Let alone

HSK 6 Grammar

Original teaching practice. Read one pattern, cover its model and try the questions before checking the separate answer section. Examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA) retain the course-reference provenance.

连 … 都 … ，何况 … (even …, let alone …)

Even adults struggle

- Your little cousin wants to read a university textbook.
- **这本书连大人都看不懂，何况小孩子呢？** – “Even adults can’t understand this book, let alone a small child.”

连 A 都 …，何况 B (呢)?

- **连 A 都 …，何况 B** = even A …, let alone B: if it holds (or fails) for A, it is even more so for B.
- 何况 often ends with 呢 as a rhetorical question.

连专家都不知道，何况我们呢?
lián zhuān jiā dōu bù zhī dào hé kuàng wǒ men ne
Word guide: 连 – even; 专家 – experts; 都 – (even); 不 – don’t; 知道 – know; 何况 – let alone; 我们 – us.



Positive too

- **他连最难的题都会做，何况这么简单的？** – “He can do even the hardest questions, let alone such an easy one.”
- The logic runs from the harder case to the easier one.

他连最难的题都会做，何况这么简单的?
tā lián zuì nán de tí dōu huì zuò hé kuàng zhè me jiǎn dān de
Word guide: 他 – he; 连 – even; 最难 – the hardest; 题 – questions; 都 – (even); 会 – can; 做 – do; 何况 – let alone; 这么 – such; 简单 – easy; 的 – ones.

Get the direction right

- The 连 item is the stronger test; the 何况 item follows more obviously.
- 何况 can also add a reason: “besides”: 太远了，何况天也晚了 – “It’s too far; besides, it’s late.”

何况 versus 更不用说

- 更不用说 … 了 is a statement: 大人都看不懂，更不用说孩子了.
- 何况 … 呢? is often a rhetorical question and a little more literary.

太远了，何况天也晚了。
tài yuǎn le hé kuàng tiān yě wǎn le
Word guide: 太 – too; 远 – far; 何况 – besides; 天 – it; 也 – also; 晚 – late.

Recap

- **连 A 都 …，何况 B (呢)?** = even A …, let alone B.
- 何况 can also mean “besides”; 更不用说 is the statement form.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Practice without the models

连 … 都 … ，何况 … (even …, let alone …)

1301.1 Complete: “Even experts don’t know, let alone us.” 连专家都不知道，……我们呢?

1301.2 In 太远了，何况天也晚了, what does 何况 mean?

- A. therefore
- B. besides
- C. although
- D. let alone

1301.3 Build: “He can do even the hardest questions, let alone easy ones.”

Arrange all chunks: 何况 / 他连最难的题都会做 / ， / 这么简单的?

1301.4 更不用说 … 了 is the statement form of the same idea.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

1301.5 Your little cousin wants to read a university textbook. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson’s pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

Answers and explanations

■ 连 … 都 … ，何况 … (even …, let alone …)

1301.1 何况

连 A 都 …，何况 B.

1301.2 B. besides

何况 can add a further reason.

1301.3 他连最难的题都会做，何况这么简单的?

连 … 都 …，何况 ….

1301.4 True.

何况 … 呢? is often rhetorical.

1301.5 One possible response: 这本书连大人都看不懂，何况小孩子呢?

Check meaning and form:

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The 连 item is the stronger test; the 何况 item follows more obviously.
- 何况 can also add a reason: "besides": 太远了，何况天也晚了 – "It's too far; besides, it's late."
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

This is supported productive practice. Compare meaning and structure; your answer need not copy the model. A partner or teacher must hear the spoken response to comment on pronunciation.