Nuala's Grammar Explanation:

To make simple questions in English, I'm sure you know, we use 'What', 'Why', 'Who' etc. and then we invert or change round the subject and the first verb. Listen:

Example: What's the time?

But this isn't the only way of asking for the same information. If we want to be more formal or more polite, we use longer, more indirect ways of asking questions. Listen:

Example: Could you tell me what the time is please?

This kind of question has two parts. They start with a phrase such as : 'Could you tell me…?'; 'Do you know…?', 'Have you any idea…?', 'Would you mind telling me…?' Listen:

Example 1: Do you know when the film finishes?
Example 2: Have you any idea where I left my keys?
Example 3: Would you mind telling me how to get to the post office please?

The information which the questioner wants is then expressed in the second half of the phrase in a form which is not like a question. We don't change the order of the subject and verb.

What time is it? Could you tell me what time it is?
Where is he? Could you tell me where he is?

So, to recap then: when we want to ask a question in a more formal or polite way than usual, we can use an indirect question. And we make it with an expression like 'Can you tell me' plus the word order of a statement, rather than the inverted word order of a simple question.

That's all from me, good luck with your grammar challenge!
**Direct question**

Where's the nearest bank please?
When is the last train on a Saturday night?
How much do two tickets cost?
Why can't you come in to work

**Indirect questions**

Could you tell me where the nearest bank is please?
Do you know when the last train is on a Saturday night?
Have you any idea how much two tickets cost?
Would you mind telling me why you can't come in to work?