



First Niš Grammar School *Stevan Sremac*

Entrance exam 2023, 2024 and 2025 tests analysis

SECTION 1 – INDIRECT SPEECH

As you have already been told, there is **NO SEQUENCE OF TENSES** in indirect speech exercises of the entrance exam tests (page 9, exercise 8 in all tests). This is because **REPORTING IS DONE IN THE PRESENT**. Consult the following exercise for more details.

present reporting verbs *She says she comes from London.*

After present verbs (for example *she says, I think*) we don't change the tenses.

DIRECT SPEECH: 'Well, yes, I *come* from London.' 'Funny – she *has* a Scottish accent.'

INDIRECT SPEECH: She says she *comes* from London, but I think she *has* a Scottish accent.

1 Complete the indirect speech sentences.

▶ 'I'm Irish.'	He says <i>he's Irish.</i>
▶ 'Where is Peter?'	She wants to know <i>where Peter is.</i>
▶ 'Did John phone?'	I don't know <i>if John phoned.</i>
1 'We live in Greece.'	They say
2 'I went to Belfast yesterday.'	She says
3 'I've been ill.'	He says
4 'It's going to rain.'	She thinks
5 'I'll ask my sister.'	She says
6 'We're going to be rich.'	They believe
7 'Is lunch ready?'	He wants to know
8 'Where did I put my keys?'	I don't remember

However, be careful when doing exercises that ask for the appropriate form or tense of the verb (page 7, exercise 5 in all tests). For example, in exercise 5 of the 2024 test, the correct answer in 14 is 'I loved it so much but I knew that I **WASN'T ALLOWED** to take it home', and in 22 it is 'My parents promised they **WOULD TAKE** us there again'. **THE SEQUENCE OF TENSES IS USED** here because the **MAIN VERBS** 'knew' and 'promised' are **IN THE PAST TENSE**, so the other tenses need to be moved to express a simultaneous action (he 'wasn't allowed' at that time, not now), and a future in the past action ('would take' is the future in relation to the moment the parents promised to do it, not the present moment).

SECTION 2 – MODAL VERBS

Sentence 1 in exercise 6 on page 8 of the 2025 test is 'It was not necessary to bring all this equipment for the experiment'. The answer to this one is 'You **NEEDN'T HAVE** brought all this equipment'. The combination of the **MODAL VERB** 'needn't', and the **PERFECT INFINITIVE** 'have brought' means the same as sentence 1 – that **SOMETHING WAS DONE EVEN THOUGH THERE WAS NO NEED FOR THAT**.

Consider the following exercise about this usage. Also, pay special attention to the difference between 'needn't have' and 'didn't need to' at the end of the exercise. In both cases, there was no need to do something. However, in one case it was done, and in another it wasn't.

If we say that we *needn't have done something*, we mean that we did it, but it was unnecessary.

I needn't have cooked all that food. Nobody was hungry.

2 John took a lot of unnecessary things on holiday. Write sentences using *needn't have* with words in the box.

HE TOOK: a camera a Spanish dictionary a swimsuit a tennis racket an alarm clock
books climbing equipment his driving licence playing cards running shoes sunglasses



- There was nothing interesting to photograph. ... *He needn't have taken a camera.*
- 1 Nobody spoke Spanish.
 - 2 It rained all the time.
 - 3 There was nowhere to go running.
 - 4 There was no swimming pool.
 - 5 There were no mountains.
 - 6 There was no tennis court.
 - 7 Nobody wanted to play cards.
 - 8 He didn't feel like reading.
 - 9 There were no cars for hire.
 - 10 The birds woke him up at 4.00 every morning.

NOTE the difference between *needn't have ...* and *didn't need to ...*

We needn't have hurried – we got there much too early. (It was unnecessary to hurry, but we did.)

We didn't need to hurry; we had lots of time. (It was unnecessary to hurry, so we probably didn't.)

In a very similar way, other modal verbs such as **SHOULD, COULD, MAY, MIGHT, MUST,** and **CAN'T** are used with the **PERFECT INFINITIVE** to describe different meanings. Sentence 3 in exercise 6 on page 8 of the 2024 test, '*It's possible I left my wallet at home*', is an example of this. The correct answer to this one is '*I **MAY/MIGHT/COULD HAVE LEFT** my wallet at home*', which means that I **PERHAPS LEFT IT AT HOME**.

Study the exercises on the following two pages to learn about the meanings of other modal verbs used in this way.

perfect modal verbs *I should have studied harder.*

+	<i>I should have gone</i>	<i>you should have gone</i>	<i>he/she/it should have gone etc</i>
?	<i>should I have gone?</i>	<i>should you have gone?</i>	<i>should he/she/it have gone? etc</i>
-	<i>I should not have gone</i>	<i>you should not have gone etc</i>	
Contraction: <i>shouldn't</i>			

If somebody **didn't** do something that was important, we can say *he/she should have done it*.

Ann should have gone to the doctor yesterday, but she forgot.

I should have studied harder when I was at school.

1 Look at the pictures and complete the sentences with *should have*, using the verbs in the box.

arrived been brought brought locked put told ✓



4

5

6

- ▶ You should have told me that you were coming.
- 1 He his car.
- 2 You here at 2 o'clock.
- 3 She more sugar in.
- 4 We a map.
- 5 They at the station earlier.
- 6 I my umbrella.

If somebody did something wrong, we can say *he/she shouldn't have done it*.

You shouldn't have told the policeman that he was stupid.

2 Look at the pictures and complete the sentences with *shouldn't have*, using the words in the box.

eaten gone played spent

- 1 I so much.
- 2 He all his money on clothes.
- 3 I to bed so late last night.
- 4 We poker with that nice man.



If somebody didn't do something that was possible, we can say *he/she could have done it*.
I could have gone to university, but I didn't want to.

3 Complete the sentences with *could have*, using words from the box.

been gone lent married studied won

- 1 Ann John or Peter, but she didn't love either of them.
- 2 Why didn't you ask me for money? I you some.
- 3 I mathematics, but I decided to do languages instead.
- 4 Our team the match, but they didn't try hard enough.
- 5 The holiday was OK, but it better.
- 6 We to Paris last weekend, but we thought this weekend would be better.

If we say something *may have happened*, we mean that *perhaps* it (has) happened.
Pat isn't answering the phone. She may have gone out. (= 'Perhaps she's gone out.')

4 Rewrite these sentences with *may have*.

- ▶ Perhaps Shakespeare went to Italy. *Shakespeare may have gone to Italy.*
- 1 Perhaps she's broken her leg.
 - 2 Perhaps I've lost my keys.
 - 3 Perhaps Alice has gone back home.
 - 4 Perhaps my great-grandfather was a soldier.
 - 5 Perhaps I've found a new job.
 - 6 Perhaps this house was a school once.

If we say that something *must have happened*, we mean that we *feel sure* that it (has) happened.

5 Rewrite the sentences *in italics* with *must have*.

- ▶ The exam was easy. *I'm sure I've passed.* *I must have passed.*
- 1 Her office is locked. *I'm sure she's gone home.*
 - 2 I can't find my umbrella. *I feel sure I left it on the bus.*
 - 3 Ann hasn't come. *I'm sure she's forgotten.*
 - 4 The car isn't here. *I'm sure John has taken it.*

SECTION 3 – THE PASSIVE VOICE

When it comes to **THE PASSIVE VOICE**, there is always **THE QUESTION OF WHETHER** the person performing the action, or **THE AGENT, SHOULD BE MENTIONED**. The passive is often used to leave out unimportant information, so most passive sentences do not contain subjects. In eight of the twelve sentences in the passive voice exercises (page 8, exercise 7 in all tests) the subjects are not mentioned because they are irrelevant. The sentences that should contain the agent are numbers 1, 2, 3 in the 2023 test, and number 4 in the 2025 test. To explain the last example, the active sentence 'Has the principal contacted Jane's parents?' should have the passive form 'Have Jane's parents been contacted by the principal?' because **WHAT IS IMPORTANT** in this case is **NOT ONLY WHETHER THE PARENTS HAVE BEEN CONTACTED**, but also that **IT WAS THE PRINCIPAL WHO WANTED TO GET IN TOUCH**. The same logic applies to the other examples.

Do the following exercise to see how often the agent is mentioned in passive sentences.

We only use *by ...* if it is really necessary. (80% of passive sentences are made without *by ...*)

3 Cross out the expression *in italics* if you feel it gives no useful information.

- ▶ A 54-year-old accountant was arrested for drunk driving last night *by the police.*
- 1 'Romeo and Juliet' was written *by Shakespeare.*
- 2 All of these birds have been seen in Britain *by people who watch birds.*
- 3 Everest was first climbed in 1953 *by mountain climbers.*
- 4 This house was built *by Frank Lloyd Wright.*
- 5 My sister's books have been translated into thirty languages *by translators.*
- 6 Sugar is made from sugar cane and sugar beet *by sugar companies.*
- 7 This letter wasn't written *by an English person.*

Including or omitting the agent in the passive is not much of a problem. There are more serious issues with it, one of them being the **IMPERSONAL PASSIVE**, expressed either using the **IMPERSONAL 'IT'** (DUMMY 'IT', as some books refer to it) or the **INFINITIVE**. Sentence 1 in exercise 7 on page 8 of the 2025 test, 'Everybody believes that good health is a life goal', can either be solved as 'It is believed that good health is a life goal' or 'Good health is believed to be a life goal', the first example, the one using the impersonal 'IT', obviously being the easier one. Sometimes, as in sentence 4 in exercise 7 of the 2023 test, it is also the only possible solution.

Study the explanation for more details, and then do the exercise on the following page. Sentences 3, 6, 7, and 8 are all infinitive constructions. Can you tell which one refers to the past and should contain the perfect infinitive?

To express other people's opinions in a formal style, we can use two special forms of the passive. They can be used with a number of verbs, including: <i>say, believe, think, claim, estimate, etc.</i> Some other verbs (<i>argue, suggest, calculate, etc.</i>) are usually used with only the second structure.	
Form noun + <i>is/are said to</i> + bare infinitive/perfect infinitive <i>It is said that</i> + clause	
People think he is a great chef.	He is thought to be a great chef. It is thought that he is a great chef.
People believe he was a great chef.	He is believed to have been a great chef. It is believed that he was a great chef.

E Rewrite in the passive starting with the words given.

- 1 People say that Bali is a beautiful island.
It
- 2 People generally think that life won't be found on Mars.
It
- 3 It is generally said that Christmas is too commercialised.
Christmas
- 4 People often argue that prison doesn't work.
It
- 5 People have suggested that the school should start to produce a magazine.
It
- 6 People say that crocodile tastes like squid.
Crocodile
- 7 It is said that the Vikings discovered America before Columbus.
The Vikings
- 8 People think that heart disease is caused by eating the wrong things.
Heart disease

To conclude the story of impersonal passive, **GO FOR THE DUMMY 'IT' CONSTRUCTION** whenever you can – it is **EASIER OF THE TWO**, always possible, and less likely to cause you to make a mistake.

SECTION 4 – CAUSATIVE 'HAVE'

Another point that may frequently create problems is the **CAUSATIVE 'HAVE'** construction. It is related to the passive, although it is usually found in sentence transformation exercises (page 8, exercise 6 in all tests). Sentence 4 in the 2023 test, 'Has the barber trimmed Peter's beard recently?', should be transformed to 'Has Peter had **HIS BEARD TRIMMED** recently?' to communicate a special kind of meaning. The message that the construction **HAVE + OBJECT + PAST PARTICIPLE** conveys is that it is **NOT THE SUBJECT OF THE SENTENCE** (Peter) **WHO DOES THE ACTION** (trimming his beard). The subject has only **ARRANGED FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO DO IT** for them.

Do the exercise on the next page to see how this structure works across the tenses.

Have something done: arrange for something to be done.

*I must **have my watch repaired**. We need to **have the curtains cleaned**.*

1 Make sentences using *have* + object + the past participles in the box.

changed	cleaned	cut	put in	redecorated	repaired	reproofed
re-strung	serviced	sharpened	valued			

- 1 When did you last (your hair)?
When did you last have your hair cut?
- 2 We (our knives) once a year.
- 3 We're going to (the roof) next summer.
- 4 I must (my jacket). And I'd better (my raincoat).
- 5 'Do we need to (the car)?' 'Well, we ought to (the oil).'
- 6 When she (her jewellery), she found it wasn't actually worth much.
- 7 You need to (your tennis racket).
- 8 Shall we (the kitchen), or shall we do it ourselves?
- 9 It would be nice to (some more electric sockets).

SECTION 5 – WISH, IF ONLY, IT'S TIME, WOULD RATHER

The correct answer to sentence 5 in exercise 6 on page 8 of the 2025 test, 'I regret buying this shirt', is 'I wish I **HADN'T BOUGHT** this shirt'. This special tense usage with **WISH** and **IF ONLY** is similar to the second and third types of conditional sentences, where the **PAST TENSE** is used with the second conditional for **UNREAL PRESENT**, and the **PAST PERFECT** with the third conditional for **UNREAL PAST**. Additionally, **WOULD** can also be used with these two to refer to the **FUTURE**.

Study the exercises on the following page for more details.

if only ...! and **wish** can be used with **would** and **past tenses**.

These structures express **regrets**, and wishes for **unlikely** or **impossible** things.

Past tenses are used to talk about the **present**.

if only I knew more people! I wish I was better looking.

1 Write sentences beginning *if only* or *I wish*.

▶ The radio doesn't work. *I wish the radio worked.* OR *if only the radio worked!*

- 1 He smokes.
- 2 I don't speak Russian.
- 3 I haven't got a car.
- 4 I'm not hard-working.
- 5 I'm bad at sport.
- 6 I don't like dancing.
- 7 It rains all the time.
- 8 She works on Sundays.
- 9 I can't eat eggs.

We use **would ...** after **wish / if only** to talk about things that we **would like** people or things (not) to do.

This often expresses dissatisfaction or annoyance: it can sound critical.

I wish this damned car would start. If only it would stop raining!

2 Write sentences with *if only ... would* or *I wish ... would ...*

▶ Somebody won't stop talking. *I wish he would stop talking.*
OR *if only he would stop talking!*

- 1 It's not snowing.
- 2 The phone keeps ringing.
- 3 The baby won't stop crying.
- 4 The kettle won't boil.
- 5 The traffic lights won't go green.
- 6 Frank hasn't written.
- 7 Patrick hasn't found a job.
- 8 The exam results haven't arrived.
- 9 Spring hasn't come.

We use a **past perfect** tense to express **regrets about the past**.

I wish you hadn't said that. If only she hadn't told the police, everything would be all right.

3 Complete the regrets with verbs from the box. Use the past perfect.

be choose get go have look after save

- 1 I wish I my teeth properly.
- 2 I wish I nicer to people.
- 3 I wish I money.
- 4 I wish I to university.
- 5 I wish I a different career.
- 6 I wish I married.
- 7 I wish I children.

Expressions **IT'S TIME** and **WOULD RATHER** can also be used with the **PAST TENSE** to describe our **WISHES ABOUT THE PRESENT**. This is exactly what is expressed in the answer '**I'd rather YOU DIDN'T GO to that party**' to sentence 1 in exercise 6 on page 8 of the 2023 test, '**I don't think you should go to that party**'. Do the following exercises to practise the structures.

After **it's time**, we can use an **infinitive** with **to**. After **would rather** (= 'would prefer'), we use an **infinitive** without **to**.
It's time to go out. I'd rather stay in.

We can also use a **subject and verb** after these expressions. The verb is **past** (but with a present or future meaning).
It's time you had a haircut. I'd rather they came tomorrow, not today.

1 Change the structure.



- ▶ It's time to stop. (*you*) *It's time you stopped.*
- ▶ It's time we went to bed. (*to*) *It's time to go to bed.*
- 1 It's time to clean the car. (*I*)
- 2 It's time you cooked supper. (*to*)
- 3 It's time to get a new fridge. (*we*)
- 4 It's time we had a party. (*to*)
- 5 It's time to go home. (*your mother*)
- 6 It's time to invite the Harrises. (*we*)
- 7 It's time to plan our holiday. (*we*)
- 8 It's time to see the dentist. (*you*)
- 9 It's time to stop work. (*I*)
- 10 It's time to get a job. (*that boy*)

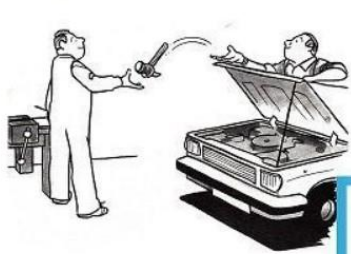

2 Rewrite the second sentence in each conversation, starting with *I'd rather we/you etc.*


- ▶ 'You'd better phone Judy.' 'No, you phone her.' *I'd rather you phoned her.*
- 1 'Let's talk things over.' 'No, let's talk tomorrow.'
-
- 2 'Shall I come at nine?' 'Ten would be better.'
-
- 3 'I'll phone Sue.' 'No, don't.'
-
- 4 'Can she work with you?' 'Why doesn't she work with Maggie?'
-
- 5 'I'll cook tomorrow.' 'Tonight would be better.'
-
- 6 'Ask that policeman.' 'You ask him.'
-
- 7 'Mark wants to go out.' 'I'd prefer him to stay in.'
-
- 8 'Can they use our sheets?' 'It would be more convenient if they brought their own.'
-
- 9 'The government wants to cut taxes.' 'It would be better if they did something about the homeless.'
-
- 10 'Let's get a new car.' 'No, let's spend the money on a trip round the world.'
-

SECTION 6 – A FEW MORE TRICKS

Exercise eight on page 9 of the 2025 test finishes with the sentence 'Don't shout at your little sister!'. This exercise deals with indirect speech, so the preposition **AT** used after the verb **SHOUT** is not to be questioned. However, **SHOUT** can also be followed by **TO** with a different meaning. The same goes for the verb **THROW**. What is the difference between **SHOUT TO** and **SHOUT AT**, or between **THROW TO** and **THROW AT**? Study the information below and see for yourselves.

shout at someone (anger)	shout to someone (attract someone's attention)
	
<p>to use a loud voice when you are angry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wish you'd stop shouting at the children. • My teacher never shouts at us. • Dad really shouted at me when I broke the window. <p>shout insults/ abuse at someone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was shouting insults at the lorry driver. • He was surrounded by a group of boys who shouted abuse at him. 	<p>to use a loud voice when you want someone to hear you. You shout to somebody when that person is not close enough to you to hear you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He shouted to me to throw down the rope. • He shouted to me from the other side of the street. • I shouted to her from the upstairs window. • I was on my way to the library when I saw Mark across the street, I tried shouting to him but he didn't hear me.

<p>Tom threw the hammer to Danny. ✓</p> 	<p>Tom threw the hammer at Danny. ✗</p> 
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How about the verb **WAVE**? Look it up in a dictionary!

KEY TO THE EXERCISES:

SECTION 1 – INDIRECT SPEECH

- 1** 1 They say (that) they live in Greece.
2 She says (that) she went to Belfast yesterday. 3 He says (that) he's been ill.
4 She thinks (that) it's going to rain.
5 She says (that) she'll ask her sister.
6 They believe (that) they're going to be rich. 7 He wants to know if/whether lunch is ready. 8 I don't remember where I put my keys.

SECTION 2 – MODAL VERBS

- 2** 1 He needn't have taken a Spanish dictionary.
2 He needn't have taken sunglasses.
3 He needn't have taken running shoes.
4 He needn't have taken a swimsuit.
5 He needn't have taken climbing equipment.
6 He needn't have taken a tennis racket.
7 He needn't have taken playing cards.
8 He needn't have taken books.
9 He needn't have taken his driving licence.
10 He needn't have taken an alarm clock.

- 1** 1 should have locked 2 should have been
3 should have put 4 should have brought
5 should have arrived 6 should have brought
- 2** 1 shouldn't have eaten 2 shouldn't have spent
3 shouldn't have gone 4 shouldn't have played
- 3** 1 could have married 2 could have lent
3 could have studied 4 could have won
5 could have been 6 could have gone
- 4** 1 She may have broken her leg. 2 I may have lost my keys. 3 Alice may have gone back home. 4 My great-grandfather may have been a soldier. 5 I may have found a new job. 6 This house may have been a school once.
- 5** 1 She must have gone home. 2 I must have left it on the bus. 3 She must have forgotten. 4 John must have taken it.

SECTION 3 – THE PASSIVE VOICE

- 3** 1 by Shakespeare 2 ~~by people who watch birds~~
3 ~~by mountain climbers~~ 4 by Frank Lloyd Wright 5 ~~by translators~~ 6 by ~~sugar companies~~
7 by an English person

- E**
- 1 is said that Bali is a beautiful island.
 - 2 is generally thought that life won't be found on Mars.
 - 3 is generally said to be too commercialised.
 - 4 is often argued that prison doesn't work.
 - 5 has been suggested that the school start to produce a magazine.
 - 6 is said to taste like squid.
 - 7 are said to have discovered America before Columbus.
 - 8 is thought to be caused by eating the wrong things.

SECTION 4 – CAUSATIVE 'HAVE'

- 105** **1**
- 2 We have our knives sharpened ...
 - 3 ... to have the roof repaired ...
 - 4 ... have my jacket cleaned. ... have my raincoat reproofed.
 - 5 ... have the car serviced ... have the oil changed.
 - 6 ... had her jewellery valued ...
 - 7 ... have your tennis racket re-strung
 - 8 ... have the kitchen redecorated ...
 - 9 ... have some more electric sockets put in

SECTION 5 – WISH, IF ONLY, IT'S TIME, WOULD RATHER

- 1**
- 1 If only / I wish he didn't smoke.
 - 2 If only / I wish I spoke Russian.
 - 3 If only / I wish I had a car.
 - 4 If only / I wish I was/were hard-working.
 - 5 If only / I wish I was/were good at sport. / I wasn't/weren't bad at sport.
 - 6 If only / I wish I liked dancing.
 - 7 If only / I wish it didn't rain all the time.
 - 8 If only / I wish she didn't work on Sundays.
 - 9 If only / I wish I could eat eggs.
- 2**
- 1 If only / I wish it would snow.
 - 2 If only / I wish the phone would stop ringing / wouldn't keep ringing.
 - 3 If only / I wish the baby would stop crying.
 - 4 If only / I wish the kettle would boil.
 - 5 If only / I wish the traffic lights would go green.
 - 6 If only / I wish Frank would write.
 - 7 If only / I wish Patrick would find a job.
 - 8 If only / I wish the exam results would arrive.
 - 9 If only / I wish spring would come.
- 3**
- 1 had looked after 2 had been 3 had saved
4 had gone 5 had chosen 6 had got
7 had had

- 1**
- 1 It's time I cleaned the car.
 - 2 It's time to cook supper.
 - 3 It's time we got a new fridge.
 - 4 It's time to have a party.
 - 5 It's time your mother went home.
 - 6 It's time we invited the Harrises.
 - 7 It's time we planned our holiday.
 - 8 It's time you saw the dentist.
 - 9 It's time I stopped work.
 - 10 It's time that boy got a job.
- 2**
- 1 I'd rather we talked tomorrow.
 - 2 I'd rather you came at ten.
 - 3 I'd rather you didn't.
 - 4 I'd rather she worked with Maggie.
 - 5 I'd rather you cooked tonight.
 - 6 I'd rather you asked him.
 - 7 I'd rather he stayed in.
 - 8 I'd rather they brought their own.
 - 9 I'd rather they did something about the homeless.
 - 10 I'd rather we spent the money on a trip round the world.

SECTION 6 – A FEW MORE TRICKS

DIY