



Direct and Reported Speech

When direct speech is written, speech marks go around the words actually spoken.

For example: "Be quiet!" I said.

When indirect or reported speech is written, speech marks are not used.

For example: I told him to be quiet.

In the story below, draw a ring around sentences that contain direct speech. Underline sentences that contain indirect (or reported) speech.

Our teacher told us the assignment was due by Friday. No excuses would be accepted for it being late.

"What if we're in an accident and on a life support system?" Jay asked. Jay was our class joker.

"Then — maybe," Miss Fields said with a small smile, "but only if your writing hand is in a plaster cast as well."

We had to write a story about an important family object. Miss Fields suggested it would be a good idea to ask our parents for ideas. She told us that special clothes or old photographs might be good objects to write about. But I wasn't at home. I was staying with my parent's friends, the Porters. Mom and Dad were on a business trip. They were supposed to be home on Wednesday only two days before the assignment was due. I wasn't worried because I knew I could write it on Thursday. But then Dad phoned and told me that they had to stay away for another week.

I was in trouble!

"You're looking sad," said Mrs Porter. I sat at the kitchen table fiddling with my pen and paper. When I told her my problem, she smiled and patted my hand.

"Maybe you're not in as much trouble as you think." She went to the cupboard and got a small vase from a top shelf. "Did you know that your grandmother and I were great friends? When she passed away, your dad gave me this beautiful vase. It had belonged to your great-great-grandmother."

I began to write.

Did you notice how the author uses a mix of direct and indirect speech to write the story? Use a similar style to write another part of this story on a separate page — perhaps what happens when the teacher returns the assignments and comments on them.