

Ex Poser

Word Work

Language in Use

1. In the story, the narrator asks Emma a series of questions when she is connected to the lie detector. Here they are:

- 1 'Are you a girl?'
- 2 'Have you ever kissed Ben Fox?'
- 3 'Have you ever held his hand?'
- 4 'Are you in love?'
- 5 'Has he got blue eyes?'
- 6 'Is he an idiot?'

1. How are these questions made?
A question mark is added and the verb is *in* _ _ _ _ _
2. What is the difference in tense between question 1 and question 2?
Question 1 is in the _____ tense and question 2 is in the _____
3. In Question 2, which part of the verb is inverted?
It is the _____
4. What do questions 1, 3 and 6 have in common with each other?

It seems that the narrator asked questions in three different ways. In all cases the **subject** and the **verb** were inverted, but in 3 cases, the main verb was inverted; in 3 cases an auxiliary verb was inverted.

Now write out each question as if it was a statement.
(Example: "Have you seen Emma?" would become "I have seen Emma")

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

In the box on the right, write the main verb of each sentence.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

2. Now rewrite these statements as questions. Use inversions only.

I have green eyes

Do you have green eyes? _____

I am very happy

I have lived here for a long time

I have never been to a football match

I have eaten pizza once

I am not 12 years old

I am very clever

I have got an eccentric family

I have many questions to ask

I have always supported Benfica (*choose your own team!*)

Some extra practice on:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/grammar/learnit/learnitv321.shtml>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/grammar/learnit/learnitv18.shtml>

<http://depts.gallaudet.edu/ESL/questnoaddc.htm>

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Reporting

I can feel *my* face turning red now. I wish I could sink through the floor

At the end of the story, the narrator is obviously very embarrassed! To make us understand how embarrassing it is, to make it more real, the narrator is using the present tense to tell the story.

If he was to tell the story in the future, though, he might well use the past tense – he will be reporting an event that happened to him. He would need to change a few things, like tenses, and points of reference (for example, ‘this’ becomes ‘that’ and ‘here’ becomes ‘there’) to make things seem further away.

Look at this passage from the text.

He tapes two wires to Sandra's arm. 'It doesn't hurt,' he says. 'But it is deadly accurate.' He switches on the machine and a little needle swings into the middle of the dial. 'Here's a trial question,' he says. 'Are you a girl?'
Sandra nods.
'You have to say yes or no,' he says.
'Yes,' replies Sandra. The needle swings over to TRUTH. Maybe this thing really works.
Boffin gives a big grin.

We need to do quite a lot of work to make this into *reported speech*. Look at the example below which changes this text extract and tells the story as a report. Make a note of all the changes that take place.

He taped two wires to Sandra's arm. He said that it wouldn't hurt but it was deadly accurate. He switched on the machine and the little needle swung into the middle of the dial. He said that there was a trial question and asked her if she was a girl.

Sandra nodded. He said that she had to say yes or no. Sandra replied yes. The needle swung over to TRUTH. Maybe that thing really worked. Boffin gave a big grin.

Make a note of all the differences between the first and second texts as you can. Work quickly with a partner.

Check your list of differences with your teacher.

Now try and turn this part of the text into an example of reported speech.

I decide to put Sandra and Ben out of their agony. I won't actually name him. I'll spare her that. 'Is he in this room?' I say.

She looks at the red Ben Fox. 'Yes,' she says. The needle points to TRUTH.

'Has he got blue eyes?' I ask.

'No,' she says.

'Brown?' I say.

'No,' she says again.

I don't know what to say next. I look at each kid in the class very carefully. Ben Fox has blue eyes. I was sure that she loved him.

'This thing doesn't work,' I say to Boffin. 'I can't see one kid who doesn't have either blue eyes or brown eyes.'

'We can,' says Boffin. They are all looking at me.

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See also: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/grammar/learnit/learnitv71.shtml>

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Glossary

The definitions given in this little glossary are correct for the context of the story 'Ex Poser', but may be different in other contexts.

(can't) let her off the hook	<i>(can't) release/make it easy for her</i>
blushing	<i>skin going red through embarrassment</i>
Boffin	<i>name sometimes given to clever person/scientist</i>
bud	<i>grow</i>
burst	<i>explode</i>
crane(s) their necks	<i>look at something, out of curiosity</i>
flush	<i>colour changes to pink</i>
form	<i>class/group</i>
gasp	<i>sound made by surprised/shocked person</i>
green eyes	<i>(also means) a jealous person</i>
lie detector	<i>machine which can detect lies</i>
needle swings	<i>indicator moves</i>
pimples	<i>spots on skin</i>
poser	<i>someone who thinks they are wonderful</i>
ruffians	<i>badly behaved people</i>
sink	<i>go down, disappear</i>
tack	<i>direction, purpose</i>
trial question	<i>preliminary test question</i>
twiddles the knobs	<i>moves the controls</i>

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Glossary

The definitions given in this little glossary are correct for the context of the story 'Ex Poser', but may be different in other contexts.

(can't) let her off the hook	<i>(não pode) dexá-la escapar (sem punição)</i>
blushing	<i>corar por vergonha</i>
Boffin	<i>nome dado a alguém/um cientista inteligente</i>
bud	<i>crescer</i>
burst	<i>rebentar</i>
crane(s) their necks	<i>virar o pescoço par aver com atenção por curiosidade</i>
flush	<i>mancha cor-de-ros</i>
form	<i>turma/ grupo</i>
gasp	<i>arfar por motivo de choque</i>
green eyes	<i>(significa também) uma pessoa invejosa</i>
lie detector	<i>máquina que detecta mentiras</i>
needle swings	<i>movimentos da agulha</i>
pimples	<i>borbulhas</i>
poser	<i>alguém que se acha fantástico; exibicionista</i>
ruffians	<i>rufias/pessoas mal comportadas</i>
sink	<i>afundar, desaparecer</i>
tack	<i>direcção, sentido</i>
trial question	<i>questão preliminar</i>
twiddles the knobs	<i>mexer nos controlos/botões</i>