot of things about Michael. For example:

- Michael eats spiders.
- He is very rich.
- He has 12 children.
- He knows a lot of famous people.
- He robbed a bank a long time ago.



MICHAEL

Nobody knows for sure whether these things are true or not. Write sentences about Michael using *supposed to*.

- Michael is supposed to eat spiders.* _____
- He _____.
- _____.
- _____.
- _____.

42.3 Now use *supposed to* with its other meaning. In each example what happens is different from what is supposed to happen. Use *(be) supposed to* + one of these verbs:

arrive be block call come park start

Some of the sentences are negative (like the first example).

- You 're not supposed to park _____ here. It's for private parking only.
- The train was supposed to arrive _____ at 11:30, but it was an hour late.
- What are the children doing at home? They _____ at school now.
- We _____ work at 8:15, but we rarely do anything before 8:30.
- This door is a fire exit. You _____ it.
- Oh no! I _____ Ann, but I completely forgot.
- They came very early – at 2:00. They _____ until 3:30.