Upper Intermediate Unit 9a

Verb patterns with reporting verbs

Presentation

Say, tell, think and *ask* are the most common reporting verbs, but you can also use other reporting verbs to summarize or express the sentiment of the original statement:

*'**Why don't we** celebrate the town's 500th anniversary with a large party?' → The chairperson **suggested** celebrating the anniversary with a large party.*

*'**Would you like me to** investigate the cost?' → Mrs Holden **offered** to investigate the cost.*

TIP When deciding which reporting verb to use, think about the function or purpose of the speaker's words. For example: *Why don't you …?* = suggesting; *Would you like me to …?* = offering.

Reporting verbs are followed by different verb patterns:

Verb + *that*

*Everyone agreed **that** it was a good idea.*

Reporting verbs with this pattern include: *admit, agree, explain, deny, say, warn.*

Verb + someone + *that*

*Mr Lloyd **warned everyone that** spending more money was a bad idea.*

Reporting verbs with this pattern include: *advise, persuade, tell, warn.*

Verb + *to* + infinitive

*Mrs Holden offered **to investigate** the costs.*

Reporting verbs with this pattern include: *agree, offer, promise, refuse, threaten.*

Verb + someone + *to* + infinitive

*The salesman **encouraged customers to buy** the product.*

Reporting verbs with this pattern include: *advise, ask, convince, encourage, invite, persuade, remind, tell, warn.*

Verb + *-ing*

*The chairperson **suggested celebrating** the anniversary with a large party.*

Reporting verbs with this pattern include: *advise, admit, deny, mention, propose, recommend, suggest.*

Verb + preposition + *-ing*

*The employee **apologized for being** late.*

Reporting verbs with this pattern include: *apologize* (+ *for*), *insist* (+ *on*).

Verb + someone + preposition + *-ing*

*Their teacher **warned all of them about copying** in the exam.*

Reporting verbs with this pattern include: *accuse* (+ *of*), *blame* (+ *for*), *congratulate* (+ *on*), *thank* (+ *for*), *warn* (+ *about*).

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Exercises

1 Complete the reported speech with a verb in the box.

accused	admitted	apologized	encouraged	recommended	refused	~~suggested~~	warned

1 'Why don't you see a doctor?' — She ..suggested.. seeing a doctor.
2 'Be careful going up that ladder.' — He ..... me about going up the ladder.
3 'Sorry. I broke your vase.' — I ..... for breaking her vase.
4 'It's true. I stole the car.' — The thief ..... stealing the car.
5 'No, we won't work late.' — The employees ..... to work late.
6 'This book is brilliant. You have to read it.' — She ..... reading the book.
7 'I think you're telling me lies!' — His mum ..... him of telling lies.
8 'Well done. Keep going. I know you can do it!' — The coach ..... the athlete.

2 Match the two halves of the sentences.

1 One person warned everyone that .....
2 Mrs White promised to .....
3 Mr Jones proposed .....
4 The chairperson insisted .....
5 The chairperson thanked .....

A everyone for coming.
B building a new park would be expensive.
C on reaching a final decision at the meeting.
D find out the exact costs for the next meeting.
E asking for more prices from different builders.

3 Read the conversation. Complete the report of the conversation. Change the verb form where necessary. Sometimes there is more than one possible answer. Then listen and check.

Baldesi: I'd like to propose that we introduce regular English lessons for everyone in the office.
Song: I agree. English lessons will be very useful for all those telephone calls from abroad.
Webb: Sorry, but I don't think staff need help with English. Most of our clients are Spanish speakers.
Song: Yes, actually you are probably right about the clients being Spanish. But some use English, so what about offering lessons in both languages?
Baldesi: But have you considered the cost of such a plan?
Webb: I have an idea. I could find out which language people think they need most.
Baldesi: Sorry, I don't understand.
Webb: They would choose between English or Spanish lessons.

1 Mr Baldesi proposed ..introducing.. regular English lessons for everyone in the office.
2 Ms Song agreed that ..... very useful for all those telephone calls from abroad.
3 However, Mr Webb disagreed ..... with English, because most of their clients are Spanish speakers.
4 Ms Song admitted ..... probably right.
5 She suggested ..... lessons in both languages.
6 Mr Baldesi asked them ..... the cost of such a plan.
7 Mr Webb offered ..... which language people thought they needed most.
8 He explained that ..... between English or Spanish lessons.

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