Hello, and welcome to today’s Grammar Gameshow! I'm your host, Will! Just try and contract me, you'll see what happens! And of course, let’s not forget Leslie, our all-knowing voice in the sky.

Hello, everyone!

Tonight, we’re going to ask you three questions about…

Question tags! Those little auxiliary verb plus pronoun combinations for checking and asking!

OK! Now, let’s meet our contestants!

Hello, all. My name’s Liz!

And contestant number two?

It’s nice to meet you. I’m Felicia!

Nice to see you again, Liz! This will be four in a row for you, won’t it? Win this one and you’ll be our longest running contestant, won’t you? This is Gameshow history, isn’t it?

I’ll do my best!
**Will**
That’s the spirit. I might even let it help you. OK. Let’s get going, and don’t forget you can play along at home too. Here comes round one! Fingers on buzzers. What is the basic rule for construction of a question tag?

**Felicia**
Use an auxiliary verb that matches the main verb phrase, but opposite – such as positive to negative. Then, add a pronoun that refers to the subject.

**Leslie**
Correct!

**Will**
Well done! Let’s get some practice. I’ll give you the sentence, and you’ll give me the question tag. He can play football.

**Felicia**
He can play football, can’t he?

**Leslie**
Correct!

**Will**
You didn’t see James.

**Liz**
You didn’t see James, did you?

**Leslie**
Correct!

**Will**
She never cleans up.

**Felicia**
She never cleans up, does she?

**Leslie**
Correct!

**Will**
They have been to France.
Liz
They've been to France, haven't they?

Leslie
Correct!

Will
You hardly ever study.

Felicia
You hardly ever study, do you?

Leslie
Correct!

Will
I'm amazingly cool

Liz
I'm amazingly cool, aren't I?

Leslie
Correct!

Will
Err…

Liz
Sorry. You are amazingly cool, aren't you?

Leslie
Also correct, though factually inaccurate.

Will
No bread or water for you tonight, Leslie! Do your job!

Leslie
That was good work, wasn't it? Question tags are used to ask questions or check information. They are constructed by using an auxiliary verb from the main verb phrase and a pronoun referring to the subject. If the main verb phrase is affirmative, the question tag should be negative and vice versa!

Will
Well done, both of you. 10 points to Felicia and five to Liz.
Liz
What? Why five?

Will
You’re nearly our next champion. You didn’t think we were going to just give it to you, did you? Our last champion was so wonderful. I’ll never forget her. Good old… Mya? Mya! Mya. Anyway, on to round two. This is a triple threat round. Three questions… get them right all to score. Question one: What is the question tag for an imperative, such as: ‘Be quiet’?

Liz
Use a modal verb like ‘could’ or ‘will’. Be quiet, could you?

Leslie
Correct!

Will
That’s just rude! Minus three points. Question two: What is the pronoun used in a question tag for sentences using ‘there’, such as: ‘There’s no hope!’

Liz
We repeat the ‘there’. There’s no hope, is there?

Leslie
Correct!

Will
You should never give up hope! Minus 100 points for being a pessimist. Last question: What is the pronoun used in question tags using words like ‘somebody’ or ‘something’?

Liz
For ‘somebody’ we use ‘they’. Somebody wants me to win, don’t they? As for ‘something’, we use ‘it’. Something went wrong, didn’t it?

Leslie
Correct!

Will
Leslie?

Leslie
Nice, nice, nice! Imperatives have no auxiliary verb. To make a question tag with one, use a modal verb such as ‘could’, ‘would’ or ‘will’, but be careful of being impolite. For sentences using ‘there’ as a subject, also use ‘there’ in the question tag. Finally, with words like

**Will**
Well done, Felicia! 60 points to you!

**Liz**
But I answered the questions!

**Will**
Come on, champ! No one likes a sore loser! Suck it up a bit!

**Felicia**
Yeah! Suck it up a bit, won’t you?

**Will**
No one likes a sore winner either, Felicia.

**Felicia**
Yes, sir. Sorry, sir.

**Will**
On to our last question. Is this question tag correct? When would someone use it? ‘You’re getting married, are you?’

**Felicia**
Yes, it’s correct. Double positive tags are possible.

**Will**
Why?

**Felicia**
Funny that… it’s dropped out of my head.

**Will**
Liz?

**Felicia**
They often express surprise or concern or other emotional emphasis.

**Will**
Very professionally done, champ. Leslie?
Leslie
I couldn’t have put it better myself… so I won’t! Double positive question tags are common after affirmative sentences. They are usually used as responses to something that has just been said. The speaker repeats the information they’ve just heard and uses the tag to show interest, surprise, concern or some other emotional emphasis.

Will
Excellent work! You’re a fighter Liz. That’s why I’m giving you minus 12 points. And that brings us to the end of today’s Grammar Gameshow. Let’s count out the points… And the winner is… Liz with 53. Well done! Here’s what you’ve won!

Leslie
It’s a boxing glove! You’re king of the world, champ!

Will
We’ll see you again next week, where you can play for another prize. And Felicia… you didn’t really stand a chance, did you?

Felicia
How does any of this make any sense?

Will
It doesn’t even matter! Free the horses! It looks like we’ll need another contestant. Thanks for joining us. Say goodbye Leslie!

Leslie
Pa makha de kha Leslie!

Will
See you next time.