

TAG QUESTIONS

ACTIVITY TYPE

Reading, Writing, Grammar,
Exercises

LANGUAGE FOCUS

TAG QUESTIONS

AIM

To learn and practice TAG
QUESTIONS

LEVEL

Beginner, Elementary,
Intermediate

TIME

45 Min

INTRODUCTION

After going through your regular review and teacher talk, tell the students that they're going to learn the TAG QUESTIONS in English

PREPARATION

Make one copy of the worksheet for each student

PROCEDURE

Give one copy of the worksheet to each student.
Go through the grammar and exercises together.

WRAPUP

Ask the students if they have any doubts.

Thank them for coming to the lesson.

Tag Questions

The use of auxiliaries in tag questions, short answers and ellipsis

In English, the verbs used as auxiliaries are to be, to do, to have, and the modal auxiliaries. All of these auxiliaries can be used in tag questions and short answers.

A. NEGATIVE TAG QUESTIONS

Negative tag questions have already been discussed. An affirmative statement is often followed by a negative tag question, in order to ask for confirmation of the affirmative statement. In the following examples, the negative tag questions are underlined. Contractions are usually used in negative tag questions.

e.g. You are coming with me, aren't you?

You like coffee, don't you?

For the Simple Present and the Simple Past of the verb to be, tag questions are formed using the verb itself. For instance, in the

following examples, the verbs *is* and *were* are used in negative tag questions.

e.g. *She is very nice, isn't she?*

They were ready on time, weren't they?

For the Simple Present and the Simple Past of verbs other than the verb *to be*, the auxiliary *to do* is used in tag questions. For instance, in the following examples, the auxiliaries *does* and *did* are used in negative tag questions.

e.g. *He rides a bicycle, doesn't he?*

They ordered pizza, didn't they?

For all other tenses and conjugations, the first auxiliary is used in tag questions. For instance, in the following examples, the first auxiliaries *have*, *would*, *should* and *can* are used in negative tag questions.

e.g. *You have worked all night, haven't you?*

He would have helped us, wouldn't he?

They should get more exercise, shouldn't they?

She can speak five languages, can't she?

B. AFFIRMATIVE TAG QUESTIONS

A negative statement is often followed by an affirmative tag question, in order to ask for confirmation of the negative statement, or in order to ask for more information. In the following examples, the affirmative tag questions are underlined.

e.g. He is not very tall, is he?

They don't want to work, do they?

The rules for forming affirmative tag questions are similar to those for forming negative tag questions. In the case of the Simple Present and Simple Past of the verb to be, the verb itself is used; and in the case of all other tenses and conjugations, the first auxiliary is used.

e.g. He wasn't much help, was he?

They didn't want to come with us, did they?

You hadn't slept well, had you?

She can't speak Greek, can she?

They wouldn't mind helping us, would they?

EXERCISES

Tag questions are small questions that we put at the end of a sentence. They can be formed using the present or past simple of the auxiliary verb found in the main sentence.

- When the first part of the question is positive, the tag is negative.

E.g. *Andrew was sick, wasn't he?* - (auxiliary verb = *to be* in the past simple)

She studies maths, doesn't she? - (auxiliary verb = *to do* in present simple)

- When the first part of the question is negative, the tag is positive.

E.g. *He didn't break the window, did he?* - (auxiliary verb = *to do* in past simple)

They aren't at home, are they? - (auxiliary verb = *to be* in the present simple)

Complete the following questions inserting the correct vocabulary and the correct tag questions in the spaces provided.

foggy / exist / peaceful / reach / box / light blue / pilot / lesson
/ basketball

1. It's very _____ this morning, _____?
2. You're an aeroplane _____, _____?
3. They didn't buy a house, _____?
4. The countryside is very _____ and relaxing, _____?
5. You've finished your Open Class _____, _____?
6. We weren't the last to arrive, _____?
7. Neil likes _____, _____?
8. That shirt is _____, _____?
9. You can _____ the top shelf, _____?
10. You didn't clean your room, _____?
11. UFOs don't really _____, _____?
12. Samantha gave Richard a gift, _____?
13. Richard was very happy, _____?

Add **negative tag questions** to the following **affirmative statements**.

For **example**:

They are lucky.

They are lucky, aren't they?

You know what I mean.

You know what I mean, don't you?

We will tell him the truth.

We will tell him the truth, won't we?

She could try harder.

She could try harder, couldn't she?

1. You are cold.
2. They passed the test.
3. I can do this well.
4. You live near the school.
5. He went downtown.
6. We should call them.
7. She likes toffee.

8. They could help us.
9. I won the race.
10. You were reading.
11. He rides a bicycle.
12. We would need more time

Add affirmative tag questions to the following negative statements.

For example:

She isn't well.

She isn't well, is she?

You don't eat fish.

You don't eat fish, do you?

He hadn't found it.

He hadn't found it, had he?

They won't mind.

They won't mind, will they?

1. They won't reach their destination before five o'clock.

2. He doesn't want to come with us.

3. She hasn't eaten breakfast yet.

4. They aren't very clever.

5. I couldn't have persuaded you.

6. You won't forget to come.

7. We weren't expecting company.

8. They wouldn't like that.
