



GRAMMAR PRACTICE

Inversion for Formal Emphasis

Science and Innovation | Not only / Rarely / Never | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner. You may already use this grammar without noticing it.

No.	Question
1	How can you make this sentence more formal: 'Scientists not only test ideas, but also improve them'?
2	Where might you see phrases like 'Not only...' or 'Rarely...'?
3	Why might formal writing use unusual word order?
4	What scientific invention has not only solved a problem but also created new questions?

2. Grammar in context

Read the text. The bold phrases show the grammar used in a natural topic context.

Emphasis in Formal Science Writing

Not only has technology changed communication, but it has also changed the way people learn and work.

Rarely do new inventions solve every problem immediately. Most ideas need testing, feedback and improvement before they are widely used.

Never have scientists had access to so much data. As a result, research can move faster, but people must still think carefully about ethics and safety.

3. Notice the pattern

Use inversion after some negative or limiting adverbials for formal emphasis. The auxiliary comes before the subject.

Use	Form / signal	Example
Not only	Not only + auxiliary + subject + verb	Not only has technology changed communication...
Rarely	Rarely + auxiliary + subject + verb	Rarely do inventions solve every problem.
Never	Never + auxiliary + subject + verb	Never have scientists had so much data.
Auxiliary support	do/does/did or have/has	Rarely do people agree immediately.

4. Build accurate sentences

Complete each sentence using the grammar focus. Then write two examples of your own.

No.	Prompt	Use	Your answer
1	Technology has changed communication and learning.	Not only has	
2	New inventions rarely solve every problem.	Rarely do	
3	Scientists have never had so much data.	Never have	
4	People rarely agree about new technology immediately.	Rarely do	

1. _____

2. _____

5. Use it in exam answers

Complete the tasks using the grammar focus naturally.

Task	What to do
Speaking	Use a formal emphatic sentence to discuss a scientific or technological change.
Writing	Write a formal article paragraph using one inversion structure naturally.
Reading	Underline inversion structures in the context text and rewrite them in normal word order.

6. Common mistakes

Correct the mistakes.

No.	Mistake	Your correction
1	Not only technology has changed communication.	
2	Rarely inventions solve every problem.	
3	Never scientists have had so much data.	
4	Rarely do people agrees immediately.	

7. Topic discussion questions

Use these for pair work, small-group discussion, or speaking-test warm-up practice.

1. Does formal emphasis make writing sound more powerful?
2. Should students use inversion in IGCSE writing tasks?
3. What technology has changed learning the most?
4. Can scientific progress create new problems?

Inversion for Formal Emphasis

4. Build accurate sentences

1. Not only has technology changed communication, but it has also changed learning.
2. Rarely do new inventions solve every problem.
3. Never have scientists had so much data.
4. Rarely do people agree about new technology immediately.

Own answers will vary. Check that the grammar focus is accurate and natural.

6. Common mistakes

1. Not only has technology changed communication.
2. Rarely do inventions solve every problem.
3. Never have scientists had so much data.
4. Rarely do people agree immediately.

Notes for checking

1. Not only: Not only + auxiliary + subject + verb - Not only has technology changed communication...
2. Rarely: Rarely + auxiliary + subject + verb - Rarely do inventions solve every problem.
3. Never: Never + auxiliary + subject + verb - Never have scientists had so much data.
4. Auxiliary support: do/does/did or have/has - Rarely do people agree immediately.