

Lesson Plan: Inversion after negative adverbials

Level: Advanced (C1+)

Time: 60–75 minutes

Topic: Using inversion after negative adverbials (e.g., *never, rarely, not only, no sooner... than*, etc.)

Grammar Focus: Subject-auxiliary inversion for emphasis or style

Objectives:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify common negative adverbials that require inversion.
2. Form grammatically correct inverted sentences after negative adverbials.
3. Use inversion to emphasize ideas in both written and spoken English.

Target Structures

Examples:

- **Never** have I seen such chaos.
- **Hardly** had she arrived when the phone rang.
- **No sooner** had we left than it started to rain.
- **Not only** is he smart, but he's also humble.
- **Under no circumstances** should you lie.

Materials

- Whiteboard or slides

- Handout with exercises
- Audio clips or reading with examples (optional)
- Mini quiz for review

Lesson Stages

1. Warm-up (5–10 min)

- Write two versions of a sentence on the board:
 - *I have never eaten sushi.*
 - *Never have I eaten sushi.*
- Ask students to discuss the difference (formality, emphasis).
- Elicit: Second sentence uses inversion for emphasis.

2. Presentation (15 min)

- Explain what inversion is and why it's used.
- Introduce common negative adverbials:
 - **Frequency/time:** *Never, rarely, seldom, hardly, scarcely, barely, no sooner... than*
 - **Restrictions/emphasis:** *Not only, under no circumstances, on no account, at no time, in no way*
- Show sentence transformations:
Example:
 - *She rarely goes out after dark. → Rarely does she go out after dark.*
- Highlight the word order: adverbial + auxiliary/modal + subject + verb

3. Controlled Practice (15 min)

- **Worksheet activity:** Rewrite sentences using inversion. Example:
 - *He had hardly finished the test when the bell rang.*
→ *Hardly had he finished the test when the bell rang.*
- Peer check, then whole-class feedback.

4. Guided Practice (10–15 min)

- **Gap-fill or matching activity:** Fill in missing parts of inverted sentences.
- **Sentence unscramble:** Reorder jumbled words into correct inverted sentences.

5. Production / Freer Practice (15 min)

- **Speaking Activity:** In pairs, give students scenarios (e.g., travel delays, exam stress, strange coincidences) and ask them to make 3–5 sentences using inversion.
- **Writing Option:** Short paragraph about a surprising day using at least three inverted sentences.

6. Review & Assessment (10 min)

- **Mini quiz** to check comprehension.
- Recap: When do we use inversion? Which adverbials require it?

Homework/Extension

- Students find 5 real examples of inversion in news articles, speeches, or literature.
- Write a short opinion essay using at least 3 types of negative adverbial inversion.