

Question Tag

A question tag or tag question (also known as tail question) is a grammatical structure in which a declarative statement or an imperative is turned into a question by adding an interrogative fragment (the "tag"). Example-

- (1) Seema is cooking, **isn't she?**
- (2) Ram was running a race, **wasn't he?**
- (3) They have played chess, **haven't they?**
- (4) She will not come today, **will she?**
- (5) He did not go there, **did he?**

Underlined words are examples of question tag.

Rules:

- (1) Question tag is always made with the help of helping verb. Example-
Doesn't, didn't, couldn't, haven't, shan't, aren't etc.
- (2) If the given statement is negative then question tag will be positive and if the given statement is positive then tag will be negative. Example-
 - (a) **She is running a race, isn't she?**
 ↓ ↓
Positive sentence Negative tag
 - (b) **He could not win the match, could he?**
 ↓ ↓
Negative statement Positive tag
- (3) Question tag is never made by using 'noun'. 'Pronoun' is used to make question tag. Example-
 - (a) Ram has submitted the file, **hasn't he?**
 - (b) Pooja can come today, **can't she?**
 - (c) Manoj is not a doctor, **is he?**
- (4) If the Subject in the given statement is no one, none, anyone, someone, everyone, everybody, somebody or nobody, then the subject of the question tag will be 'they'.
 - (1) None can solve this sum, **can they?**
 - (2) Anyone can come here, **can't they?**
 - (3) Someone criticized me, **didn't they?**
- (5) If the Subject in the given statement is nothing, anything, something or everything, then the subject of the question tag will be 'it'.
 - (a) Everything is fine, **isn't it?**
 - (b) Something was missing, **wasn't it?**
 - (c) Nothing can't be seen, **can it?**
- (6) Question tag of 'I am' will be 'aren't I?' and question tag of 'I am not' will be 'am I?'
 - (a) I am reading a book, **aren't I?**
 - (b) I am not your teacher, **am I?**
- (7) Some words are used in negative sense. Question tag of such words is made in positive sense. Such words are-
Few, little, neither, none, no one, nothing, hardly, rarely, seldom, scarcely.

Example-

- (a) No one can read this, **can they?**
- (b) None is present here, **are they?**
- (c) They said nothing for him, **did they?**
- (d) She rarely tells a lie, **does she?**
- (8) If any statement starts with let's (Let us) then its question tag will be '**shall we?**'

Example-

- (a) Let's play chess, **shall we?**
- (b) Let's watch a movie, **shall we?**

But if the statement starts with Let you/ let them/ let him etc. then the Question tag will be 'will you'.

Example-

- (a) Let they plan, will you?
- (b) Let him sleep, will you?
- (c) Let her read, will you?

Exercise

Fill in the blanks with suitable question tags:

1. Payal did not come in time,
2. Sanu and Panu did not go there,
3. I am rich,
4. We find a large number of men waiting at the bus stand,
5. I can drive a car,
6. You often go to your teacher,
7. The poor boy has no chance of success,
8. Ramesh has little knowledge of English,
9. Few students were present there,
10. Let the children go out,
11. Let him do that,
12. Let's finish this work now,
13. Don't be disappointed,
14. Somebody has beaten the cow,
15. Anyone can easily break the gate,
16. He isn't going to do it,
17. You enjoyed that,
18. He doesn't write very well,
19. We love it,
20. It doesn't work,

Solutions

1.	did she?	2.	did they?	3.	aren't I ?	4.	don't we?	5.	can't I ?
6.	don't you?	7.	has he?	8.	has he?	9.	were they ?	10.	will you?
11.	will you?	12.	shall we?	13.	will you?	14.	haven't they?	15.	can't they?
16.	is he?	17.	didn't you?	18.	does he?	19.	don't we?	20.	does it?