ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Tag Questions Test Exercises – Multiple Choice Questions With Answers – Advanced Level 42

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Explanations

1. Neither of the workers was happy with the new legislation, _____?
✔ **E) were they**
Neither is a negative word, so the sentence counts as negative and takes a positive tag. In tags, **neither of**, **everybody** and **nobody** are referred to with **they**, so we use **were**, not **was**: **Neither of them was ready, were they?** Not **weren't they**, because a negative sentence cannot have a negative tag.

2. Tom, the Browns' only son, died in a terrible accident last year. Before that event, however, the family used to be very cheerful people, _____, dad?
✔ **B) didn't they**
Used to is past simple in form, so the tag uses **did**. The statement is positive, so the tag is negative: **didn't**. The subject is **the family** (= **people**), so the pronoun is **they**: **They used to live here, didn't they?** Not **hadn't they**, because there is no past perfect (**had**) in the sentence.

3. That is very important for him, _____?
✔ **A) isn't it**
In tag questions, **this** and **that** are replaced by **it**. The verb is positive **is**, so the tag is **isn't it**: **That's lovely, isn't it?** Not **isn't that**, because the tag must use a personal pronoun, not a demonstrative.

4. Everybody should visit Goreme, _____?
✔ **C) shouldn't they**
Everybody takes a singular verb (**Everybody is here**), but in tags it is replaced by the pronoun **they**. The statement is positive with **should**, so the tag is negative: **shouldn't they**. Not **shouldn't we**, because **everybody** is not the same as the speaker's group (**we**).

5. Tomorrow, instead of going to Madrid with my boss, I am going to London, _____? So, is everything arranged properly there?
✔ **B) aren't I**
With a positive **I am**, the standard negative tag is **aren't I**: **I'm late, aren't I?** The present continuous here shows a future arrangement, so the tag keeps the auxiliary **am**, not **will** or **do**. Not **am I**, because a positive statement needs a negative tag.

6. As far as I know Jim, and according to what his mum told me about him, he hates football and never plays it, _____?
✔ **C) does he**
The tag goes with the main clause **he hates football and never plays it**. The verbs are in the present simple, so the tag uses **does**. **Never** makes the clause negative, so the tag must be positive: **He never complains, does he?** Not **didn't he**, because the sentence is in the present, not the past.

7. You really think that those over there are our new teacher's kids, _____? But they aren't, because he isn't married yet.
✔ **B) don't you**
The tag refers to the main clause **You really think**, which is present simple and positive, so the negative tag is **don't you**. The speaker is checking the other person's opinion, not the fact itself. Not **aren't they**, because the next sentence shows the speaker does not believe they are the teacher's kids; the question is about what **you** think.

8. They had to provide some evidence to the court to clear him of the accusation, _____?
✔ **E) didn't they**
Had to (= obligation) is past simple of **have to**, so the tag uses **did**, not **had**: **They had to leave, didn't they?** The subject is **they**, not **him**, so **didn't he** is wrong. Not **hadn't they**, because **had to** is a main verb here, not the auxiliary of the past perfect.

9. Just because the teacher of math has strict rules in class, everybody dislikes him too much, _____?
✔ **E) don't they**
The tag refers to the main clause **everybody dislikes him**. **Everybody** is replaced by **they** in the tag, and with **they** we use **don't**, even though the main verb **dislikes** is singular. Not **doesn't it**, because **everybody** is never replaced by **it**.

10. A: What an exhausting day it was! I had better go to sleep right now, _____?

B: Yes, of course. Anyway, I have already prepared the room for you.
✔ **D) hadn't I**
Had better takes the tag **hadn't**: **I'd better go, hadn't I?** The statement is positive, so the tag is negative. Not **should I**, because the tag repeats the auxiliary used in the sentence (**had**), and a positive statement needs a negative tag.

11. It is breaking news. Something bad must have happened at the airport. Pass the remote control to me, _____?
✔ D) will you
After an imperative (**Pass the remote control to me**), the usual tag to make a request is **will you?** (or **would you? / can you?**). Not **shall we**, which is used only after **Let's**: **Let's go, shall we?**

12. I guess my brother didn't like the way his wife behaved in front of many people, _____? Because he takes her words personally.
✔ C) did he
With **I guess / I think / I suppose**, the tag refers to the following clause, not to **I**. That clause, **my brother didn't like**, is past simple and negative, so the tag is positive: **did he**. Not **don't I**, because the tag does not go with **I guess**.

13. Nobody in the family believes Carl has paid the heating bill, _____? So, he needs some time to prove himself to be reliable.
✔ A) do they
The tag goes with the main clause **Nobody in the family believes**. **Nobody** makes the sentence negative, so the tag is positive, and **nobody** is replaced by **they**: **do they**. Not **has he**, because the tag refers to the main verb **believes**, not to the clause about Carl.

14. I assume the books you gave me will be helpful despite the fact that there are plenty of similar books, _____?
✔ B) won't they
With **I assume**, the tag refers to the clause after it: **the books … will be helpful**. This clause is positive and uses **will**, so the tag is **won't they**. Not **isn't there** or **are there**, because the clause beginning **despite the fact that** is not the main idea being checked.

15. One of the things I used to do was breaking ice floes in the stream, _____?
✔ B) wasn't it
The subject is **One of the things**, which is singular (**one**), and the verb is **was**. So the tag is **wasn't it**. Not **weren't they**, because the subject is **one**, not **things**. Not **didn't it**, because the main verb in the sentence is **was**; **used to** belongs to the relative clause.

16. I suppose they won't come in time for lunch, _____?
✔ D) will they
With **I suppose**, the tag refers to the clause after it: **they won't come**. This clause is negative with **will**, so the tag is positive: **will they**. Not **won't they**, because a negative sentence needs a positive tag.

17. He said the teacher ought to give the instructions more clearly, _____?
✔ C) didn't he
He said is a reporting verb, not an opinion verb like **I think**, so the tag goes with **He said**. It is past simple and positive, so the tag is **didn't he**. Not **oughtn't he**, because **ought to** belongs to the reported clause, and its subject is **the teacher**, not **he**.

18. He _____ hard for the exam, didn't he?
✔ B) studied
The tag **didn't he** shows that the verb must be positive past simple: **He studied hard, didn't he?** Not **had studied**, which would need the tag **hadn't he**. Not **didn't study**, because a negative verb would need the positive tag **did he**.

19. He _____ the car he damaged repaired, won't he?
✔ A) will have
The tag **won't he** shows the verb must use **will**. The causative **have + object + past participle** (**have the car repaired**) means he will arrange for someone else to repair it. Not **would have**, which would need the tag **wouldn't he**.

20. It would have been a more tactful decision to leave them alone when they told us to have a break, _____?
✔ C) wouldn't it
The main clause is **It would have been a more tactful decision**. The first auxiliary is **would** and the subject is **it**, so the tag is **wouldn't it**. Not **wouldn't they** or **didn't they**, because the clause **when they told us** is not the main clause.

21. They will be coming in an hour, so I have got to prepare something for dinner, _____?
✔ A) haven't I
A tag goes with the nearest main clause, **I have got to prepare something**. **Have got (to)** takes the tag **haven't**: **I've got to go, haven't I?** Not **don't I**, which goes with **I have to** (no **got**). Not **won't they**, because that refers to the first clause, not the one just before the tag.

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