

How to report WH and Yes/No questions

There are mainly two types of questions – Wh-questions and Yes/No questions.

When we report a Wh-question, we use a reporting verb like asked or enquired.

Study the example given below.

Direct: He said to me, 'Where do you live?'

Indirect: He asked me where I lived.

Direct: Mother said to me, 'What are you doing there?'

Indirect: Mother asked me what I was doing there.

When we report a Yes/No question, we use whether or if.

Direct: Suma said to me, 'Are you interested in this offer?'

Indirect: Suma asked me if I was interested in that offer.

Direct: The teacher said to me, 'Do you know the answer?'

Indirect: The teacher asked me if / whether I knew the answer.

Direct: Martha said to Susie, 'Will you trust a guy like Martin?'

Indirect: Martha asked Susie if she would trust a guy like Martin.

Direct: 'Do you think you know better than your dad?' the angry mother jeered.

Indirect: The angry mother jeered at her son and asked if he thought that he knew better than his dad.

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Exercise

Change the following direct speech into indirect speech.

1. 'What do you want?' he said to her.
2. He said, 'How's your mother.'
3. He enquired, 'When do you intend to pay me?'
4. 'Do you really come from China?' the prince asked.
5. 'Do you speak English?' he said.

Answers

1. He asked her what she wanted.
2. He asked me how my mother was.
3. He enquired when I intended to pay him.
4. The prince asked if I really came from China.
5. He asked if I spoke English.