

Reported Speech

English tutorials

reported speech

Reported speech (sometimes also referred to as “indirect speech”) refers to a sentence reporting what someone has said.

Several changes occur when we do this.

- verb tenses;
- pronouns;
- time expressions;
- place expressions.

reported speech

- Changing verb tenses:

Direct speech		Reported speech
Present Simple	→	Past Simple
Present Continuous	→	Past Continuous
Present Perfect Simple	→	Past Perfect Simple
Present Perfect Continuous	→	Past Perfect Continuous
Past Simple	→	Past Perfect Simple
Future	→	Conditional
Imperative	→	Infinitive

Note that the Past Perfect Simple and the Past Perfect Continuous do not change.

reported speech

- Changing pronouns, personal and possessive:

Direct speech		
I	me	my
We	us	ours



Reported speech		
he / she	him / her	his / her
they	them	their

reported speech

- Time expressions:

Direct speech		Reported speech
Now	→	then
Today	→	that day
Tonight	→	that night
Yesterday	→	the day before
Tomorrow	→	the following day / the next day
next day / week / month / year	→	the following day / week / month / year

reported speech

- Place expressions:

Direct speech		Reported speech
Here	→	there
This	→	that
These	→	those

reported speech

Look at the girl on the right. We would turn the statement into the reported speech by changing:

- the verb from the present simple to the past simple
- the personal pronoun I to she
- the possessive pronoun my to her

I love my new dress.



The sentence would then be:

The girl said she loved her new dress.

reported speech

There are several reporting verbs we can use:

→ The most commonly used one is to say.
She said she was studying.

→ When the person who we are talking to is referred, we can use to tell.
You told me you liked your new dress.

→ We may report something that was said without keeping to the original words, the reporting verb itself may contain that idea or intention. The verbs here can be: to admit, to advise, to agree, to remind, to suggest, to encourage, to insist, to persuade, to warn, to refuse, to urge, among others.
- I admit it, I did it!

She admitted she did it.

reported speech

Time to practise!

Look at the images that will appear and change what the characters say into the reported speech. Take in consideration all the changes that must occur: in the verbs, the pronouns and the expressions of time and place.

reported speech

My mother
gives me new
dolls regularly.



reported speech

The girl said her mother gave her new dolls regularly.

My mother
gives me new
dolls regularly.



reported speech

My book
is being very
interesting!



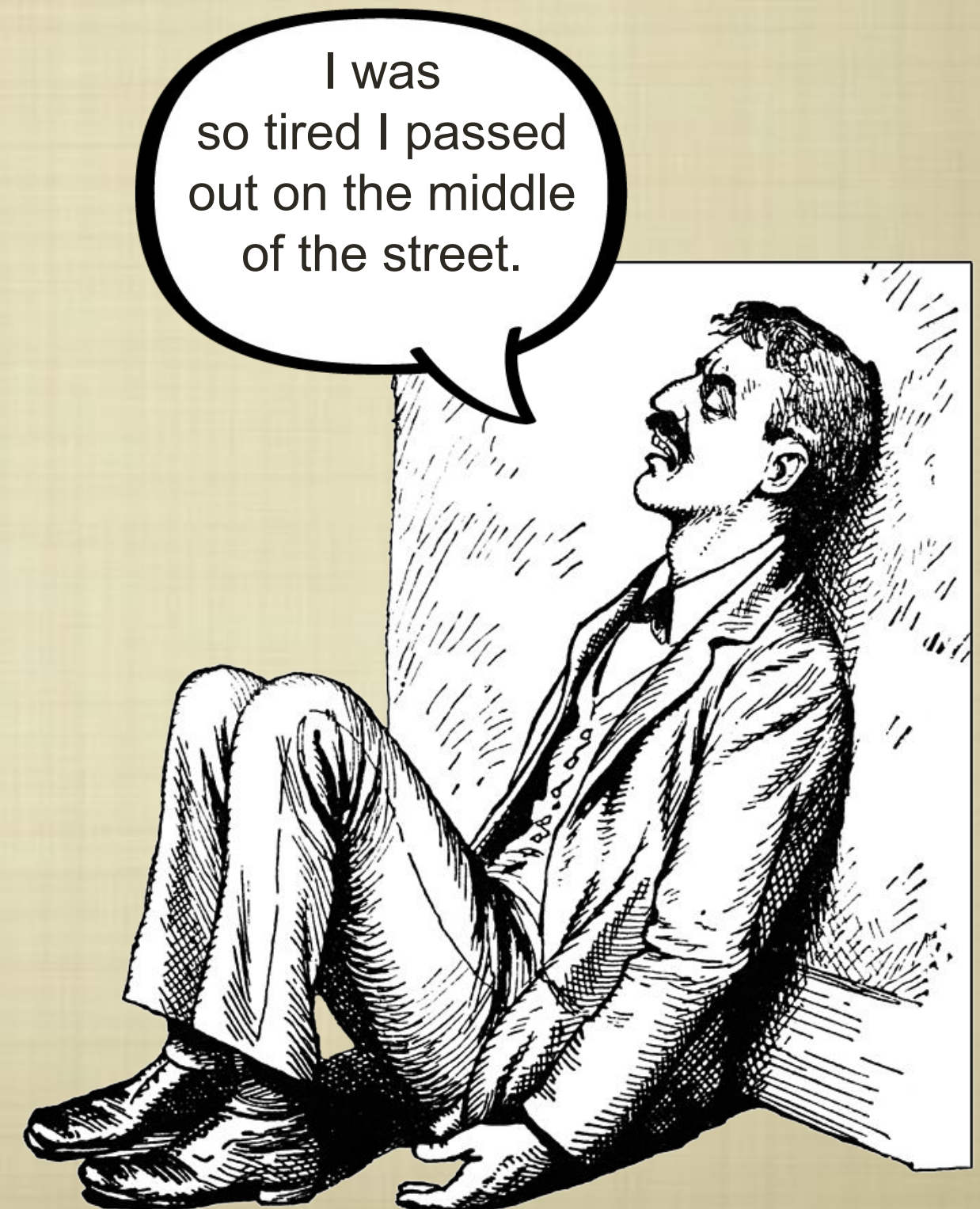
reported speech

The woman said her book was being very interesting.

My book
is being very
interesting!

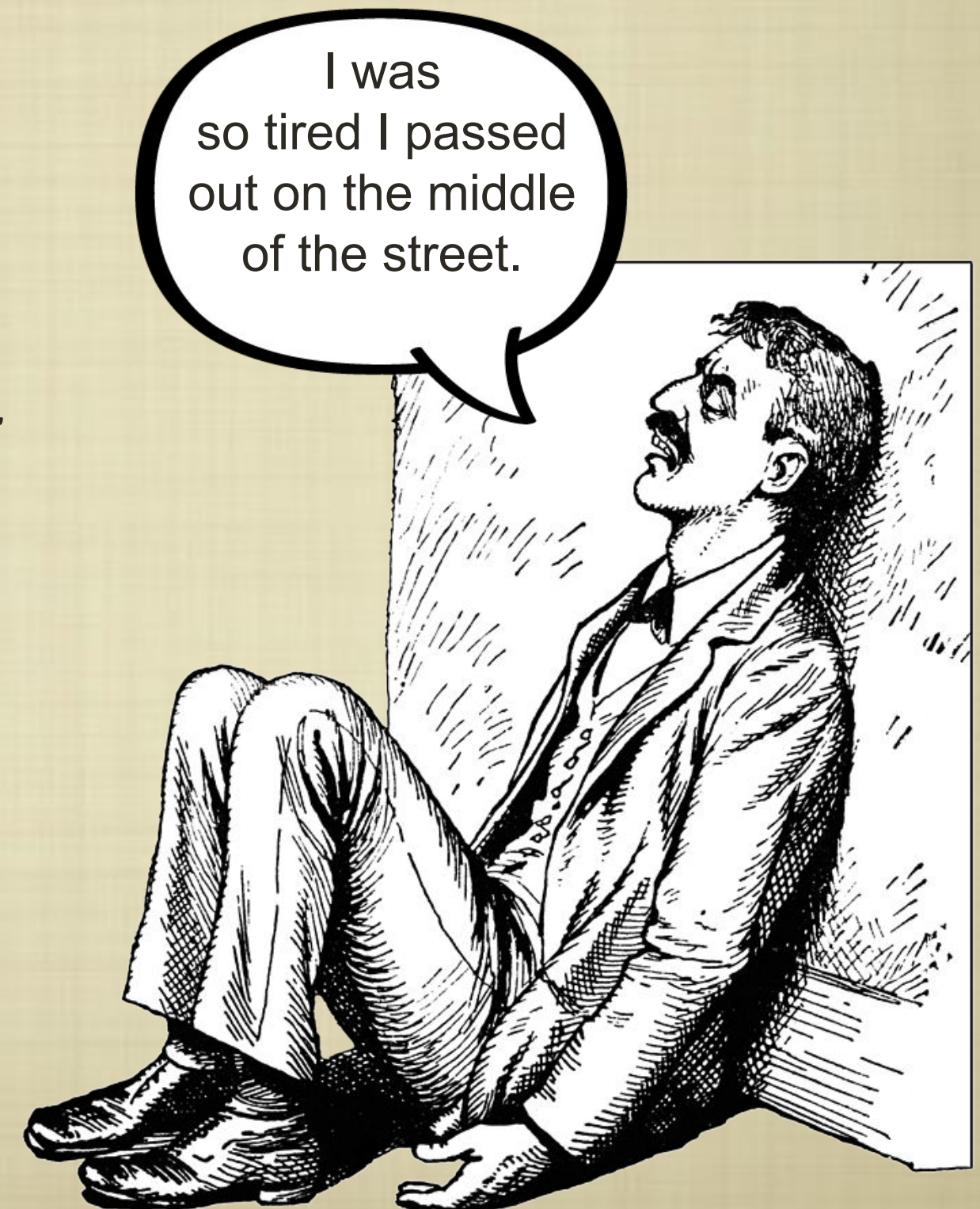


reported speech



reported speech

The man said he had been so tired he passed out on the middle of the street.



reported speech



reported speech

*The woman said it had been years since she
had had that much fun.*



reported speech



I will catch
a fish
today!

reported speech

The girl said she would catch a fish that day.

I will catch
a fish
today!



reported speech



reported speech

The man yelled at me to stop.

