HOW TO ENGLISH
With Gav & Em
Free teacher practice card

How Can a Word-Order Table Help Teach Present-Simple Questions?

S06E23 | For teachers to adapt to their learners

Purpose

Build a table of sentence parts and let learners supply the language. In S06E23, Em has to cover a class with little notice, so she creates columns for question words or auxiliaries, subjects, negatives, verbs, objects, places and times.

Try this in your next lesson

Build Do/Does + subject + base verb questions. Use a separate pattern for subject + don’t/doesn’t + base verb statements.

Our suggested routine

☐ Start with Do or Does, followed by a subject.

☐ Add a base-form verb, then an object if needed.

☐ Add a place or time phrase when it fits.

☐ For negative questions or statements, add do not, don’t, does not or doesn’t in the right position.

☐ Let learners combine words to make their own examples.

A classroom example

Our new word bank is she/they, play/read and tennis/books. Build Does she read books? and Do they play tennis?, then change them into negatives. Ask why play and read keep their base form. Add place and time after that pattern is secure. Questions with be and subject questions need different treatment, so keep this activity’s scope clear.

Answers and teacher guidance

Does she read books? Do they play tennis? Negatives: She doesn’t read books. They don’t play tennis. The auxiliary carries the person contrast; the main verb stays in its base form.

After the attempt

What worked? What needs another model or a smaller step? Note one change for next time.

Read the full explanation and examples:
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