

12. We ___ for hours on the phone last night.
a) talked
b) said
c) told
d) spoke
13. Can you ___ the difference between these two pictures?
a) say
b) speak
c) tell
d) talk
14. The sign ___ 'No parking'.
a) tells
b) speaks
c) says
d) talks
15. Generally ___, the project has been a success.
a) saying
b) telling
c) talking
d) speaking
16. Who were you ___ to on the phone just now?
a) talking
b) saying
c) telling
d) speaking
17. I ___ him my name and where I was from.
a) said
b) told
c) spoke
d) talked
18. Actions ___ louder than words.
a) say
b) tell
c) speak
d) talk
19. Let's ___ business. How much will it cost?
a) say
b) speak
c) tell
d) talk
20. "That's enough!" ___ the referee, and he blew his whistle.
a) told
b) said
c) spoke
d) talked



Answers

1. c) speak
2. a) talk
3. d) speak
4. b) told
5. b) talk
6. d) talk
7. b) said
8. a) speak
9. c) talking
10. c) said
11. d) speak
12. a) talked
13. c) tell
14. c) says
15. d) speaking
16. a) talking
17. b) told
18. c) speak
19. d) talk
20. b) said



Explanations

1. “speak” (c)

'Speak' is used with languages: speak English, speak French, speak three languages. We don't say 'talk three languages' or 'say three languages'.

2. “talk” (a)

'Talk about' is used when discussing a topic in conversation. 'Talk' emphasizes the interactive, informal nature of discussion.

3. “speak” (d)

'Speak to someone' is more formal and is commonly used on the phone or in professional settings: 'Could I speak to...?' 'Talk to' is also possible but less formal.

4. “told” (b)

'Tell + person + that clause' is the pattern for reporting information to a specific person. Neither 'spoke' nor 'talked' can be used with this structure.

5. “talk” (b)

'Learn to talk' refers to a child developing the ability to produce words and have conversations. 'Learn to speak' is also possible, but 'learn to talk' is the more natural expression for babies.

6. “talk” (d)

'Talk nonsense' is a fixed expression meaning to say silly or untrue things. Other 'talk' expressions: talk rubbish, talk sense, talk business, talk shop.

7. “said” (b)

'Say a few words' means to make a short speech or comment. 'Say' is used with specific words, sentences, or phrases that someone produces.

8. “speak” (a)

In a formal or professional context, 'speak to you about' is more appropriate than 'talk to you about'. It signals a serious or official conversation.

9. “talking” (c)

'Stop talking' means to stop having conversation or making noise. 'Talk' emphasizes the ongoing activity of conversation. 'Stop speaking' is possible but less natural in informal contexts.

10. “said” (c)

'Said that...' is used to report what someone communicated when no listener is mentioned. 'Told' would need a person: 'told me/us that...!'

11. “speak” (d)

'Speak in public' means to give a speech or address an audience. It emphasizes the formal act of speaking. 'Talk in public' is possible but less standard for this meaning.

12. “talked” (a)

'Talk' is used for informal conversations, especially when emphasizing duration or the social nature of the exchange. 'We talked for hours' is natural and warm.

13. “tell” (c)

'Tell the difference' is a fixed expression meaning to distinguish or identify what is different. Other fixed expressions with 'tell': tell the time, tell the truth, tell a lie.

14. “says” (c)

'Say' is used for written messages on signs, notices, letters, and books: 'The sign says...', 'The email says...'. Signs and texts 'say' things — they don't 'tell' or 'speak'.

15. “speaking” (d)

'Generally speaking' is a fixed phrase meaning 'in general terms'. Other similar phrases: 'roughly speaking', 'strictly speaking', 'broadly speaking'. These all use 'speaking', not 'saying' or 'talking'.

16. “talking” (a)

'Talk to someone' is the natural informal way to describe a phone conversation. 'Speaking to' is also correct but more formal. 'Saying to' and 'telling to' are incorrect.

17. “told” (b)

'Tell + person + information' is the correct pattern. We tell someone facts, details, or information. 'I told him my name' — 'said him' would be incorrect.

18. “speak” (c)

'Actions speak louder than words' is a well-known proverb. 'Speak' is used figuratively to mean 'communicate' or 'express meaning'. Other examples: 'His results speak for themselves.'

19. “talk” (d)

'Talk business' is a fixed expression meaning to discuss business matters. Similarly: 'talk shop' (discuss work), 'talk politics', 'talk money'.

20. “said” (b)

When quoting exact words in direct speech, we use 'said' as the reporting verb: "'...' said the referee.' This is standard in storytelling and journalism.