



Haji Muhammad Mohsin Government High School (*Since 1874*)

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Class 9-10

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Tag Questions

Tags Usage: A question tag is a question added at the end of a sentence. Speakers use question tags chiefly to make sure their information is correct or to seek argument.

They consist of a statement and a tag. A negative tag is used with an affirmative statement whereas a positive tag is used with a negative statement.

● **A. If the statement has "be" as an ordinary verb, we use a form of be in the tag. Tags are always used with pronouns.**

After positive statements, we use a negative tag.

You are from Zaire, aren't you?
Angela is here, isn't she?
Your father was at school, wasn't he?
They were on holiday, weren't they?
It was a super show, wasn't it?
It is a big garden, isn't it?

After negative statements, we use a positive tag.

I am not surprised, am I?
Tanim and Jahin aren't rich, are they?
They weren't at the movie theater, were they?
That isn't Benzir, is it?
You are not a policeman, are you?
We aren't lucky, are we?
Amana isn't at home, is she?
They are not with us, are they?

- **B. If the statement has a modal, it is repeated in the tag.**

Kamla can go herself, can't she?

You should get up early, shouldn't you?

You wouldn't do that, would you?

We must help them, mustn't we?

- **C. With the Simple Present Tense we use do / does - don't / doesn't? With the Simple Past Tense we use did / didn't?**

They like going to the movie theater, don't they?

You don't take sugar in tea, do you?

Rassel listens to music, doesn't he?

Alam works at a bank, doesn't he?

You all watched TV during the night, didn't you?

Alia went to the movie theater, didn't she?

He didn't read the novel, did he?

Anwar doesn't live here, does he?

After all tenses, we just put the auxiliary.

Masha is coming today, isn't she?

Muhammad is not drinking tea, is he?

They were playing football yesterday, weren't they?

Layla and Sarifa were on the bus, weren't they?

They are going to play football, aren't they?

Note: Remember that 's' = is or has, and 'd' = had or would

Peter's got a cat, hasn't he?

She's in the office, isn't she?

- **D. Question tags with "HAVE" and "DO" are often both possible after the noun-auxiliary "have".**

Note: "do" is preferred in American English.

Mr. Farmer has two cars, hasn't he? Or doesn't he?

She has a nice kitten, hasn't she? Or doesn't she?

You haven't a house, have you? Do you?

They have a garden, haven't they? Or don't they?

- **E. If the statement contains words such as no, no one, nothing, nobody, scarcely, hardly, hardly ever, never, neither, seldom, under no circumstances... etc, it is considered a negative statement and followed by an affirmative tag.**

Julia hardly ever drinks coke, does she?

Nothing will cure his illness, will it?

Maniruzzaman never acts like a gentleman, does he?

She is hardly the right person for the job, is she?

It is no good, is it?

- **F. If the subject of the statement is somebody, anybody, nobody, everybody, no one, and neither We use the pronoun "they" in question tag.**

Somebody entered the garden, didn't they?

Everybody was upset, weren't they?

Nobody objects to the plan, do they?

- **G. When the subject of the statement is that or this, the pronoun in the tag is "it". The pronoun is "they" for their plural forms these and those.**

This is an expensive necklace, isn't it?

Those are very naughty children, aren't they?

That wasn't a big surprise, was it?

These weren't yours, were they?

- **H. When we use a there + be combination in a sentence the pronoun in the tag is again "there".**

There isn't a hotel next to the museum, is there?

There won't be any trouble, will there?

There is a bus to Atlantic City every hour, isn't there?

There weren't any children at school, were there?

- **I. Let's has the tag "shall we?"**

Let's go to the movie theater, shall we?

Let's have a party, shall we?

Let's drink tea, shall we?

Let's go out for a walk, shall we?

● **J. "Have to" is considered Simple Present and "had to" is considered Simple Past.**

Your father has to wear glasses, doesn't he?

They don't have to come early, do they?

We had to borrow some money to buy a new house, didn't we?

They didn't have to read the story book, did they?

● **K. Some introductory phrases such as "I am afraid, I think, I believe, I am sure, I suspect, I suppose, it appears that, it seems that, it looks as if, as far as I remember, as far as I can see ... so on" don't affect question tags except for the transfer of negation.**

I suppose you are not serious, are you?

I think my mother returned home, didn't she?

I don't suppose you are serious, are you?

I don't believe you have paid for it yet, have you?

I don't think anyone will volunteer, will they?

I hope he won't object to our plan, will he?

It appears that she is enjoying herself, isn't she?

As far as I can see, Wade is the best, isn't he?

● **Note:** For the phrase "you know that" the question tag is don't you?

You know that you can do it, don't you?

● **L. If the subject of the sentence is everything, nothing, something, anything the pronoun in the tag is "it".**

Everything is ready, isn't it?

Nothing has the end, has it?

Anything is possible, isn't it?

● **M. After positive imperatives, we use will you, won't you, can you, can't you, could you ...etc. Yet for the negative imperatives we only use "will you?"**

Open the door, will you / won't you, can you, could you ...etc

Don't play with your nose, will you?

● **After "I am" the tag is "aren't".**

I am your father, aren't I?

I am a bit late, aren't I?

I am a teacher, aren't I?

Note: Negative interrogative question tags without contractions are possible but the word order is different.

You lied to him, did you not?

This is a less common case and it is usually used with rising intonation. The speaker might be more eager to find out the answer. (more important, stronger emotions, could result in anger, disappointment, relief)

Intonation In Question Tags

When the speaker is adding a tag question to his/her statement, he/she might increase or decrease the volume/tone of his/her voice at the end. If the person is increasing his/her voice with the tag question, this is called "Rising Intonation", if the tone/volume is decreasing, this is called "Falling Intonation".

Falling Intonation ↘

I have told you not to run, haven't I? (Mother telling her son after her son falls.)

You love wearing my clothes, don't you? (...Stop wearing my clothes.)

It is a beautiful view, isn't it? (...We are all enjoying it.)

You know I hate this movie, don't you? (...And yet we are watching it.)

In a falling intonation the speaker is not really asking a question, rather he/she is asserting what he thinks, the speaker is actually very confident and sort of asking the person to confirm/agree with what he/she is saying.

Rising Intonation ↗

He didn't go to school yesterday, did he? (Did he really go to school yesterday?)

Jack paid for the dinner, didn't he? (I hope he paid for the dinner... did he?)

You told her I wasn't going to the party, didn't you? (Did you forget to tell her?)

In a rising intonation the speaker is not as confident of his/her statement and he/she is asking the other person to find out about it.

Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a more clever devil. _ C. S. Lewis