ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Reported Speech Test B1 Grammar Exercises

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

1. Kirsten said that _____ would lend _____ her car if I needed it.
✔ **C) she / me**
In reported speech, pronouns change to fit the new speaker. Kirsten said **"I will lend you my car"**, so **I** becomes **she** and **you** becomes **me**: **she would lend me her car**.

2. Scientists still have no answer to _____ there is life on other planets.
✔ **D) whether**
We use **whether** (or **if**) for a yes/no question inside a sentence: **Is there life on other planets?** becomes **whether there is life on other planets**. **That** introduces a fact, not a question.

3. It _____ obvious that we _____ a big problem with our old car one day.
✔ **D) was / would have**
The situation is in the past, so we use **was**. A future idea seen from the past uses **would** instead of **will**: **It was obvious that we would have a problem one day**. Not **was / will have**, because after a past verb we normally backshift **will** to **would**.

4. She _____ to us _____ there was nothing to worry about, but actually there was so much.
✔ **B) said / _____**
We say **say (something) to someone**, so **said to us** is correct, and **that** can be left out. Not **told**, because **tell** takes a person directly with no **to**: **She told us…**, not **She told to us…**.

5. I asked Lorena what Mike _____ about when I went into his room, but she told me that she _____ no idea.
✔ **C) had been talking / had**
In reported speech we move tenses back: the action in progress becomes **had been talking**, and **I have no idea** becomes **she had no idea**. Not **was having**, because **have** meaning 'possess' is not used in continuous forms.

6. I know the film starts at 9 pm, but I am not sure _____ it is today or tomorrow.
✔ **B) if**
We use **if** (or **whether**) for a yes/no question inside a sentence: **Is it today or tomorrow?** becomes **I'm not sure if it is today or tomorrow**. Not **when** or **what time**, because the speaker already knows the time (9 pm).

7. **Keith:** Shall we throw a party for Jane next Saturday?

Bill told Lara that Keith _____ for Jane the following Saturday.
✔ **A) suggested throwing a party**
Shall we…? is a suggestion, so we report it with **suggest + -ing**: **Keith suggested throwing a party**. Not **promised**, because Keith is asking for an idea, not saying he will do it.

8. The police wanted to know _____ had stolen the businessman's car and _____.
✔ **B) who / why**
In a reported question, **who** asks about the person who did the action (the thief), and **why** asks for the reason: **The police wanted to know who had stolen the car and why.** Not **whom**, because the missing word is the subject of **had stolen**.

9. No one _____ me _____ we were going to pay such a lot of extra money for the package tour.
✔ **D) told / _____**
Tell is followed directly by a person: **No one told me (that)…**; **that** can be left out. Not **said** or **explained**, because they need **to** before the person: **said to me**, **explained to me**.

10. We knew that it was true, but Russell _____ that he _____ from the company.
✔ **B) denied / had been fired**
But shows contrast: we knew it was true, yet Russell said it wasn't, so he **denied** it. The firing happened before he spoke, so we use the past perfect passive **had been fired**. Not **admitted**, because that doesn't contrast with **We knew it was true**.

11. Alice told me that no one at customs had _____ her _____ she had anything to declare and that she found it quite strange.
✔ **A) asked / if**
A reported yes/no question uses **ask + person + if/whether**: **Do you have anything to declare?** becomes **asked her if she had anything to declare**. Not **told her whether**, because **tell** is for giving information, not asking.

12. Martha _____ to break up with him if Jack didn't stop smoking.
✔ **D) threatened**
Threaten to do something means saying you will do something unpleasant if another person doesn't do what you want: **She threatened to break up with him**. Not **warned**, because we say **warn someone that…** or **warn someone not to…**, not **warn to do**.

13. Miriam _____ me that she _____ how to dance the waltz from her grandmother.
✓ B) told / learnt
Tell takes a person directly: **Miriam told me that…**, and the past tense **learnt** reports **I learnt…**. Not **said / had learnt**, because **said me** is wrong; we say **said to me**.

14. Jason finally _____ to copying the homework from the Internet.
✓ D) admitted
Admit to + -ing means to say that you did something wrong: **He admitted to copying the homework**. **Finally** shows he accepted the truth in the end. Not **denied**, because we say **denied copying**, without **to**.

15. Could you _____ her _____ the reports with her when she comes to the meeting?
✓ D) tell / to bring
To report an instruction we use **tell + person + to + verb**: **tell her to bring the reports**. Not **suggest / bringing**, because **suggest** is not followed directly by a person.

16. Ahmet _____ when he will be able to get rid of the plaster on his leg.
✓ C) wants to know
Wants to know introduces a question in the present, so the tense stays the same: **When will I be able to…?** becomes **he wants to know when he will be able to…**. Not **was telling me**, because that is past and doesn't fit **will**.

17. I am busy today and might forget it. Can you please _____ me to do the shopping before I come home?
✓ A) remind
Remind someone to do something means help them not to forget: **Can you remind me to do the shopping?** The clue is **might forget it**.

18. I asked _____ he said to her, but she _____ to talk to me.
✓ B) what / refused
What asks about the words he said, and **refuse to + verb** means say no to doing something. **But** shows she didn't want to talk. Not **agreed**, because that doesn't contrast with **but**.

19. That tooth of yours looks awful. I _____ making an appointment at the dentist's as soon as possible.
✓ D) suggest
Suggest is followed by the **-ing** form: **I suggest making an appointment**. Not **suggest that**, because **that** must be followed by a clause, e.g. **I suggest that you make…**; not **advise you**, because it needs **to**: **advise you to make**.

20. His parents _____ Luke of getting into a fight with his younger brother, but he _____ having done anything wrong.
✓ B) accused / denied
Accuse someone of + -ing means say they did something wrong, and **deny + -ing** means say you didn't do it: **he denied having done anything wrong**. Not **complained**, because we don't say **complain someone of**.

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