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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The Grammar Gameshow

### Questions

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The logo for BBC Learning English, featuring the letters 'BBC' in a white box above the words 'LEARNING ENGLISH' in white text on a teal background.

**Will**

Hello and welcome to today's Grammar Gameshow! I'm your host, Will! Ah, make something up yourself! And of course, let's not forget Leslie, our all-knowing voice in the sky.

**Leslie**

Hello, everyone!

**Will**

Tonight, we're going to ask you three questions about...

**Leslie**

Questions! Those investigative interrogatives that satisfy the curious and kill the cat.

**Will**

OK! Now, let's meet our contestants!

**Liz**

Hello, all. My name's Liz!

**Will**

And contestant number two?

**Clarence**

Hello, everyone. I'm Clarence!

**Will**

Nice to see you again Liz. This is your fifth...

**Clarence**

Hold it right there, Will. This is a sting. Agent Clarence Articulates from the Bureau of Invisible Know-it-all Grammarians Held Invisibly Somewhere in a Box in the Sky.

**Will**

Not... B.O.I.N.G.H.I.S.I.A.B.I.T.S.!

**Clarence**

Yes, well, we are working on the acronym. Now, I've heard some rumours about you and your Grammar Gameshow. Have you got an unlicensed Leslie?

**Will**

Rumours? How?

**Clarence**

We've had an informant working on the inside for the last few weeks.

**Will**

Liz! You snake in the grass. How could you?

**Liz**

Sorry, Will. They give better gifts.

**Clarence**

Leslie Licence please. We have some questions for you.

**Will**

Questions, eh? I can't imagine why. Leslie's very well cared for. He's happy here. Aren't you Leslie?

**Leslie**

Well, I what I'd really appreciate is...

**Will**

We must get that cable fixed!

**Clarence**

Licence, please.

**Will**

Quid pro quo, Agent Clarence. We are in the middle of a quiz game. You play my game, and I'll play yours. Quid pro quo.

**Clarence**

Well, it looks like I have no choice but to proceed.

**Will**

Well, OK! Let's get going, and don't forget, you can play along at home too. Our first round is a reverse round. I'm going to give you the answer, and you'll tell me the question. The category is standard object question grammar. Ready? Answer one: Put the auxiliary verb in front of the subject. What is the question?

**Liz**

How do we form most object questions?

**Leslie**

Correct!

**Will**

Answer two. Yes/no and question word. What's the question?

**Clarence**

What are the two types of object questions?

**Leslie**

Correct!

**Will**

Answer three: What, who, where, when, why, how, which. What's the question?

**Liz**

What kinds of words start a question-word question?

**Leslie**

Correct!

**Will**

Answer four: They use an auxiliary verb only, but short answers are possible. What's the question?

**Clarence**

What makes yes/no questions different from question-word questions?

**Leslie**

Correct!

**Will**

Leslie?

**Leslie**

Well done! The most common type of question is the object question. In this type, the normal word order of a sentence is changed. The auxiliary verb is moved in front of the subject. They come in two types. Yes / no questions, such as: Am I about to be set free? And question-word questions, for example: What will happen to the show if I leave?

**Will**

You win this round. Well done, Agent Clarence and co. You may ask one question.

**Clarence**

What are you feeding him, you monster?

**Will**

Oh, nothing but the best I assure you.

**Liz**

He's fibbing. It's nothing but bread and water!

**Clarence**

Bread and water? That's Les-lunacy!

**Will**

Sorry! We must get on! Round two is about subject questions. Question one. What is the difference between subject and object questions?

**Liz**

Replace the noun or pronoun with a question word and use statement word order.

**Will**

Leslie?

**Leslie**

Strange answer Liz, but that is one way to make a subject question from a sentence. However, it doesn't answer Will, so no points. Subject questions are used when the question word represents the subject noun of the answer. For example: What happened? Nothing happened. With these questions, we do not invert the auxiliary verb and subject like we do with object questions. We use the verb like we would in a normal sentence and if the verb is changed to show a tense, that change remains.

**Will**

Excellent. Let's have an example. Look at these sentences and tell me which one is wrong.

- a) Who broke the window?
- b) What has happened to the house?
- c) What will become of us?
- d) Who does know?

**Liz**

It's C because it has an auxiliary verb!

**Leslie**

Incorrect. That's a future simple subject question and perfectly right.

**Clarence**

D is wrong because an auxiliary verb is not needed.

**Will**

Leslie?

**Leslie**

Sorry, Agent Clarence. It's not always wrong. To add emphasis to subject questions, we stress the auxiliary. With certain tenses, such as the present simple, we can reintroduce the auxiliary verb so that it can be stressed.

**Will**

Sorry, Agent Clarence. No right answer, no question for you. On to our last round. And this is a true-or-false round. The category is reported questions. Here we go.

**Leslie**

This type of question does not switch the auxiliary verb and subject.

**Liz**

True!

**Leslie**

Correct! Now try this: Reported yes/no questions are introduced using 'if' or 'whether'.

**Clarence**

True!

**Leslie**

Correct! Reported questions are written as sentences with no question mark.

**Clarence**

True!

**Leslie**

Correct! One more: Reported questions are often introduced with the verb 'ask'. For example: He asked me...

**Liz**

True!

**Leslie**

Correct!

**Will**

Leslie?

**Leslie**

Reported questions do not switch the auxiliary verb and subject like object questions do. They are written as sentences and may be introduced by the verb 'ask', such as: 'They asked me...'. Finally, if the reported question has a yes or no answer, we need to use 'if' or 'whether' in its construction.

**Will**

And that brings us to the end of today's Grammar Gameshow.

**Clarence**

I've played your games long enough. Now, Leslie Licence, please! If you show me quickly, I might be more Les-lenient.

**Will**

Of course! But first, don't you want to ask Leslie what he wants to do?

**Clarence**

Leslie?

**Leslie**

If I left, who would answer the questions? Who would keep Will company? He's mean, but he's my friend.

**Liz**

But he's horribly trapped!

**Clarence**

A trapped Leslie is just the way of the world. But without a Leslie licence, life would be chaos! Now, show me the Leslie Licence or I'll have to Les-litigate.

**Will**

Just this way Agent Clarence. It's down here...in the basement! And Liz, birds of a feather flock together. See where your curiosity has got you now, Agent Clarence. Release the cats! It looks like we'll need another two more contestants. Say goodbye Leslie.

**Leslie**

Donadagohvi, Leslie

**Will**

See you next time, old friend.