

SECTION 8 questions and negatives

● grammar summary

To make **questions**, we normally put an **auxiliary verb** before the **subject**.

John has gone. → *Has John gone?* *She's leaving.* → *When is she leaving?*

To make **negatives**, we put **not** or **n't** after an **auxiliary verb** (*be, have, can* etc).

John is working. → *John is not working.* *I could swim* → *I couldn't swim.*

If there is **no other auxiliary verb**, we use **do**.

I live in Manchester. → *Where do you live?* *He said 'Hello'.* → *What did he say?*

She likes cold weather. → *She doesn't like cold weather.*

We do **not** use **do** when a **question word** is the **subject**.

What happened? (NOT *What did happen?*)

● pre-test: which units do you need?

Try this small test. It will help you to decide which units you need. The answers are on page 283.

① Correct (✓) or not (x)?

▷ I not speak English. x

1 Does she works in London? ...

2 Will Ann and her family arrive by train? ...

3 Did you knew John at school? ...

4 Play you tennis? ...

5 Why you are tired? ...

6 How well do you know him? ...

7 What time does the film start? ...

8 What is your new boyfriend like? ...

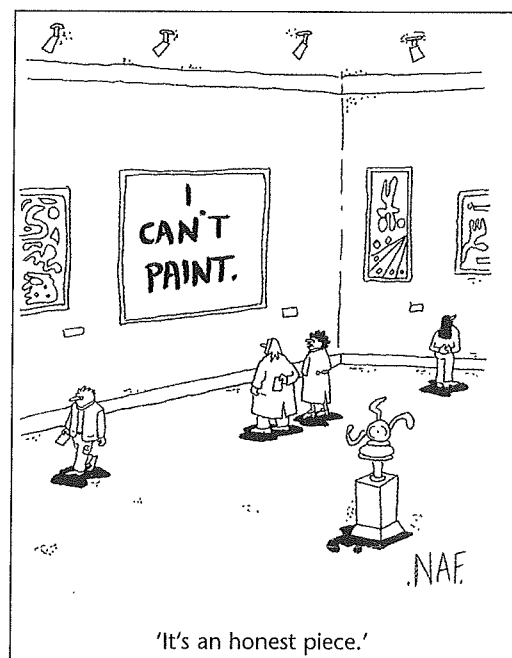
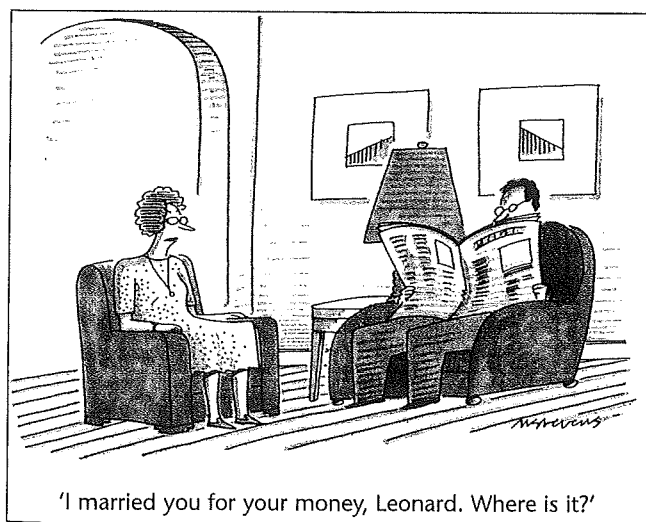
9 Who did tell you that? ...

10 I won't be here tomorrow. ...

11 I couldn't find my glasses nowhere. ...

12 Isn't she beautiful! ...

13 'Aren't you coming?' 'Yes, I am.' ...



yes/no questions *Is the taxi here? Do I need a visa?*

AM I? HAVE YOU? CAN SHE? DO YOU? DOES HE?

All yes/no questions begin with a verb.

To make questions: put an auxiliary verb before the subject.

(Auxiliary verbs are *be* (am, are etc), *have/has/had*, *will*, *would*, *can*, *could*, *shall*, *should*, *may*, *might* and *must*.)

STATEMENT [1]: *The taxi is here. Ann has arrived. The train will be late. You can pay.*

QUESTION [2]: *Is the taxi here? Has Ann arrived? Will the train be late? Can you pay?*

① Put the words in the right order to make questions.

- ▶ you ready are *Are you ready?*
- ▶ telephoned she has Mary *Has she telephoned Mary?*
- ▶ swim your brother can *Can your brother swim?*
- 1 tired are you
- 2 he at is home
- 3 go must now you
- 4 Spanish they speak can
- 5 tomorrow you be here will
- 6 she will arrive by train
- 7 forgotten her keys she has
- 8 your sister is playing tennis

If there is no auxiliary verb: put *do/does/did* before the subject and use the infinitive (without *to*).

STATEMENT [1]: *I need a visa.*

QUESTION [2]: *Do I need a visa? (NOT ~~Need I a visa?~~, NOT ~~Do I to need a visa?~~)*

STATEMENT [1]: *John wants to go home.*

QUESTION [2]: *Does John want to go home? (NOT ~~Does John wants to go home?~~)*

STATEMENT [1]: *She knew Mary.*

QUESTION [2]: *Did she know Mary? (NOT ~~Did she knew Mary?~~)*

② Make questions with *you*.

You want to know if somebody:

- ▶ understands *Do you understand?*
- ▶ called you *Did you call me?*
- 1 drinks coffee
- 2 likes jazz
- 3 knew Andrew
- 4 went skiing last winter
- 5 works in London

③ Make questions with *he*.

You want to know if somebody:

- ▶ plays football *Does he play football?*
- 1 speaks Arabic
- 2 knows Mr Peters
- 3 works at home
- 4 lived in Birmingham
- 5 went home last week

We don't put *do* with other auxiliary verbs.

Can you swim? (NOT ~~*Do you can swim?*~~)

4 Circle the correct question.

- A Will you be ready soon? B Do you will be ready soon?
➤ A Live you in London? B Do you live in London? C Are you live in London?
1 A Do you are tired? B Do you tired? C Are you tired?
2 A Do you must go now? B Must you go now?
3 A Do you speak Japanese? B Speak you Japanese? C Are you speak Japanese?
4 A Do you have been to China? B Have you been to China?
5 A Were you go to work by car? B Did you go to work by car? C Went you to work by car?
6 A Can she sing? B Does she can sing?
7 A Is Ann looking for a job? B Does Ann looking for a job? C Is Ann look for a job?

Only put one verb before the subject.

Is her father working today? (NOT ~~*Is working her father today?*~~)

Has your brother got children? (NOT ~~*Has got your brother children?*~~)

Did those people telephone again? (NOT ~~*Did telephone those people again?*~~)

Be careful when questions have **long subjects**. The word order does not change.

Is Ann coming tomorrow?

Are Ann and her mother coming tomorrow?

Are Ann and her mother and father and Uncle George coming tomorrow?

(NOT ~~*Are coming tomorrow Ann and her mother and father and Uncle George?*~~)

5 Make yes/no questions.

- The boss's secretary travels a lot.

Does the boss's secretary travel a lot?

- The President and her husband have arrived.

Have the President and her husband arrived?

- 1 Your sister Caroline is talking to the police.

- 2 All the people here understand Spanish.

- 3 Most of the football team played well.

- 4 Everybody in the office is working late today.

- 5 The man at the table in the corner is asleep.

- 6 The 7.30 train for London leaves from Platform 2.

➔ For more about questions with *have*, see pages 8–11.

➔ For more practice with present questions, past questions etc, see Sections 2–5.

➔ For question tags like *It's late, isn't it?*, see pages 266–267.

question words *When will you see her?*

WHERE IS ... ? WHEN CAN ... ? WHY DOES ... ?

Questions with *where, when, why* etc normally have the same word order as *yes/no* questions (pages 106–107).

We put *am/are/is/was/were* or another auxiliary verb (*have, will, can* etc) before the subject.

STATEMENT ❶: *Anna is in Russia.*

I will see her on Tuesday.

QUESTION ❷: *Where is Anna?*

When will you see her? (NOT ~~When you will see her?~~)

If there is no other auxiliary verb, we use *do/does/did* + infinitive (without *to*).

STATEMENT ❸: *He likes his job.*

I came here to learn English.

QUESTION ❹: *How does he like his job?*

Why did you come here? (NOT ~~Why you came here?~~)

❶ Make questions with the words in the boxes.

how when ✓ when where ✓ where why

- ▷ (you staying?) ...*Where are you staying?* 'At the Park Hotel.'
- ▷ (you arrive?) ...*When did you arrive?* 'Last night.'
- 1 (you here?) 'To see Scotland.'
- 2 (you been today?) 'To Edinburgh.'
- 3 (you going to Glasgow?) 'Next weekend.'
- 4 (you like Scotland?) 'How 'It's great!'

how when when where why

- 5 (you come here?) 'By car.'
- 6 (you come by car?) 'I like driving.'
- 7 (you live?) 'In Germany.'
- 8 (you leaving?) 'Next Tuesday.'
- 9 (we see you again?) 'I'll be back next summer.'

We often ask questions with *how* + adjective/adverb.

How old is your sister? How tall are you? How fast can you run?

❷ Here are some common expressions with *how*. Use them to complete the questions.

How old ...? ✓ How far ...? How long ...? How tall ...?
How big ...? How fast ...? How often ...? How well ...?

- ▷ 'How old are you?' '37 next birthday.'
- 1 '..... your house from here?' 'About 5 km.'
- 2 '..... John?' 'Very tall – nearly two metres.'
- 3 '..... she driving?' 'The police say she was doing 160 km/h.'
- 4 '..... see your parents?' 'Every week.'
- 5 '..... Ann's flat?' 'Very small – just one room and a bathroom.'
- 6 '..... stay in China?' 'I was there for six months.'
- 7 '..... speak Spanish?' 'Not very well.'

Some questions begin with **what + noun**.

What time is the film? **What time** does the train leave? (NOT USUALLY *At what time ...?*)

What colour are her eyes? (NOT *What colour have ...?*) **What colour** is your car?

What size are you? (buying clothes) **What size** would you like?

What sort of books do you read? **What sort of** films do you like? (OR *What kind of ...?*)

3 Put the beginnings and ends together, and put in an expression with *What ...*

1 'What time..... does her plane arrive?'	A 'Eight o'clock, if it's not late.' 1
2 '..... is the baby's hair?'	B '....., small or large?' ...
3 '..... music do you play?'	C 'She hasn't got any.' ...
4 'I'd like a packet of rice, please.'	D 'Pop, mostly.' ...
5 'Can I borrow one of your sweaters?'	E 'I don't remember – it was very late.' ...
6 '..... holidays do you prefer?'	F 'Sure. would you like? Blue? Green?' ...
7 '..... did you get home?'	G 'Extra large.' ...
8 'I need a sweater.' '..... are you?'	H 'We usually go to the mountains.' ...

To ask for **descriptions**, we often use **What is/are/was/were ... like?**

'Where have you been?' 'In Ireland.' 'What was the weather like?' 'OK.'

'What's your new boyfriend like?' 'He's very nice.'

'My brother writes detective stories.' 'Yes? What are they like?' 'Not very good, really.'

4 Make questions with *What ... like?*, using expressions from the box.

your new girlfriend your new house your new car your new job
your new boss ✓ your new school your new neighbours

- 'What's your new boss like?' 'He's not very good at his job.'
- 1 'She's beautiful.'
- 2 'Very noisy. They have parties all night.'
- 3 'OK – it's a bit slow.'
- 4 'Great – we've got much more room.'
- 5 'It's interesting. I travel a lot.'
- 6 'The teachers aren't much good.'

GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY: some more useful questions

Where are you from? Where do you come from? (NOT *From where ...?* – see page 137)

How long have you been here? How long are you here for? (= 'Until when ...?')

How long does it take to get to London? How long does it take to learn English?

How do you spell that word? How do you pronounce this word?

➔ For questions with *who*, *what* and *which*, see page 110.

*I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew):
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.
(Rudyard Kipling)*

question-word subjects *Who phoned? What happened?*

We use **who** for people and **what** for things.

'Who did you see?' 'John.' 'What did he say?' 'Nothing much.'

When **who** and **what** are subjects, we make questions without **do/does/did**. Compare:

'Who^{SUBJ} phoned?' 'Mike^{SUBJ} phoned.' (NOT 'Who did phone?')

'Who^{OBJ} did you see?' 'I saw Mike^{OBJ}.'

'What^{SUBJ} happened?' 'Something^{SUBJ} terrible happened.' (NOT 'What did happen?')

'What^{OBJ} did he say?' 'He said something^{OBJ} terrible.'

The same thing happens when subjects begin with **which**, **what**, or **how much/many**.

Which team won? (NOT 'Which team did win?') What country won the World Cup in 1966?

How many people work here? (COMPARE 'How many people^{OBJ} did you^{SUBJ} see?')

1 Circle the correct form.

▷ Who (lives) / does live in that house?

▷ What (happened) / did happen to Joe?

1 Who plays / does play the piano?

2 What made / did make that noise?

3 Who married she? / did she marry?

5 What means this word? / does this word mean?

4 What said you? / did you say?

6 Who told / did tell you?

2 Complete the questions.

▷ 'I saw some dogs.' 'How many dogs did you see?'

▷ 'One of those cars belongs to Mary.' 'Which car belongs to Mary?'

1 'A lot of people came to her party.' 'How many people

2 'Peter caught a train.' 'Which train

3 'One of those buses goes to the station.' 'Which bus

4 'Douglas speaks a lot of languages.' 'How many languages

5 'Alice likes music.' 'What sort of music

3 Look at the picture and complete the sentences.

▷ Who loves Fred? Alice and Mary.

1 Who does Fred love?

2 Ann?

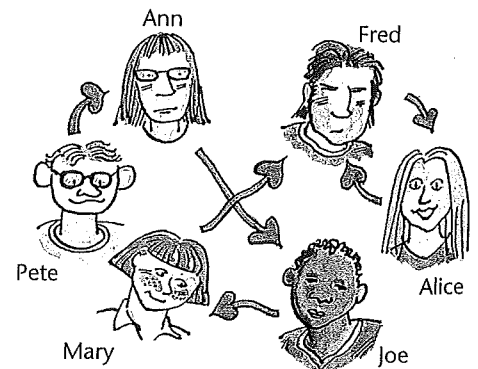
3 love? Joe.

4 Alice?

5 love? Mary.

6 love? Ann.

7 Nobody.



4 Can you write four more questions and answers about the picture?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

5 Make questions. Ask about the words in *italics*.

► (a) John broke *the window*. (b) *John* broke the window.

(a) *What did John break?* (b) *Who broke the window?*

1 (a) Mary bought *a coat*. (b) *Mary* bought a coat.

2 (a) The bus hit *that tree*. (b) *The bus* hit that tree.

3 (a) *Ann* lost the office keys. (b) Ann lost *the office keys*.

4 (a) Fred is studying *Arabic*. (b) *Fred* is studying Arabic.

5 (a) *Mike* hates computers. (b) Mike hates *computers*.

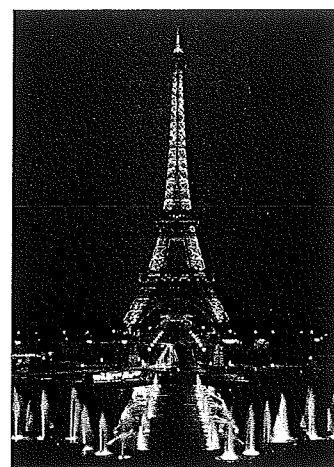
6 Write questions about the pictures, using the words in the box. Do you know the answers? (They are at the bottom of the page.)

build ✓ build paint first reach write

► *Who built the Eiffel Tower?*

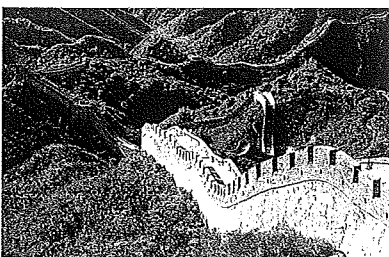
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

► The Eiffel Tower



1 The North Pole

2 War and Peace



3 The Great Wall of China



4 Sunflowers

7 Write questions about books, plays or songs. Ask some people.

Who wrote

→ For the difference between *which* and *what*, see page 281.

→ For *whom*, see page 282.

4 Van Gogh 3 The Emperor Shi Huangdi (and a lot of other people) 2 Leo Tolstoy 1 Robert Peary in 1909

negatives *Dogs can't fly. I don't know why.*

AM NOT HAVE NOT WILL NOT CANNOT DO NOT

To make negative sentences: put *not* after an auxiliary verb.

(Auxiliary verbs are: *be (am etc), have/has/had, will, would, can, could, shall, should, may, might, must.*)

It is not raining. I have not seen Bill. She cannot understand me.

In conversation we usually use **contractions** (see page 277):

*aren't isn't wasn't weren't haven't hasn't hadn't won't (= 'will not') wouldn't
can't couldn't shan't shouldn't mightn't mustn't*

We say *I'm not*, NOT ~~*I am n't*~~. We can also say *you're not* (= *you aren't*), *he's not*, *she's not*, etc.

*It isn't / It's not raining. We weren't at home. I haven't seen Bill.
She can't understand me. You mustn't tell anybody. I'm not ready.*

1 Make negative sentences. Use contractions.

▷ Dogs can swim. (*fly*) ...~~*Dogs can't fly.*~~.....

- 1 Milk is white. (*red*)
- 2 The children are at school. (*at home*)
- 3 Joe has been to Japan. (*Egypt*)
- 4 You must give this letter to Ann. (*her mother*)
- 5 I'll be here tomorrow. (*in the office*)
- 6 I could talk when I was two years old. (*swim*)
- 7 We were in London yesterday. (*Birmingham*)
- 8 I'm Scottish. (*English*)

2 Write five things that you can't do. Here are some suggestions.

dance	draw	drive	play chess/bridge etc	play the piano/guitar etc
remember faces	remember names	ride a horse	sing	
speaking French/Chinese etc	understand maths			

▷ ~~*I can't speak German.*~~.....

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



'There are three things that I can't remember: names, faces, and I've forgotten the other.'

3 Write five things that you probably won't do next week. Here are some suggestions.

go to New York	get married	get rich	play football	become President
write a poem	buy a car	make a cake	read Shakespeare	climb Mount Everest

▷ ~~*I probably won't go to Paris next week.*~~.....

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

If there is no auxiliary verb, we use *do/does/did + not/n't + infinitive* (without *to*).

I like → *I don't like* *She knows* → *She doesn't know* (NOT *She doesn't knows*)

He arrived → *He did not arrive* (NOT *He did not arrived*) *It rained* → *It didn't rain*

4 Make negative sentences.

- Cats eat meat. (*potatoes*) *Cats don't eat potatoes.*
- Cervantes wrote 'Don Quixote'. (*Mozart*) *Mozart didn't write 'Don Quixote'.*
- 1 Shakespeare lived in London. (*New York*)
- 2 Dictionaries tell you about words. (*phone books*)
- 3 The earth goes round the sun. (*round the moon*)
- 4 Most Algerians speak Arabic. (*Russian*)
- 5 Fridges keep food cold. (*cookers*)
- 6 The Second World War ended in 1945. (*1955*)
- 7 John knows my parents. (*my sister*)

5 Use expressions from the two boxes, and write five things that you don't do.

buy socks	dance	go to sleep	play football	play the violin	ride a bicycle
sing	speak English	study mathematics	write poetry		

after breakfast	at Christmas	at school	in London	in the bath	in the middle of the night
in the middle of the road	in the sea	on the bus	on the telephone	on Tuesdays	

- *I don't buy socks in London.*
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

6 Complete these negative sentences. Use *aren't*, *haven't*, *doesn't* etc.

- 1 'What's the time?' 'I know.'
- 2 'What was the film like?' 'It very good.'
- 3 'Would Ann like some coffee?' 'No, she drink coffee.'
- 4 I seen Joe for weeks. Is he OK?
- 5 Pat and Jim very happy with their new car.
- 6 'Can I see you tomorrow?' 'I be here. How about Tuesday?'
- 7 'Was the lesson any good?' 'I understand a word.'
- 8 She buy the coat; it was too expensive.
- 9 The baby got much hair.
- 10 'Can we go?' 'In a minute. I ready.'

7 GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY: four words for people who can't do things Put the beginnings and ends together. Use a dictionary if necessary.

1 Some handicapped people	A can't see. ...
2 A blind person	B can't hear. ...
3 A deaf person	C can't read or write. ...
4 An illiterate person	D can't move or work normally. ...

➔ For more practice with present negatives, past negatives etc, see Section 2-5. ➔ For more about negatives with *have*, see page 8-11.

negatives with *nobody, never* etc *Nobody loves me.*

We can make negative sentences with ***nobody, nothing, nowhere, never, no, hardly*** (= 'almost not') and similar words. With these words, we **do not** use ***not*** or ***do/does/did***.

Nobody loves me. (NOT ~~*Nobody doesn't love me.*~~)

He said nothing. (NOT ~~*He didn't say nothing.*~~)

She never writes to me. (NOT ~~*She doesn't never write to me.*~~)

I've got no money. (NOT ~~*I haven't got no money.*~~)

I can hardly understand him. (NOT ~~*I can't hardly understand him.*~~)

① Put the sentences in order.

- ▶ up father early my gets never *My father never gets up early.*
- 1 lives house nobody that in
- 2 my understand I'll dog never
- 3 children me the nothing told
- 4 money I no have
- 5 the could road I see hardly

② Change the sentences.

- ▶ She didn't say anything. (*nothing*) *She said nothing.*
- 1 I didn't see anybody. (*nobody*)
- 2 We didn't have any trouble. (*no*)
- 3 My parents don't go out. (*never*)
- 4 I looked for the dog, but it wasn't anywhere in the house. (*nowhere*)
.....
- 5 I didn't eat anything yesterday. (*nothing*)
- 6 It didn't rain for three months. (*hardly*)
- 7 John didn't speak, Mary didn't speak, Bill didn't speak. (*nobody*)
.....

③ Make the sentences negative.

- ▶ I drink coffee. (*not*) *I don't drink coffee.*
- ▶ I drink coffee. (*never*) *I never drink coffee.*
- ▶ Somebody telephoned. (*nobody*) *Nobody telephoned.*
- 1 My grandmother drives fast. (*never*)
- 2 Andrew plays the guitar. (*not*)
- 3 When she talked, I understood. (*nothing*)
- 4 I like Ann's new shoes. (*not*)
- 5 Something happened this morning. (*nothing*)
- 6 There's somewhere to sit down in the station. (*nowhere*)
- 7 I watch TV. (*hardly*)
- 8 Somebody wants to play tennis. (*nobody*)

I never hated a man enough
to give him diamonds back.
(Zsa Zsa Gabor)

I have nothing to say,
and I am saying it,
and that is poetry.
(John Cage)

Sometime they'll give a war
and nobody will come.
(Carl Sandburg)

negative questions *Aren't you well?*

CONTRACTED (CONVERSATIONAL)

n't after auxiliary verb

Why isn't it ready yet? Doesn't she know?

We say *aren't I?*, NOT ~~*amn't I?*~~

'Aren't I next?' 'No, I am.' (BUT NOT ~~*+aren't next.*~~)

UNCONTRACTED (FORMAL, UNUSUAL)

not after subject

Why is it not ready yet? Does she not know?

1 Make these questions more conversational.

- Are you not well? *Aren't you well?*
- 1 Can you not swim?
- 2 Do you not speak Spanish?
- 3 Were the shops not open?
- 4 Has Ann not arrived?
- 5 Did she not know him?
- 6 Why are you not working?

We often use negative questions to **make sure that something is true.**

Didn't you go and see Peter yesterday? How is he? (= 'I believe you went and saw Peter ...')

2 Make negative questions to make sure that these things are true.

- I think you went to Scotland last week. *Didn't you go to Scotland last week?*
- 1 I think you speak Arabic.
- 2 I think that's Bill over there.
- 3 I believe you studied at Oxford.
- 4 Perhaps this is your coat.
- 5 I think her mother is a doctor.
- 6 I thought Joe was at the party.

We can use negative questions as **exclamations.**

Isn't it cold! Doesn't your hair look nice! Weren't those children noisy!

3 Make exclamations.

- It's surprising. *Isn't it surprising!*
- 1 They're late.
- 2 She looks tired.
- 3 That child is dirty.
- 4 It's hot.
- 5 John works hard.

Notice how we use **yes** and **no** in answers to negative questions.

'Don't you like it?' 'Yes (I like it).' *'Aren't you ready?' 'No (I'm not ready).'*

4 Add Yes or No to the answers.

- *'Aren't you ready?' 'Yes....., I am.'*
- 1 *'Don't you like her?' '....., I don't.'*
- 2 *'Can't you help me?' '....., I can't.'*
- 3 *'Isn't this nice?' '....., it is.'*
- 4 *'Hasn't she paid?' '....., she has.'*
- 5 *'Wasn't he at home?' '....., he was.'*
- 6 *'Didn't she phone?' '....., she didn't.'*

test yourself questions and negatives

1 Make questions with *she*.

- live in England? *Does she live in England?*
- 1 been to America?
- 2 like dancing?
- 3 can swim?
- 4 be here tomorrow?
- 5 watch TV yesterday?

2 Make negative sentences.

- I can speak French. (*Spanish*) *...I can't speak Spanish.*
- 1 Ann is at home. (*at work*)
- 2 I've forgotten your name. (*your face*)
- 3 Peter drives buses. (*taxis*)
- 4 We went to Spain. (*Portugal*)
- 5 You must use this phone. (*that one*)

3 Put in suitable question words.

- *'What time* is the film?' 'Eight o'clock.'
- 1 '..... is her hair?' 'Black.'
- 2 '..... are you?' '1 metre 84.'
- 3 '..... music do you like?' 'Pop.'

4 Correct (✓) or not (x)?

- I did not understand. ✓
- 1 Does your brother living with you? ...
- 2 Are coming to the party all your friends? ...
- 3 Did you see Bill yesterday? ...
- 4 Play you football? ...
- 5 Why you are tired? ...
- 6 What time does the lesson start? ...
- 7 What is your boss like? ...

5 Ask about the words *in italics*.

- She said something. *Who said something?*
- She said *something*. *What did she say?*
- 1 *Julia* cooked dinner.
- 2 *Julia* cooked *eggs*.
- 3 *The ball* hit Joe.
- 4 The ball hit *Joe*.
- 5 Ann plays *the guitar*.
- 6 *Ann* plays the guitar.

6 Put in Yes or No.

- 1 'Isn't she coming?' '....., she isn't.'
- 2 'Aren't you tired?' '....., I am.'
- 3 'Didn't Bill phone you?' '....., he did.'
- 4 'Can't you find your keys?' '....., I can't.'

7 Correct (✓) or not (x)?

- 1 Who did tell you that? ...
- 2 Isn't the weather nice! ...
- 3 Nobody didn't help me. ...
- 4 I had no money. ...
- 5 Will be there tomorrow both your parents? ...

More difficult questions