

Word Order in English Exercise

◆ Exercise 1: Correct the word order

Rewrite each sentence with the correct word order.

1. If will you come, we'll start early.
2. Rarely I have seen such loyalty.
3. It John was who called the police.
4. Can you tell me what is he doing?
5. The man helped me who yesterday.
6. She gave to the teacher, with a smile, her essay.

◆ Exercise 2: Sentence transformation

Change the sentence according to the instruction.

1. He broke the window. → (use a cleft sentence to emphasise "the window")
2. I didn't expect the test to be difficult. → (begin with "What I didn't expect...")
3. If she had known, she would have told us. → (use inversion)
4. He rarely misses a deadline. → (begin with "Rarely..." and change word order)
5. We saw a painting that impressed us. → (make it a non-defining relative clause)

◆ **Exercise 3: Identify the mistake**

Find and correct the word order error.

The reason is that I was late I missed the bus.

Only then he realised the truth.

What do you want is money.

Never I have been so embarrassed.

The film which I saw it was amazing.

◆ **Exercise 4: Fill in the blanks with the correct word order**

_____ you heat metal, it expands. (zero conditional)

_____ had I arrived than the train left. (use inversion: no sooner...)

What he wants most _____ peace and quiet.

The woman _____ helped me was very kind.

Under no circumstances _____ leave the room. (use inversion)

Answer key:

Exercise 1: Correct the Word Order

1. ✗ If will you come, we'll start early.
✓ If you will come, we'll start early.
◆ Subject ("you") must come before "will."

2. ✗ Rarely I have seen such loyalty.
✓ Rarely have I seen such loyalty.
◆ Inversion after negative adverbials like "rarely."

3. ✗ It John was who called the police.
✓ It was John who called the police.
◆ Cleft sentence structure: "It + be + focus + who/that..."

4. ✗ Can you tell me what is he doing?
✓ Can you tell me what he is doing?
◆ Indirect questions use statement word order (subject + verb).

5. ✗ The man helped me who yesterday.
✓ The man who helped me yesterday.
◆ Relative clause word order is normal (no inversion).

6. ✗ She gave to the teacher, with a smile, her essay.
✓ She gave, with a smile, her essay to the teacher.
◆ Verb-object split used for emphasis or rhythm.

Exercise 2: Sentence transformation

1. He broke the window.
→ It was the window that he broke.
◆ Cleft sentence for emphasis on “the window.”

2. I didn’t expect the test to be difficult.
→ What I didn’t expect was the test to be difficult.
◆ What-cleft for focus.

3. If she had known, she would have told us.
→ Had she known, she would have told us.
◆ Inversion of third conditional (formal style).

4. He rarely misses a deadline.
→ Rarely does he miss a deadline.
◆ Inversion after “rarely” (negative adverb).

5. We saw a painting that impressed us.
→ We saw a painting, which impressed us.
◆ Non-defining relative clause adds extra (non-essential) info.

Exercise 3: Identify the mistake

1. ✗ The reason is that I was late I missed the bus.
✓ The reason I was late is that I missed the bus.

2. ✗ Only then he realised the truth.
✓ Only then did he realise the truth.
◆ Inversion after “Only then.”

3. ✗ What do you want is money.
✓ What you want is money.
◆ Indirect statement uses embedded (not question) word order.
4. ✗ Never I have been so embarrassed.
✓ Never have I been so embarrassed.
5. ✗ The film which I saw it was amazing.
✓ The film which I saw was amazing.
◆ Avoid repeating the object (“it”).

Exercise 4: Fill in the blanks

1. If you heat metal, it expands.
◆ Zero conditional: present + present
2. No sooner had I arrived than the train left.
◆ Inversion with “no sooner”
3. What he wants most is peace and quiet.
◆ What-cleft sentence
4. The woman who helped me was very kind.
◆ Defining relative clause
5. Under no circumstances must you leave the room.
◆ Inversion after negative adverbial (“Under no circumstances”)