Other uses of comparatives, superlatives, and comparisons with as ... as

For emphasis
The Nile River is more than 5,500 kilometers long. [emphasizes that the river is very long]
The Dickens School now has fewer than 900 students. [emphasizes that this is a relatively small number]
A newborn Asian elephant can weigh as much as 150 kilos. [emphasizes that this is fairly heavy]
As many as 200 of these animals are killed every year. [emphasizes that this is a high number]
That was the worst movie ever. [emphasizes that this was a bad movie]
This meal was the best ever! [emphasizes that this was a great meal]

To show progression
My son is getting taller every day. [He’s growing.]
The economy is stronger now. [It’s improving.]

To show tendencies or preferences
We eat out more than in. [We tend to eat out.]
Sara likes being alone more than socializing. [She prefers to spend time alone.]

To clarify
He’s a lot friendlier than you would think. [You may think he’s not friendly, but in fact he is.]
She’s more of a singer than a dancer. [People may think she’s mainly a dancer, but in fact she’s mainly a singer.]
The movie’s more annoying than scary. [You may think this movie will be scary, but in fact it’s just annoying.]
It looks more like snow than rain. [You may think it’s going to rain, but in fact it looks like it’s going to snow.]

Use a comparative, a superlative, or a comparison with as ... as to complete each statement so it has a similar meaning to the information in quotes.

1. “Our meal last night was really inexpensive. It only cost 48 euros for the two of us.”
   Our meal last night cost less than 50 euros.
2. “Our reading club meetings are getting pretty big. On some nights there are thirty students.”
   Our reading club meetings sometimes have as many as thirty students.
3. “I think our teacher is really great!”
   Our teacher is the greatest ever!
4. “The garden you planted last month has become so beautiful!”
   Your garden is getting more beautiful every day!
5. “You may think snails might taste strange, but they actually taste quite good.”
   Snails taste better than you may think.
6. “You may think Kate is shy, but she’s actually very talkative.”
   Kate is more talkative than you might think.

Unit 9

Say, ask, and tell: summary
Say and ask are the most common reporting verbs in direct speech. Use say for statements and ask for questions.

“I completely disagree with the president on this issue,” said the education minister.
“Who do they think is in control of this government?” asked the president.

Note the use of say, ask, and tell in indirect speech.
She said (to the press) that she completely disagreed with the president.
She asked (the press) if they disagreed with the president.
She told the press that she completely disagreed with the president.
Other uses of comparatives, superlatives, and comparisons with as ... as

- Have volunteers read the examples under For emphasis.

  - On the board, write:
    1. It costs $90.
    2. It was a bad concert.
    3. The album can hold 200 photos.

To provide practice, have students add emphasis to the statements on the board. Point out that in some cases there may be more than one way to add emphasis. Review as a class. (Possible responses: 1. It can cost as much as $90. 2. It was the worst concert ever. 3. The album can hold as many as 200 photos.)

- Have students study the examples under To show progression.

  - Point out that the second part of the comparison (than) is not used.

  - On the board, write:
    1. Prices are getting _________.
    2. The book is becoming _________.

To provide practice, have students complete the statements with their own ideas. Review as a class. Have volunteers read their sentences out loud. (Possible responses: 1. Prices are getting higher. 2. The book is becoming more interesting.)

- Have students study the examples under To show tendencies or preferences.

  - On the board, write:
    1. In class, we ________ more than _________.
    2. At home / work I spend more time than _________.
    3. Your idea: ________.

To provide practice, have pairs complete the statements with their own ideas. Review as a class. Have volunteers read their sentences out loud. (Possible responses: 1. In class, we speak more than write. 2. At home, I spend more time in the garden than inside.)

- Have students study the examples under To clarify.

  - On the board, write the following prompts:
    1. ice skating—not difficult but easy
    2. vacation—not relaxing but tiring

To provide practice, have pairs form sentences with the prompts on the board, using the comparative form to clarify. To review as a class, have volunteers read their sentences out loud. (Possible responses: 1. Ice skating is a lot easier than you would think. 2. My vacation was more tiring than relaxing.)

B Use a comparative, a superlative ...

- Model the first item with the class. Point out that students should pay attention to the meaning of the sentence in quotes and choose the best use from the Grammar box above. Call on one student to say the use and another to complete the statement out loud.

- Have students complete the exercise individually and then compare answers with a partner. Review as a class.

Option: Photocopy and distribute this exercise or write it on the board:

  I'm getting ________ every day.
  On the weekends, I ________ more than ________.
  I read ________ than ________ a year.
  I'm a lot ________ than people think.

For further practice, have students complete the sentences with true information about themselves. In pairs, have students exchange sentences and decide on the use of the comparative, superlative, or comparison with as ... as in their partners' sentences. Have a few volunteers read their sentences out loud and say the use. Then encourage students to create other sentences about themselves using comparatives, superlatives, and comparisons with as ... as to show emphasis, progression, tendencies or preferences, and to clarify. Circulate as students write to provide help as needed. To finish, have students share their sentences with a partner.

Unit 9

Say, ask, and tell: summary

- With books closed, ask Does direct speech or indirect speech use the exact words the speaker said? (direct speech) What's the function of indirect speech? (to report the words the speaker said without using the exact words)

- Write three examples of indirect speech on the board:
  He said (to me) that he would go to the party.
  He asked (me) if I was going to the party.
  He told me that he was going to the party.

Point to the first example. Ask Is it me a direct or indirect object? (indirect) Point to the second example. Ask Is me a direct or indirect object? (direct) Point to the third example. Ask Is me a direct or indirect object? (direct)

- Tell students that in indirect speech, say is followed by an indirect object: (to + listener) or no object, ask is followed by a direct object (listener) or no object, and tell is followed by a direct object (listener).

- Point out that in the first and third examples. Remind students that that is not usually dropped after nouns.

- Have volunteers read the explanations, examples, and Be Careful! note out loud.
Complete the sentences...
- Model the first item with the class. Tell students to first identify if the sentence has a direct or indirect object in order to decide between say, ask, or tell.
- Have students compare answers with a partner and review as a class.

Grammer for Writing: other reporting verbs
- With books closed, brainstorm ideas for reporting verbs other than say and ask as a class. Write a list on the board.
- Have volunteers read the explanation and examples out loud.
- Have students study the list of reporting verbs and look up the verbs they don't know in a dictionary.

Option: In pairs, have students choose another verb from the list of reporting verbs for each example in the Grammar box. Review as a class. Have volunteers read their sentences out loud.

On a separate sheet of paper...
- Model the first item with the class. Identify the reporting verb (says) and brainstorm other possible replacements as a class. (Possible responses: reports, states)
- Have students compare answers with a partner and review as a class.

Challenge: Bring in newspapers and distribute. In pairs, have students choose an article that uses indirect speech, underline the sentences in indirect speech, and circle the reporting verbs. Then have each pair join another pair. Have pairs take turns reporting the articles they read, using different reporting verbs. Encourage students to include information about what people said.
A

Complete the sentences with a form of **say**, **ask**, or **tell**.

1. She __________ the waiter if she could pay with a credit card.
2. We __________ that we would come back later when they were less busy.
3. He __________ his friends that he would be a few minutes late.
4. She __________ to her teacher that she needed a bit more time.
5. I __________ my kids whether they would mind if we stopped at the store on the way home.
6. They __________ the reporter that they were ready to provide information about the case.
7. He __________ to the clerk that it was the longest he’d ever had to wait on line.
8. I __________ them if they enjoyed the movie.

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Grammar for Writing: other reporting verbs

Writers use a variety of reporting verbs to describe actions more specifically and accurately.

**argue**

“Things are definitely getting worse,” argues Charles Wilder, a leading economic advisor to the president. Charles Wilder, a leading economic advisor to the president, argues that things are getting worse.

**claim**

“Baylor was taking bribes,” claims the Daily Sun. The Daily Sun claims that Baylor was taking bribes.

**declare**

“The mayor has been doing a brilliant job” declared the governor on Tuesday. On Tuesday, the governor declared that the mayor had been doing a brilliant job.

**explain**

“You should always discuss dieting with your doctor,” Dr. Fish explained. Dr. Fish explained that people should always discuss dieting with their doctors.

**report**


**state**

The new CEO stated, “Things are going to change around here.” The new CEO stated that things were going to change at the company.

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B

On a separate sheet of paper, restate each sentence with a different reporting verb. Use a dictionary if necessary.

Answers will vary, but may include:

1. The *Bangkok Post* says that the president of Chile will be visiting Thailand next month.
2. The minister of education *said* yesterday that major improvements have been made in schools across the country.
3. The secretary of the United Nations *stated* that more should be done to alleviate world hunger.
4. The scientists who conducted the study *promised* that more research would have to be conducted.
5. The children who wrote on the walls *told* that they wouldn’t do it again.
6. The BBC *announced* that it would increase its coverage of the news in the Middle East.