

Tag Questions

To Show Concern/To Empathize

Materials developed by Katie Leite

Class Demographics:

Primary Skills: Listening & Speaking

Students: Adults

Type of Institution: Adult Education, Continuing Education Program

Proficiency Level: High Beginner

Length of Class Time: 2 hours

First Language Background: Varied

Suggested Follow-Up Lesson: Offering suggestions to
classmates' problems

TAG QUESTIONS with "BE"

Language Presentation



To Show Concern
To Empathize

*Directions: Listen to each conversation below.
Practice each conversation with your partner.*

Conversation 1:

Juanita and Fredo are classmates. They are talking after class.

Juanita: I'm having such a hard time speaking English.

Freda: It's tough, isn't it?

Juanita: Yeah.



Conversation 3:

Masha and Neeraj are classmates in a night class. They are talking during the class break.

Neeraj: I'm having such a hard time staying awake in class.

Masha: It's late, isn't it?

Neeraj: Yes.



Conversation 2:

Hamid and Elsa are classmates. They are doing homework together.

Hamid: I'm having such a hard time learning new vocabulary words.

Elsa: They're impossible, aren't they?

Hamid: Umm-hmm.



Conversation 4:

Deepak and Kumi are classmates. They are studying together before class.

Deepak: I'm having such a hard time reading the books for this class.

Kumi: They're long, aren't they?

Deepak: Oh yeah.



TAG QUESTIONS with "BE"

Highlighting Structure



Directions: Use the conversations to fill in the grid.
Then, answer the questions below.

I'm having such a hard time...
Problem

STATEMENT (+)	TAG (-)
---------------	---------

speaking	English
staying	

Subject	Verb (+)	Adjective	Verb (-)	Pronoun
It	's	tough,	isn't	it?
They				

Now, think about these questions.

1. On the grid you see both "is" and "are". How do you know which one to use?
2. What is the difference between the verb in the STATEMENT and the verb in the TAG?
3. a) What is the relationship between the speakers?
b) Would it be ok to respond, "It's great, isn't it?" Why or why not?
4. What does the speaker who uses the tag question do?

TAG QUESTIONS with "BE"

Controlled Exercises



To Show Concern
To Empathize

Part I:

Directions: Complete the conversations below.

Conversation 1:

Won Jung and Pablo are classmates. They are studying together.

Won Jung: I'm having such a hard time
understanding the homework.

Pablo: difficult,
.....?

Won Jung: Umm-hmm.



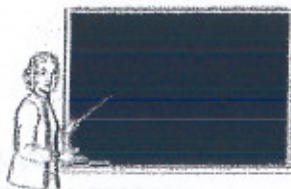
Conversation 2:

Hironoshi and Carol are classmates. They are talking during the class break.

Hironoshi: I'm having such a hard time reading the
sentences on the board.

Carol: messy,
.....?

Hironoshi: They sure are.



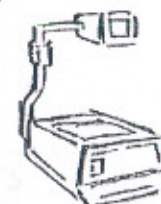
Conversation 3:

Mikko and Bonnie are classmates. They are doing homework together.

Mikko: I'm having such a hard time seeing the
words on the overhead.

Bonnie: small,
.....?

Mikko: Yeah.



Conversation 4:

Chenara and Yong Hwon are classmates. They are talking in class during pair work.

Chenara: I'm having such a hard time hearing in
class.

Yong Hwon: noisy,
.....?

Chenara: Umm-hmm.





Part II:

*Directions: Complete the conversations below.
Use the adjective bank to help you.*

Conversation 5:

Pepe and Arlene are classmates. They are walking to class together.

Pepe: I'm having such a hard time
writing the essays for English class.

Arlene:
.....?

Pepe: Yeah.

Conversation 6:

Joohyang and Bill are classmates. They are studying together.

Joohyang: I'm having such a hard time staying
awake during class.

Bill:
.....?

Joohyang: Umm-hmm.



To Show Concern
To Empathize

Adjective Bank

tough	impossible	small	late
difficult	messy	noisy	

Conversation 7:

Jim and Raquel are classmates. They are talking in class during pair work.

Jim: I'm having such a hard time
understanding the assignments.

Raquel:
.....?

Jim: I think so!

Conversation 8:

Lisa and Felipe are classmates. They are talking after class.

Lisa: I'm having such a hard time speaking
English outside class.

Felipe:
.....?

Lisa: Yeah.

TAG QUESTIONS with "BE"

Semi-Controlled Activity

Directions:

- Write the problem that the person might have with English or in English class.
- Then, respond to the person... don't forget to use a tag question.
- Use the words in the bank to help you!

Problem Bank	Adjective Bank
reading...	tough
the textbooks	difficult
the sentences on the board	impossible
learning...	messy
the new vocabulary words	small
the grammar rules	noisy
understanding...	late
the homework	
the class work	
seeing...	
the words on the overhead	
the sentences on the board	
hearing...	
the teacher directions	
the announcements	
speaking...	
English	



To Show Concern
To Empathize

Conversation 1:

Eliene: I'm having such a hard time...

You:

Eliene: Yeah.

Conversation 2:

Gustavo: I'm having such a hard time...

You:

Gustavo: Umm-hmm.

(continued)

Conversation 3:

Marika: I'm having such a hard time...

You:

Marika: Yes.

Conversation 4:

Cesar: I'm having such a hard time...

You:

Cesar: Umm-hmm.



To Show Concern
To Empathize

Conversation 5:

Lea: I'm having such a hard time...

You:

Lea: Yeah.

Conversation 6:

Abdul: I'm having such a hard time...

You:

Abdul: I think so!

TAG QUESTIONS with "BE"

Communicative Activity



To Show Concern
To Empathize

Directions:

- Write some problems you are having with English or in English class in the grid.

I'm having such a hard time...
1.
2.
3.
4.

- Now, find a partner
 - ⇒ Student A tells Student B one of his/her problems.
 - ⇒ Student B responds appropriately.
- Switch roles and practice again!

Sample Conversation

Student A: I'm having such a hard time...

Student B:

Student A: Umm-hmm.

- Last, get the phone number of one of your classmates and pick a time to call each other and talk about your problems in English class.



Classmate's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Day/Time to Call: _____

TAG QUESTIONS with "BE"

Looking Ahead...



To Show Concern
To Empathize

- Now record your classmates problems in the grid below.
- Count the number of classmates with the problem.
- In our next class we will learn how to offer solutions to our classmates to help with these problems.

Problem	How many classmates?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

TAG QUESTIONS with "BE"

Homework

Name _____

Directions:

- Call your partner
 - ⇒ Student A tells Student B one of his/her problems.
 - ⇒ Student B responds appropriately.
- Switch roles and practice again!

Sample Conversation

Student A: I'm having such a hard time...

Student B:

Student A: Umm-hmm.



To Show Concern
To Empathize

- In the space below write your conversations to give to the teacher next class.

FIRST CONVERSATION

_____:
(Student A)

_____:
(Student B)

_____:
(Student A)



SECOND CONVERSATION:

_____:

_____:

_____:

_____:

ANSWER KEY

TAG QUESTIONS with "BE" Highlighting Structure



To Show Concern
To Empathize

Directions: Use the conversations to fill in the grid.
Then, answer the questions below.

I'm having such a hard time...

Problem	
---------	--

speaking	English
staying	<i>awake in class</i>
<i>learning</i>	new vocabulary words
<i>reading</i>	<i>the books</i>

STATEMENT (+)			TAG (-)	
Subject	Verb (+)	Adjective	Verb (-)	Pronoun
It	's	tough,	isn't	it?
<i>It</i>	's	<i>late,</i>	<i>isn't</i>	<i>it?</i>
<i>They</i>	're	<i>impossible,</i>	<i>aren't</i>	<i>they?</i>
<i>They</i>	're	<i>long,</i>	<i>aren't</i>	<i>they?</i>

Now, think about these questions.

1. On the grid you see both "isn't" and "aren't". How do you know which one to use?

Use isn't with singular (it) and aren't with plural (they)

2. What is the difference between the verb in the STATEMENT and the verb in the TAG?

In the statement it's positive and in the tag it's negative

3. a) What is the relationship between the speakers?

Close, Informal

b) Would it be ok to respond, "It's great, isn't it?" Why or why not?

No, because the person feels bad.

4. What does the speaker who uses the tag question do?

The speaker acknowledges/shows concern for the other person's feelings

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ANSWER KEY

TAG QUESTIONS with "BE" Controlled Exercises



To Show Concern
To Empathize

Part I:

8 Directions: Complete the conversations below.

Conversation 1:

Won Jung and Pablo are classmates. They are studying together.

Won Jung: I'm having such a hard time understanding the homework.

Pablo: It's difficult,
isn't it?

Won Jung: Umm-hmm.



Conversation 2:

Hironoshi and Carol are classmates. They are talking during the class break.

Hironoshi: I'm having such a hard time reading the sentences on the board.

Carol: They're messy,
aren't they?

Hironoshi: They sure are.



Conversation 3:

Mikko and Bonnie are classmates. They are doing homework together.

Mikko: I'm having such a hard time seeing the words on the overhead.

Bonnie: They're small,
aren't they?

Mikko: Yeah.



Conversation 4:

Chenara and Yong Hwon are classmates. They are talking in class during pair work.

Chenara: I'm having such a hard time hearing in class.

Yong Hwon: It's noisy,
isn't it?

Chenara: Umm-hmm.



ANSWER KEY

Part II:

*Directions: Complete the conversations below.
Use the adjective bank to help you.*

Conversation 5:

Pepe and Arlene are classmates. They are walking to class together.

Pepe: I'm having such a hard time
writing the essays for English class.

Arlene: They're (tough/difficult/impossible),
aren't they?

Pepe: Yeah.

Conversation 6:

Joohyang and Bill are classmates. They are studying together.

Joohyang: I'm having such a hard time staying
awake during class.

Bill: It's (late/tough/difficult),
isn't it?

Joohyang: Umm-hmm.

Adjective Bank

tough	impossible	small	late
difficult	messy	hoisy	



To Show Concern
To Empathize

Conversation 7:

Jim and Raquel are classmates. They are talking in class during pair work.

Jim: I'm having such a hard time
understanding the assignments.

Raquel: They're (tough/difficult/impossible),
aren't they?

Jim: I think so!

Conversation 8:

Lisa and Felipe are classmates. They are talking after class.

Lisa: I'm having such a hard time speaking
English outside class.

Felipe: It's (tough/difficult/impossible),
isn't it?

Lisa: Yeah.

Answers will vary for the Semi-controlled,
Controlled, and Homework activities.