

Teaching Tips

We can use a speaker's words or thoughts as part of our own sentence, using conjunctions (e.g. that), and changing pronouns, tenses and other words where necessary. This kind of structure is called 'indirect speech' or 'reported speech'.

Direct Speech

John said, "I want to go home."

Reported/Indirect Speech

John said that he wanted to go home.

Change of Tenses

When we use reported speech, the main verb of the sentence is usually **past or past perfect**

Simple Present	→	Simple Past
Simple Past	→	Past Perfect
Present Continuous	→	Past Continuous
am / is	→	were
are	→	were
do / does	→	did
has / have	→	had

Change of Pronouns

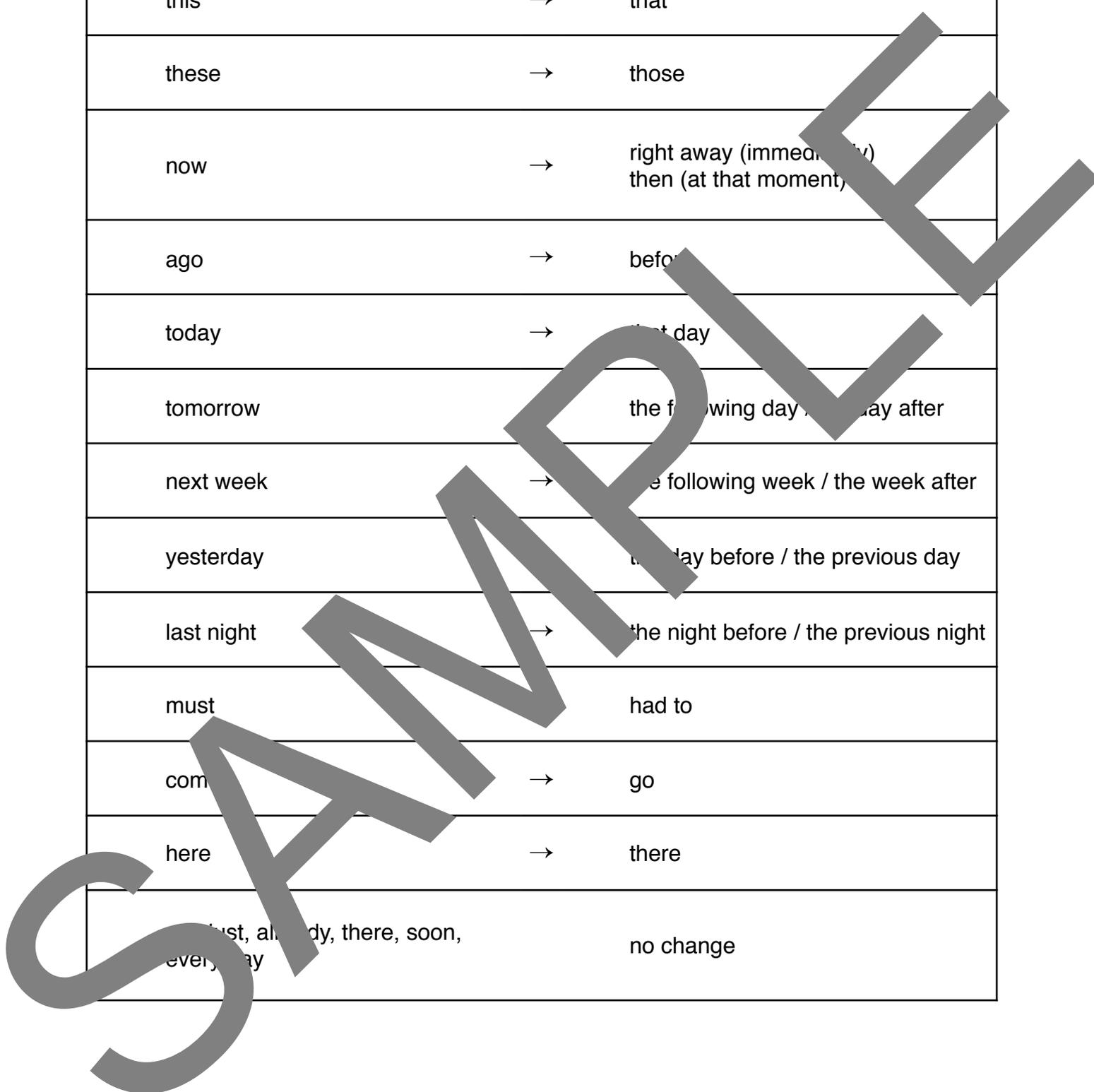
I	→	he, she
we	→	they
you	→	I, we, they, he, she
me	→	him, her
us	→	them
she, he, it	→	me, us, them, him, her
he, she, they, him, her, them, it	→	no change

Change of Possessive Pronouns

my	→	his, her
our	→	their
your	→	my, our, their, his, her
her, his, its, their	→	no change

Other Changes

this	→	that
these	→	those
now	→	right away (immediately) then (at that moment)
ago	→	before
today	→	that day
tomorrow	→	the following day / the day after
next week	→	the following week / the week after
yesterday	→	the day before / the previous day
last night	→	the night before / the previous night
must		had to
come	→	go
here	→	there
just, already, there, soon, every day		no change



Exercise 1

Step-by-step reported speech for statements: Follow the instructions based on this sentence: "I will finish my project tonight." (David announced)

1. Find the verbs that need to be changed.

2. Find the pronouns that need to be changed.

3. Find the time words that need to be changed.

4. Rewrite the sentence with third person and the speaking verb first (followed by 'that'). Use 'told' if necessary.

Follow the steps above to change the sentences below into reported speech.

1. "Roy gave me a present yesterday." (Tom said)

2. "I was having a shower this morning when someone rang the doorbell." (Polly said)

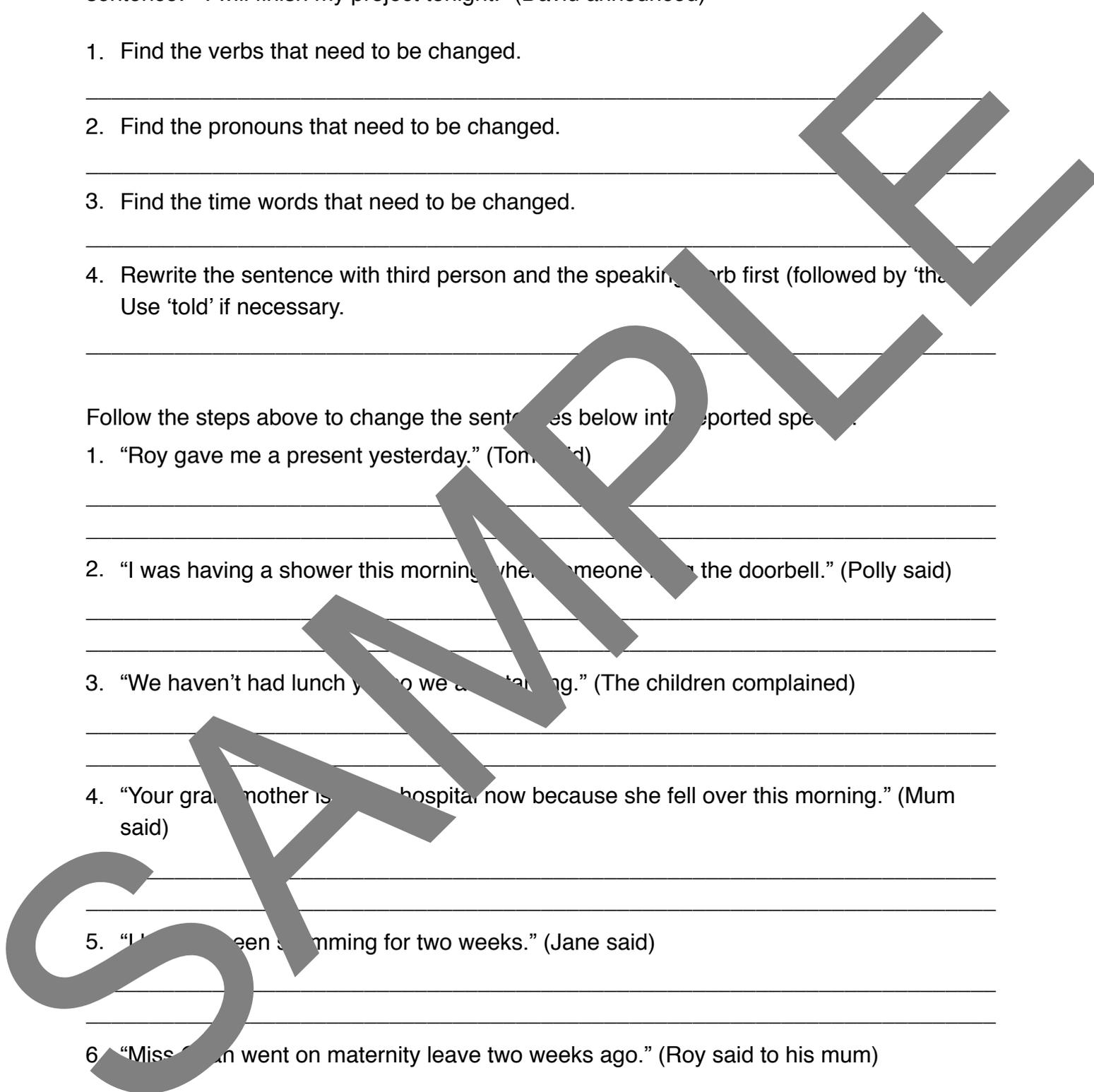
3. "We haven't had lunch yet so we are starving." (The children complained)

4. "Your grandmother is in hospital now because she fell over this morning." (Mum said)

5. "I have been swimming for two weeks." (Jane said)

6. "Miss Green went on maternity leave two weeks ago." (Roy said to his mum)

7. "I think the exam papers will be returned to us tomorrow." (Raymond said)



Exercise 6

Change the following conversation into reported speech.

- Roy: What did you do at the weekend?
- Anna: We went to Macau for a short trip and we came back last night.
- Roy: That sounds like fun! Did your whole family go?
- Anna: We all went except my dad. He went fishing in Tai Po instead.
- Roy: What did you do in Macau?
- Anna: We took a tour around some historic places.
- Roy: Are you planning to go back again soon?
- Anna: Yes. We'll go to see the Dancing Water Show next month. Maybe you come with us.
- Roy: Sure! I hear it's a great show!

Roy asked Anna what she had done that weekend.

Anna replied _____

Roy said it sounded like fun and asked _____

Anna said that her dad _____

Roy asked what she had done in Macau.

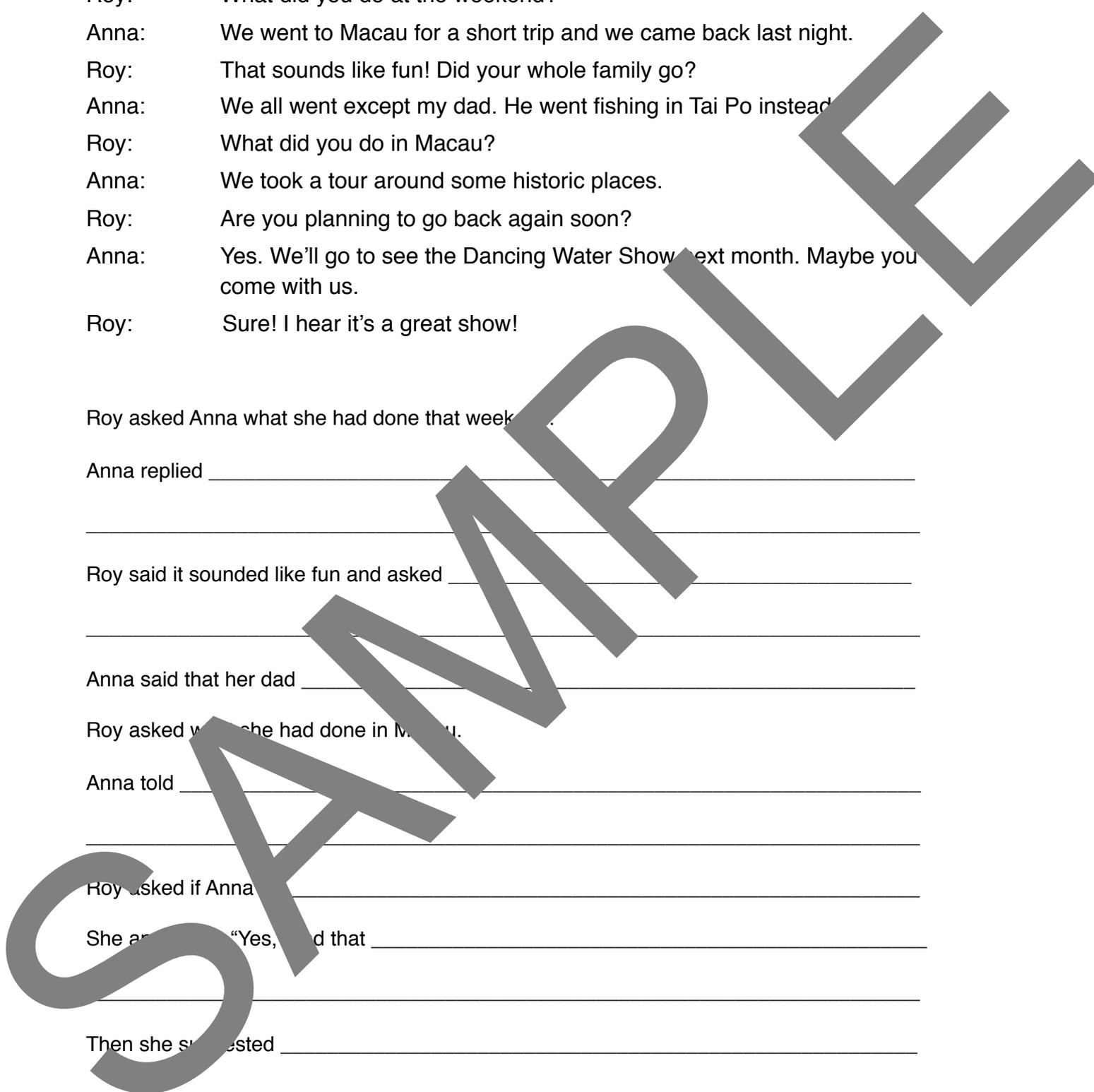
Anna told _____

Roy asked if Anna _____

She answered "Yes," and that _____

Then she suggested _____

Roy agreed and said _____



Exercise 1 - Answers

Step-by-step reported speech for statements: Follow the instructions based on this sentence: "I will finish my project tonight." (David announced)

1. Find the verbs that need to be changed.

finish

2. Find the pronouns that need to be changed.

I, my

3. Find the time words that need to be changed.

tonight

4. Rewrite the sentence with third person and the speaking verb first (followed by 'that'). Use 'told' if necessary.

David announced that he would finish his project that night.

Follow the steps above to change the sentences below into reported speech.

1. "Roy gave me a present yesterday." (Tom said)

Tom said that Roy had given him a present the day before/previous day.

2. "I was having a shower this morning when someone rang the doorbell." (Polly said)

Polly said that she had been having a shower this morning when someone rang/had rung the doorbell.

3. "We haven't had lunch yet so we are starving." (The children complained)

The children complained that they hadn't had lunch yet and were starving.

4. "Your grandmother is in the hospital now because she fell over this morning." (Mum said)

Mum said that their grandmother was in the hospital because she fell/had fallen over this morning.

5. "I haven't been swimming for two weeks." (Jane said)

Jane said that she hadn't been swimming for two weeks.

6. "Miss Chan went on maternity leave two weeks ago." (Roy said to his mum)

Roy said to his mum that Miss Chan had gone on maternity leave two weeks earlier/previously.

7. "I think the exam papers will be returned to us tomorrow." (Raymond said)

Raymond said that he thought the exam papers would be returned to them the next/following day.

Exercise 6 - Answers

Change the following conversation into reported speech.

Roy: What did you do at the weekend?

Anna: We went to Macau for a short trip and we came back last night.

Roy: That sounds like fun! Did your whole family go?

Anna: We all went except my dad. He went fishing in Tai Po instead.

Roy: What did you do in Macau?

Anna: We took a tour around some historic places.

Roy: Are you planning to go back again soon?

Anna: Yes. We'll go to see the Dancing Water Show next month. Maybe you come with us.

Roy: Sure! I hear it's a great show!

Roy asked Anna what she had done that weekend.

Anna replied that they had been to Macau for a short trip and had come back the previous night/night before.

Roy said it sounded like fun and asked whether the whole family had been.

Anna said that her dad hadn't been. Instead, he had gone/been fishing in Tai Po.

Roy asked what she had done in Macau.

Anna told him they had taken a tour around some historic places.

Roy asked if Anna was planning to go back again soon.

She answered, yes and that they would go to see the Dancing Water Show the following month.

Then she suggested that Roy went with them.

Roy agreed and said that he had heard it was a great show.