ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Reported Speech Test A2 – B1 Grammar Exercises

A2 B1 Level Grammar Tests · 20 questions · Online test and questions PDF:
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Explanations

1. Peter, who has finished reading a history book, told his brother that he _____ it really interesting.
✔ **B) had found**
After a past reporting verb like **told**, the past simple moves back to the past perfect. Peter said, **"I found it really interesting"** → he **had found** it really interesting.

2. John called his wife and said that he _____ collect the kids from school because his car _____ down.
✔ **B) wouldn't be able to / had broken**
John's words were: **"I won't be able to collect the kids because my car has broken down."** After **said**, **won't be able to** becomes **wouldn't be able to**, and **has broken** becomes **had broken**. Not **would** or **can**, because a broken car means he cannot collect the kids.

3. Isobel has said that she _____ to Holland last year and that she _____ to France this summer.
✔ **C) travelled / is flying**
The reporting verb **has said** is in the present perfect, so the tenses do not move back. Isobel said **"I travelled to Holland last year and I'm flying to France this summer"**, so we keep **travelled / is flying**. Not **had travelled / flew**, because we only move tenses back after a past reporting verb like **said**.

4. Luke said to his elder sister, "I _____ hard tonight to get a good grade in tomorrow's exam."
✔ **A) must study**
These are Luke's exact words in quotation marks, so the tense does not change. **Tonight** and **tomorrow** show the present situation, so Luke says **must study**. Not **had to study**, because we only change tenses in reported speech, not inside quotation marks.

5. A: What did Tim ask you and Carl?

B: He asked us _____ we _____ to the shopping centre.
✔ **D) if / were going**
We report a yes/no question with **if** or **whether**. Tim asked, **"Are you going to the shopping centre?"** After **asked**, **are going** becomes **were going**. Not **whether / have gone**, because the tense must move back.

6. My new music teacher asked me if I _____ the electric guitar, and I said that I couldn't, but I told her that I _____ the drums.
✔ **B) could play / played**
In reported speech after a past verb, **can** becomes **could** and the present simple **play** becomes the past simple **played**. The clue **I said that I couldn't** shows the tenses move back.

7. While my mum was cooking dinner yesterday, she _____ me to set the dinner table.
✔ **B) asked**
We report a request with **ask + person + to + verb**: **She asked me to set the table.** We can't say **suggested me to**, **offered me to** or **refused me to**.

8. Because Berk, Feray and Fatma were all bored of watching TV, Fatma _____ turning off the TV and playing Scrabble.
✔ **C) suggested**
We use **suggest + -ing** to report an idea: **Fatma suggested turning off the TV.** Her words were probably **"Let's turn off the TV and play Scrabble." Ordered**, **warned** and **promised** are not followed by **-ing** like this.

9. Omar's dad _____ him what he _____ in his history lesson the previous day.
✔ **D) asked / had learnt**
A reported question uses **asked**. The dad asked, **"What did you learn yesterday?"** After **asked**, the past simple moves back to the past perfect: **what he had learnt**. **The previous day** is the reported form of **yesterday**.

10. Linda _____ her sister not to play in the main road and added that she _____ be hit by a car.
✔ **A) warned / might**
We use **warn + person + not to + verb** to talk about danger: **She warned her sister not to play in the road.** In reported speech, **may** becomes **might**. **Suggested**, **refused** and **promised** cannot be used with **her sister not to play**.

11. Esat _____ me that the new James Bond film was getting great reviews but that he _____ it yet.
✔ **C) told / hadn't seen**
Tell is followed by a person (**told me**), but **say** is not (**said me** is wrong). Esat said, **"I haven't seen it yet"**, and after a past reporting verb this becomes **hadn't seen**. The word **yet** goes with the perfect tense.

12. Toni said that she _____ do her washing the next day and she added that the weather _____ nice then.
✔ **C) ought to / would be**
Toni said, **"I ought to do my washing tomorrow. The weather will be nice." Ought to** does not change, and **will be** becomes **would be**. The words **the next day** and **then** show the tenses move back. Not **might / will be**, because **will** must change to **would**.

13. Last night, my mum came into my bedroom, asked me what I _____ and told me _____ my room.
✓ A) was doing / to tidy
Mum asked, **"What are you doing?"**, so after **asked** this becomes **what I was doing**. An order is reported with **tell + person + to + verb**: **told me to tidy my room**.

14. My friend Ahmed said, "I _____ in my biology project _____."
✓ B) gave / yesterday
These are Ahmed's exact words in quotation marks, so we use normal direct speech: the past simple with **yesterday**. **Give in** means 'hand in' work to a teacher: **I gave in my project yesterday. The day before** and **the following day** are used in reported speech.

15. The doctor advised Mr Karabulut to do more exercise and to stop smoking. The doctor said, "_____."
✓ D) You should do more exercise and stop smoking, Mr Karabulut
Advise means 'give advice', and we usually give advice with **should**: **You should do more exercise.** Not **Please, please…**, because that sounds like begging, not advice.

16. **Mr Jacobs had blamed Mr Burns for the crash.**
✓ A) True
Mr Jacobs said, **"It is the other driver's fault, not mine."** So he **blamed** Mr Burns for the crash.

17. **The accident investigator said that Mr Jacobs had not been driving too fast.**
✓ A) True
The passage says the investigator said that **Mr Jacobs couldn't have been speeding**. **Speeding** means driving too fast, so this is true.

18. **The accident happened exactly the way Mr Burns had described it.**
✓ B) False
The investigator said the accident happened **exactly how Mr Jacobs had described it**, not Mr Burns. So this is false.

19. **The report was written by the accident investigator.**
✓ B) False
The passage says **a policeman** has written a brief report. The policeman only talked to the accident investigator, so this is false.

20. **When it was understood in the end that Mr Burns was guilty, the policeman told Mr Burns that he had to go to the police station with him.**
✓ A) True
At the end, the policeman went to Mr Burns' house and said, **"You must come with me to the police station."** In reported speech, **must** becomes **had to**, so this is true.

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