Grammar Presentation

EMBEDDED QUESTIONS

Main Clause	Embedded Question
I'm not sure He wondered	**if I left the right tip.** **whether (or not) five dollars was enough.**
Can you remember	**how much our bill was?**

Wh- Word + Infinitive	
I don't know	**how much to tip.**
Do you know	**where to leave the tip?**

GRAMMAR NOTES

EXAMPLES

1. Embedded questions are questions that are inside another sentence. An embedded question can be:

    a. inside a statement

    b. inside another question

▶ **BE CAREFUL!** If the embedded question is inside a <u>statement</u>, use a **period** at the end of the sentence.

If the embedded question is inside a <u>question</u>, use a **question mark** at the end of the sentence.

- I don't know **who our server is.**

- Do you remember **who our server is?**

- I wonder **if that's our server.**
  NOT I wonder if that's our server?

- Do you know **if that's our server?**

2. Use embedded questions to:

	DIRECT QUESTION	EMBEDDED QUESTION
a. express something you do not know	Why didn't he tip the mechanic?	I don't know **why he didn't tip the mechanic.**
b. ask politely for information	Is the tip included?	Can you tell me **if the tip is included?**
USAGE NOTE: Embedded questions are <u>more polite</u> than direct questions.	*Less formal:* Does our bill include a service charge?	*More polite:* Can you tell me if **our bill includes a service charge?**

(continued)

3. Begin **embedded** *yes/no* **questions** with *if*, *whether*, or *whether or not*.

   USAGE NOTE: *Whether* is more formal than *if*.

   - Do you know *if* they delivered the pizza?

     OR

   - Do you know *whether* they delivered the pizza?

     OR

   - Do you know *whether or not* they delivered the pizza?

   Begin **embedded** *wh-* **questions** with a **question word**.

   - Many tourists wonder *how much* to tip their restaurant server.

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4. Use **statement word order** (subject + verb), not question word order in:

	DIRECT QUESTION	EMBEDDED QUESTION
a. embedded *yes/no questions* Do not leave out *if* or *whether* in embedded *yes/no* questions.	Is it 6:00 yet?	Could you tell me **if it is** 6:00 yet? NOT Could you tell me ~~is it~~ 6:00 yet?
b. embedded *wh-* questions about the predicate (usually the last part of the sentence) Do not use the auxiliary verbs *do*, *does*, or *did* in embedded questions.	Why did they order pizza?	I wondered why **they ordered** pizza. NOT I wondered why ~~did they order~~ pizza.
c. embedded *wh-* questions about the subject (usually the first part of the sentence)	Who ordered pizza?	I can't remember **who ordered** pizza.
▶ **BE CAREFUL!** If a direct question about the subject has the form **question word + *be* + noun**, then the indirect question has the form **question word + noun + *be***.	Who is our waiter?	Do you know **who** our waiter **is**? NOT Do you know ~~who is our waiter?~~

5. In embedded questions, you can also use:

    a. question word + infinitive

    b. *whether* + infinitive

▶ **BE CAREFUL!** Do not use the infinitive after ***if*** or ***why***.

- Let's ask where we should leave the tip.
  - OR
- Let's ask ***where* to leave** the tip.

- I wonder whether I should leave a tip.
  - OR
- I wonder ***whether* to leave a tip.**

- I don't understand *why* **I should tip.** NOT I don't understand why ~~to tip~~.

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6. Embedded questions often follow these phrases:

    I don't know . . .

    I'd like to know . . .

    Do you know . . . ?

    Can you tell me . . . ?

    I can't remember . . .

    Can you remember . . . ?

    Let's ask . . .

    We need to find out . . .

    I'd like to find out . . .

    I wonder . . .

    I'm not sure . . .

    It doesn't say . . .

    Could you explain . . . ?

    I can't imagine . . .

- ***I don't know*** what the name of the restaurant is.
- ***Can you remember*** how much the shrimp costs?
- ***Let's ask*** what today's specials are.
- ***I wonder*** what time the restaurant closes.
- ***Could you explain*** what that sign means?
- ***I can't imagine*** why this restaurant isn't more popular.