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## EC02. Small Talk: Tag Questions

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For media links in this activity, visit [the LLC ESL Tutoring website for Upper Level SDLAs](#). Find your SDLA number to see all the resources to finish your SDLA.

### Section 1: Small Talk Review

As you learned in EC01, small talk is informal, friendly conversation about general topics. Small talk is extremely important to make a good first impression and build positive relationships with other people. Do you remember how to have successful small talk? Complete the chart below.

**Good places for small talk:**

**Good topics for small talk:**

After completing EC01, you were challenged to try to make small talk with a stranger or acquaintance in English. How did it go? Answer the questions below.

1. Where did you make the small talk?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What did you talk about? How did you keep the conversation going?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. In your opinion, was it successful small talk? Why or why not?

\_\_\_\_\_





**Section 2: Tag Questions**

A tag question is a statement followed by a mini-question called a "question tag". Tag questions are a way of asking the other person to make a comment and *to keep the conversation going*; as a result, tag questions are very important to use when making small talk. We use question tags at the end of statements to ask for confirmation. They mean something like: "Am I right?" or "Do you agree?" The basic structure of a tag question is:

**Statement + Question Tag**

<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>Positive Statement</b>	<b>Negative Tag</b>	<b>Negative Statement</b>	<b>Positive Tag</b>
It is going to rain,	<b>isn't</b> it?	It <b>isn't</b> going to rain,	<b>is</b> it?
You <b>swim</b> ,	<b>don't</b> you?	You <b>don't</b> swim,	<b>do</b> you?

Notice that the question tag repeats the helping verb (or main verb when *be*) from the statement and changes it to negative or positive. The question tag should also include the same subject as the statement.

**Statement**

**Question Tag**

It (subject) **is not (negative be verb)** going to rain,  
You (subject) **have (positive helping verb)** eaten,

**is (positive be verb)** it (subject)?  
**haven't (negative helping verb)** you (subject)?

**Note:** In the **Hobbies** example above, the helping verb *do* in the statement - "You swim," - is not stated because the tense is simple present. However, the question tag uses *do* to make "don't you?" It is also possible to say: "You do swim, don't you?"

**Statement**

**Question Tag**

You (subject) **swim (main verb)**,

**don't (helping verb – no main verb)** you (subject)?

**You try:** For the following tag questions, read the statement and write an appropriate question tag to follow it.

*Example:* She has been to the zoo, *hasn't she?*

1. It's windy today, \_\_\_\_\_?
2. You're not a doctor, \_\_\_\_\_?
3. She didn't feel good yesterday, \_\_\_\_\_?
4. They will have fun this weekend, \_\_\_\_\_?
5. You watched the football game on Sunday, \_\_\_\_\_?





**Section 3: Create a Comic!**

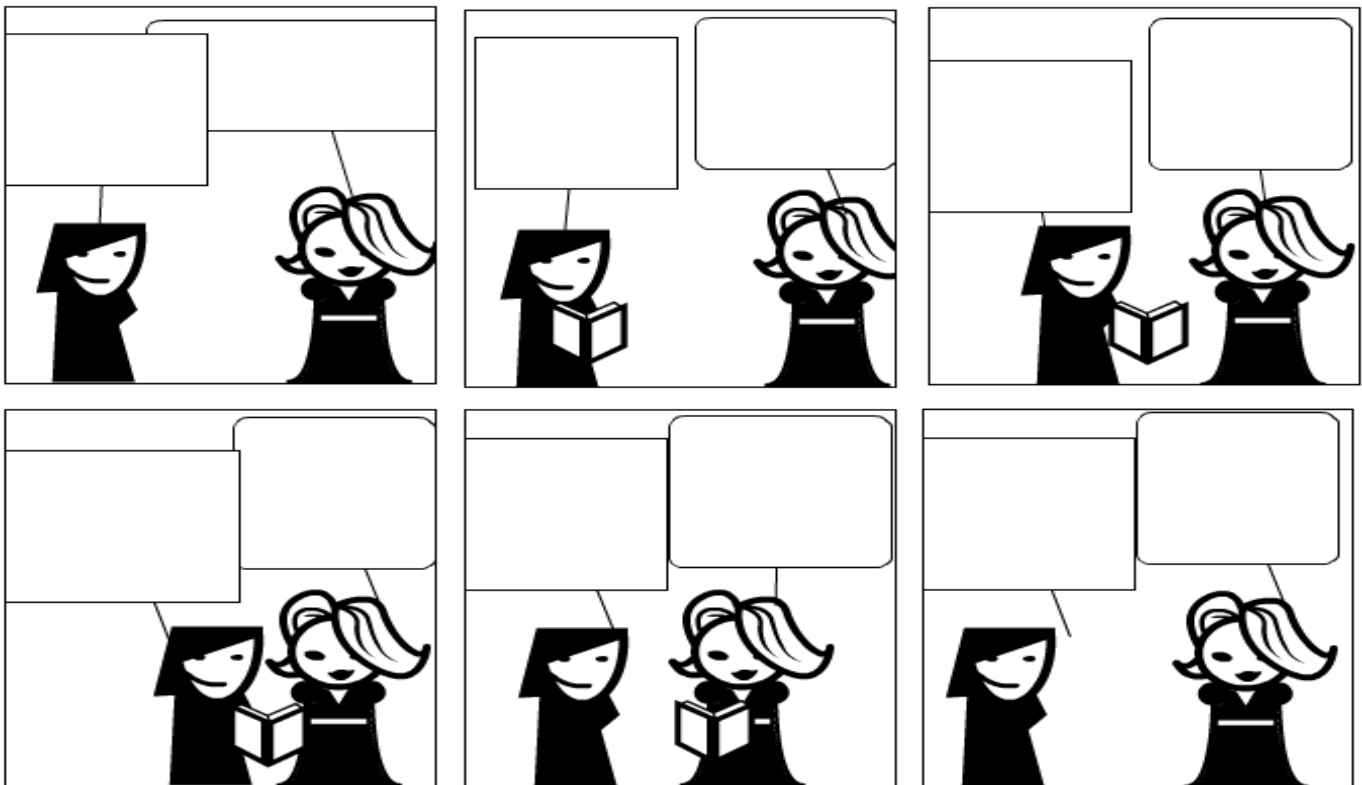
You will create a comic between two people that are having small talk. Be sure to use **tag questions** in your comic!!

**Step 1:** Before you begin writing your comic, answer these questions to help guide your comic:

1. Where are the characters in the comic making small talk? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. What is the relationship between the characters in the comic? (Remember: we don't usually make small talk with close friends or family) \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What topic(s) are they discussing? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Step 2:** Remember to add tag questions. Use at least **3** tag questions in your comic.

**Step 3:** Use what you've learned in EC01 and EC02 of this SDLA to complete the comic below. Be as creative as you'd like!







Source: Strip Generator. (2011). <http://stripgenerator.com/strip/507265/blank-comic-strip/view/fresh/>





**Section 4: Student Self-Assessment**

Complete this table BEFORE meeting with a tutor.

Communication Skill	I can't do this YET. 	I can do this WITH help. 	I can do this WITHOUT help. 	I can TEACH this to a classmate. 
I can form tag questions.				
I can create a small talk dialogue with tag questions.				

Here are some words/phrases I need to practice.

**Good Job!**

Now make an appointment

with a tutor on the LLC ESL Tutoring Website

([www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring](http://www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring)).








**Section 5: Practice with a Tutor!**

Meet with a tutor and share this activity with the tutor. To make sure you understand how to use tag questions in small talk, you will practice the conversation you created in the comic in Section 3 with the tutor. You may also ask the tutor any questions that you might have.

**Grading Rubric**

Possible Points	Need Practice  (0-1 Point)	Good Job  (2-3 Points)	Excellent Work  (4-5 Points)
<b>Content</b>	Not enough information provided in responses and often does not use correct vocabulary.	Provides most important information in responses and some of the time uses correct vocabulary.	Provides all necessary information in responses and most of the time uses correct vocabulary.
<b>Skill: Speaking</b>	More than 6 mistakes saying words; needs guessing more than 3 times.	Not more than 5 mistakes saying words; needs guessing on 1-2 words or sentences.	Not more than 2 mistakes saying words; needs no guess about meaning.
<b>Oral Fluency</b>	Speaks mostly in phrases, individual words; many pauses.	Sometimes speaks in complete sentences; several pauses.	Speaks in complete sentences; a couple pauses okay.

\*Students must receive at least 10 points to move on

Possible Points: \_\_\_\_\_ / 15

Tutor Comments:

**Congratulations! Keep going.**

You have successfully completed this SDLA and are ready to continue to the next.

**Work on this more.**

You have not yet mastered this SDLA. It is recommended that you complete it again.

Tutor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

