

Statements which follow patterns such as the following can only use the second impersonal report structure:

Some people have argued that it is important to ban mobile phones from schools.

→ **It has been argued that** *it is important to ban mobile phones from schools.*

Educationalists claim that mobile phones should be banned from schools.

→ **It is claimed that** *mobile phones should be banned from schools.*

1 Report the statements using impersonal report structures and starting with the words given. In some cases, only one structure is possible.

1 Some parents think that young people are spending too much time staring at a screen.

Young people _____ ?

It _____ ?

2 People generally consider that the Internet has improved our lives in many important ways.

The Internet _____ ?

It _____ ?

3 Surveys have reported that 85 percent of teenagers watch at least one music video every day.

85 percent _____ ?

It _____ ?

4 We know that technology has been changing the way students approach their schoolwork at home.

Technology _____ ?

It _____ ?

5 Educationalists believe that overuse of the Internet is reducing students' attention span.

Overuse _____ ?

It _____ ?

6 Some teachers have argued that less emphasis should be placed on digital tools in education.

It _____ ?

7 They fear that misinformation, pseudo-facts, unsupported opinions and the like are too easily available on the Internet.

Misinformation _____ ?

It _____ ?

2 Complete the sentences using the words in brackets. Do not change the order of the words given, but add extra words where necessary.

1 _____ ? (it/often/claim) that the world has become too dependent on the Internet.

2 Three hackers _____ ? (presume/breach) a sophisticated computer security system for months.

3 Teenagers _____ ? (assume/be) the most proficient users of the Internet within the family.

4 _____ ? (it/hope/technology) can improve rather than hinder the growth of literacy.

5 More and more elderly people nowadays _____ ? (say/get) to grips with social media.

8.3 GRAMMAR

Inversion after adverbials

When we want to emphasise a word, phrase or clause in English, we can do this by bringing it to the front of a sentence. This is frequently done with negative or limiting adverbials in order to make a sentence seem more dramatic or emphatic.

When negative or limiting adverbials are placed at the start of a sentence, the usual word order of subject + verb is inverted and we follow the same word order as that used for most questions.

Adverbial + auxiliary do/does/did + subject + verb (base form)

The devastation after the earthquake was terrible. We rarely see such complete destruction after earthquakes!

→ **Rarely do we see** such complete destruction after earthquakes!

Adverbial + auxiliary have/has/had + subject + verb (past participle)

In our judgement, the aid agencies collaborated extremely well. We have never witnessed cooperation as successful as this before.

→ **Never before have we witnessed** cooperation as successful as this.

Adverbial + modal auxiliary + subject + verb

The mudslide covered the village. We could never go there again.

→ **Never could we go** there again.

Adverbial + is/was + subject

I'm worried. Where is he? He is never so late!

→ **Never is he** so late!

Little with negative use, neither

Little is usually used with verbs to do with thinking and knowing, such as: believe, expect, imagine, know, realise, think, understand:

We didn't realise what effect the announcement would have.

→ **Little did we realise** what effect the announcement would have.

Neither is usually used with nor.

*We wanted **neither** the book **nor** the CD.*

→ **Neither the book nor the CD did we want.**

Note:

When *little* and *neither* are used to qualify the subject of the verb, there is no inversion:

***Little information** was available on the subject.*

***Neither he nor I** understood what was said.*

Negative adverbs showing frequency – never, rarely, seldom

These adverbs are straightforward in their use. They are simply moved to the front position in the sentence when we want to be more emphatic, and followed by an inverted subject and verb:

We rarely attend the meetings.

→ **Rarely do we attend** the meetings.

I have never experienced such extreme temperatures.

→ **Never have I experienced** such extreme temperatures.