Say or Tell

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Target Students: Lower-intermediate

Corpus Used: Corpus Concordance English

Class duration: 35 mins

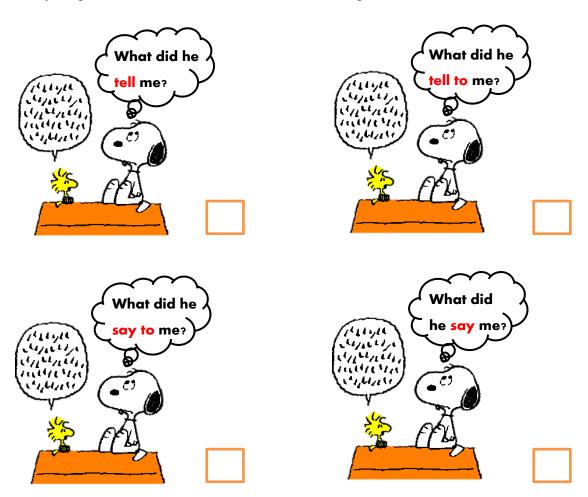
Materials: Worksheet 2 say or tell

Aim: Emphasize the semantic and phraseological differences between the

verbs tell and say

I. Individual Work

Can you spot the errors? Look at the sentences in the pictures and tick the correct ones.



II. Pair Work.

Read Disney Frozen script lines below and see if you can find the answers to Question I.



- 1 ELSA: **Tell** the guards to open up the gate.
- ANNA: Okay, just **tell** me one thing: What was happening on the North Mountain? Did it seem magical?
- 3 KRISTOFF: Hm. So tell me, what made the queen go all ice-crazy?
- 4 KRISTOFF: You don't **tell** him what to do!
- 5 ANNA: Elsa! Elsa! Elsa, it's me, Anna—Your sister who didn't mean to make you freeze the summer. I'm sorry. It's all my f-f-fault. ... Of course, none of this would have happened if she'd just **told** me her secret.
- 6 They **say**, 'Have courage', and I'm trying to -- I'm right out here for you Just let me in.
- 7 ANNA: Okay, can I just **say** something crazy?
- 8 ANNA: No. Whatever you have to say, you—you can say to both of us.
- 9 HANS: You said she'd never hurt you.

III. Group Work.

Now put the two words into the online corpus, look at the examples in it and try to work out their difference. Groups can then feedback to each other, explaining the words.

First go to http://www.lextutor.ca/conc/eng/.

Type in the word *tell* in the "keyword" box, choose corpus "2k Graded Corpus (920,000)", hit the "Go concordancer" icon.

IV. Pair Work.

Check your understanding. Circle **T** for True or **F** for False for each statement about **say** or **tell**.

Differences between say and tell

- a) The word *tell* need a person as object before reporting what was said.
- b) The word <u>tell</u> do not need a person as object and its object is usually what T F has been said.
- c) The verb commonly used for reporting what someone says is <u>say</u>.
- d) The word <u>tell</u> never has a person as the object. You <u>tell</u> something or T F something to somebody.

V. Group Work. Try it yourself.

Try to summarize the use patterns of the two words. Groups can then feedback to each other, explaining the words. The first example of each word has been done for you.

<u>tell</u>

Meaning	use pattern	Example
to say sth to sb, usually giving them information	1.tell sb	Don't tell him.
To order or advise sb to do sth		

say

Meaning	use pattern	Example
Speak words	Say + direct object (sth)	She said sorry.
Say direct		
speech		
to speak or		
tell sb sth		

VI. Individual Work.

Which word fits all the gaps in each set, tell or say?

'I wrote to them.' 'What did you ?' 'I asked them about the man in the adv Holmes said. How many students live upstairs? Three, did you ? And they all go past your door.' 'Yes, or do anything.' 'What's his job?' Holme she answered. 'A woman knows. But he doesn't f your beard, Bob,' he said. 'I know it's you. hello to my new wife!' Our friend pulled et love?' 'I don't know. It's too difficult to . . .'When Helen travels through Europe et love?' 'I don't know. It's too difficult to exactly. But it's going to be a good ti obably Angela James, twenty-one. Hmm. Shall I something to her about that case? No, no name. After that, it was easy.' 'Will you _____ Miss Sutherland all this?' I asked. 'No,' Home. What happened?' 'Tomorrow is the first / you can help.' 'All right,' Holmes said. en he said, 'I'll help you, Mr Soames. Now, 'Please close the door,' Holmes said. 'Now, me something. Did anybody visit you in your 'Please close the door,' Holmes said. 'Now, There's nothing more?' 'No, sir.' 'Then I'll me - what really happened yesterday?' Bannis you, 'Holmes said. 'When you sat down on tha 're talking now,' Holmes said. 'Gilchrist, us! It's not a secret now.' Gilchrist put hi but you're sorry now. . I know that T I'll Mr Soames the story. You can

VII. Pair Work – I am an Examiner! (See Worksheet_ I am an Examiner!)

Each one (examiner) of the pair develops a test paper with 10 fill-the-gap questions from the corpus for the words **tell** and **say**, then answer each other's test paper (full mark: 10 points) and discuss.