

Inversion (Never have I..., Not only...) – Worksheet 1

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ Score: / 38



Do this worksheet
online and check your
answers instantly

Exercise 1: Complete the sentences

Complete each sentence with the correct auxiliary and the subject in brackets, using inversion and the verb in the correct form.

Example: Never ___ (we / experience) such heat. → have we experienced

1. Never _____ (I / see) such a spectacular view.
2. Rarely _____ (she / complain) about her job, even when she is exhausted.
3. Not only _____ (they / lose) the match yesterday, but they also lost their captain to injury.
4. No sooner _____ (we / leave) the café than it began to snow.
5. Seldom _____ (the museum / be) this busy on a weekday.
6. Little _____ (Marco / know) that his friends were planning a surprise party.
7. Only later _____ (Aisha / realise) that she had left her passport at home.
8. Not until next year _____ (the new bridge / be) finished.

Exercise 2: Choose the right adverbial

Complete each sentence with a word or phrase from the box. Use each one once. There are two extra words you do not need.

Example: ___ in my life have I been so embarrassed. → Never

WORD BOX

No sooner Hardly Little Under no circumstances Not only Not until Only Seldom So
Such

9. _____ had I closed my eyes than the phone rang.
10. _____ had we left the house when it started to pour.
11. _____ did they suspect that their quiet guest was a famous novelist.
12. _____ should you share your password with anyone.
13. _____ does the company produce furniture, but it also designs interiors.
14. _____ the last guest had left did they start cleaning up.
15. _____ by working together will we find a solution.

16. _____ do we get snow in this part of the country.

Exercise 3: Rewrite the sentences

Rewrite each sentence so that it begins with the word or words in brackets. Keep the meaning the same.

Example: I have rarely felt so nervous. (Rarely) → Rarely have I felt so nervous.

17. I have never tasted such delicious food. (Never)

18. She speaks French and she also speaks Japanese. (Not only)

19. As soon as he arrived, the meeting started. (No sooner)

20. They didn't realise the truth until much later. (Not until)

21. You must not open this door under any circumstances. (Under no circumstances)

22. He had no idea how famous he would become. (Little)

23. We rarely eat out these days. (Rarely)

24. If I had known about the problem, I would have helped. (Had)

Exercise 4: Correct the mistakes

Each sentence contains one mistake. Write the corrected sentence.

Example: Seldom she goes to the cinema. → Seldom does she go to the cinema.

25. Never I have seen such a mess in the kitchen.

26. Not only she plays the piano, but she also sings beautifully.

27. No sooner had the film started when the lights went out.

28. Hardly had we sat down than the waiter brought the menus.

29. Only after the exam did she felt relieved.

30. Under no circumstances you should leave the building during the test.

31. Little did they knew what was about to happen.

32. Not until I read the email I understood the problem.

Exercise 5: Put the words in order

Put the words in the correct order to make sentences with inversion. Add punctuation where needed.

Example: often / rarely / do / so / I / feel / not → Rarely do I feel so ... (example of the pattern only)

33. have / never / such / I / a / heard / strange / story

34. we / seldom / do / visit / relatives / our

35. not / only / was / he / late / but / he / was / also / rude

36. sooner / no / had / she / home / got / than / phone / the / rang

37. had / I / known / would / I / have / come / earlier

38. circumstances / no / under / you / are / to / allowed / smoke / here

Answer key – Inversion (Never have I..., Not only...) – Worksheet 1

Exercise 1: Complete the sentences

1. have I seen

After Never, use present perfect question word order: have + subject + past participle.

2. does she complain

In the present simple, inversion needs does + subject + base form.

3. did they lose

Yesterday shows past simple, so use did + subject + base form.

4. had we left

No sooner is normally followed by the past perfect: had + subject + past participle.

5. is the museum

With the verb be, simply invert be and the subject; no do is needed.

6. did Marco know

Little did + subject + know means the person had no idea at all.

7. did Aisha realise

After Only + time expression, the main clause is inverted with did + subject + base form.

8. will the new bridge be

Next year shows the future, so invert will and the subject: will + subject + be.

Exercise 2: Choose the right adverbial

9. No sooner

No sooner... than describes one action immediately following another.

10. Hardly

Hardly... when is the pattern for something happening immediately after.

11. Little

Little did they suspect means they did not suspect at all.

12. Under no circumstances

Under no circumstances expresses a strong, formal prohibition.

13. Not only

Not only... but also adds a second, often surprising, fact.

14. Not until

Not until + clause is followed by inversion in the main clause.

15. Only

Only + by + -ing introduces the one way something can happen, followed by inversion.

16. Seldom

Seldom means rarely and triggers inversion with do.

Exercise 3: Rewrite the sentences

17. Never have I tasted such delicious food.

Never moves to the front and have comes before the subject.

18. Not only does she speak French, but she also speaks Japanese.

Not only + does + subject + base form, followed by but (also) in the second part.

19. No sooner had he arrived than the meeting started.

No sooner + had + subject + past participle + than + past simple.

20. Not until much later did they realise the truth.

The time phrase goes first and the main clause is inverted with did.

21. Under no circumstances must you open this door.

Under no circumstances replaces not, and the modal comes before the subject.

22. Little did he know how famous he would become.

Little did + subject + know expresses complete lack of awareness.

23. Rarely do we eat out these days.

In the present simple, add do before the subject after Rarely.

24. Had I known about the problem, I would have helped.

In formal third conditionals, If is dropped and had goes before the subject.

Exercise 4: Correct the mistakes

25. **Never have I seen such a mess in the kitchen.**

After Never, the auxiliary must come before the subject.

26. **Not only does she play the piano, but she also sings beautifully.**

The present simple needs does + subject + base form after Not only.

27. **No sooner had the film started than the lights went out.**

No sooner is followed by than, not when.

28. **Hardly had we sat down when the waiter brought the menus.**

Hardly is followed by when (or before), not than.

29. **Only after the exam did she feel relieved.**

After did, use the base form of the verb.

30. **Under no circumstances should you leave the building during the test.**

The modal should must come before the subject after a negative adverbial.

31. **Little did they know what was about to happen.**

Did is followed by the base form know, not the past form.

32. **Not until I read the email did I understand the problem.**

The inversion happens in the main clause: did I understand.

Exercise 5: Put the words in order

33. **Never have I heard such a strange story.**

Never + have + subject + past participle.

34. **Seldom do we visit our relatives.**

Seldom + do + subject + base form.

35. **Not only was he late, but he was also rude.**

With be, invert was and the subject after Not only.

36. **No sooner had she got home than the phone rang.**

No sooner had + subject + past participle + than + past simple.

37. **Had I known, I would have come earlier.**

Had + subject + past participle replaces If I had known.

38. **Under no circumstances are you allowed to smoke here.**

Under no circumstances + are + subject + allowed to.

Notes for teachers: Start by contrasting a neutral sentence (I have never seen...) with its inverted version (Never have I seen...) and point out that inversion follows question word order, adding do/does/did in the present and past simple. Typical mistakes include forgetting the auxiliary (Not only she plays...), keeping the past form after did (did she felt), and mixing up No sooner... than with Hardly... when. As a follow-up, ask learners to write a short, dramatic story opening or a formal notice using at least five different inversion structures.