ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Indirect Speech MCQ Test With Answers + PDF Exercise 4

English Grammar Tests · 20 questions · Online test and questions PDF:
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Explanations

1. “Don’t make so much noise, Michael,” said Ellen. Ellen told Michael _____ so much noise.
✔ **B) not to make**
A negative command in reported speech uses **tell someone not to + verb**: **Ellen told Michael not to make so much noise.** Not **don't make**, because we don't keep the imperative form after **told**.

2. A foreigner asked: “How do English people spend their Sundays?” A foreigner asked how _____ their Sundays.
✔ **C) English people spent**
In reported questions we use normal statement word order (subject + verb), with no **do/did**. After the past verb **asked**, the present **spend** moves back to the past: **how English people spent**. Not **did English people spend**, because that is question word order.

3. The film director was asked _____.
✔ **C) if he had ever won an Oscar**
After **was asked**, the reported question moves back in tense and uses statement word order. A question like **Have you ever won an Oscar?** becomes **if he had ever won an Oscar**. It also fits a film director. The other options have the wrong tense, the wrong linking word (**that**) or don't fit a film director.

4. The police officer asked us _____.
✔ **B) where we were going**
Reported questions use statement word order and move back one tense after a past reporting verb: **Where are you going?** becomes **where we were going**. Options like **are we going** or **did the tram stop** keep question word order, which is wrong in reported speech.

5. He said that _____.
✔ **C) they were going to the nearest post-office**
After **He said that**, we need a normal statement (subject + verb) moved back one tense: **We are going…** becomes **they were going**. The other options put the verb before the subject, like a question. That word order is wrong after **said that**.

6. He said to her, “Don’t enter the room.” He ordered her _____ the room.
✔ **A) not to enter**
A negative order in reported speech uses **order someone not to + verb**: **He ordered her not to enter the room.** Not **to enter**, because that reports the opposite order.

7. “How far do I have to walk?” she asked me. She wanted to know how far _____ to walk.
✔ **A) she had**
In reported speech the pronoun changes (**I** becomes **she**) and the present **have to** moves back to the past: **how far she had to walk**. Not **she has**, because the reporting verb **wanted** is in the past.

8. She told him that she _____ to see him the following day.
✔ **D) would come**
After a past reporting verb, **will** becomes **would**: **I will come tomorrow** becomes **she would come the following day**. Not **will come**, because **told** is past, so the tense moves back.

9. “Did you sleep well?” I asked him. I asked him if _____ well.
✔ **C) he had slept**
A yes/no question is reported with **if** + statement word order, and the past simple moves back to the past perfect: **Did you sleep well?** becomes **if he had slept well**. Not **you slept**, because the pronoun must change to **he**.

10. “Were you at the zoo last night?” asks Jane. Jane asks _____ at the zoo last night.
✔ **B) if I was**
The reporting verb **asks** is in the present, so the tense does not move back: **Were you…?** becomes **if I was**. Not **if I had been**, because backshift happens only after a past reporting verb.

11. “Whose birthday is it?” said Jane. Jane asked whose birthday _____.
✔ **C) it was**
Reported questions use statement word order (subject + verb), and after a past reporting verb **is** becomes **was**: **whose birthday it was**. Not **was it** or **is it**, because those keep question word order.

12. “Where do you live?” the boy asked. The boy wanted to know where _____.
✔ **D) I lived**
Do you live? becomes **I lived**: we use statement word order without **do**, and the present simple moves back to the past simple after **wanted to know**. Not **I had lived**, because that is the backshift of **did you live**, not **do you live**.

13. “Where did you live?” my boss asked. My boss wanted to know where _____.
✔ **D) I had lived**
Did you live? becomes **I had lived**: the past simple moves back to the past perfect, and we use statement word order without **did**. Not **had I lived**, because that is question word order.

14. “I spoke to Jane last week,” she said. She said _____.
✔ **C) she had spoken to Jane a week before.**
In reported speech **I** becomes **she**, the past simple becomes the past perfect (**had spoken**), and **last week** becomes **a week before**. Not **she had spoken to Jane last week**, because the time expression should also change.

15. “Don’t wait for me, Ann,” said Tom. Tom told Ann _____.
✓ **B) not to wait for him**
A negative command is reported with **tell someone not to + verb**, and **me** becomes **him**: **Tom told Ann not to wait for him.** Not **don't wait for him**, because we don't keep the imperative after **told**.

16. The manager asks the secretary _____.
✓ **B) if Mr. Smith will be busy at 11 tomorrow**
The reporting verb **asks** is in the present, so there is no backshift: **will** and **tomorrow** stay the same. We use **if** + statement word order: **if Mr. Smith will be busy at 11 tomorrow**. Not **would be… the next day**, because that is only used after a past reporting verb.

17. He was sure that he _____ this time.
✓ **B) wouldn’t fail**
After a past verb (**was sure**), a future idea uses **would**, the past form of **will**: **He was sure that he wouldn't fail.** Not **will not fail**, because the main verb is in the past.

18. “Can you open the door for me, my son?” asked an old woman. An old woman asked a young man _____ the door for her.
✓ **E) to open**
A polite request like **Can you…?** is often reported with **ask someone to + verb**: **An old woman asked a young man to open the door for her.** Not **if can he open**, because a reported question needs statement word order (**if he could open**), not question word order.

19. She said, “I lost the key of my room.” She said that _____.
✓ **A) she had lost the key of her room**
In reported speech **I** becomes **she**, **my** becomes **her**, and the past simple **lost** becomes the past perfect **had lost**. Not **she lost the key of my room**, because **my** must change to **her**.

20. I asked Nelly, “What are you looking for?” I asked Nelly what _____ looking for.
✓ **B) she was**
Reported questions use statement word order, **you** becomes **she**, and **are** becomes **was** after a past reporting verb: **what she was looking for**. Not **was she**, because that is question word order.

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