

HSK 5 Grammar 23: Let alone...

HSK 5 别说 就是 / 连 也 and 连 都 更不用说 (let alone), taught from the reviewed topic handout; classroom examples, not official exam items.

Let alone — from either end

Big to small — 别说

别说整篇课文，连今天的生词我都没记住。

The big job is set aside; the small one fails.

Small to big — 更不用说

连今天的生词我都没记住，更不用说整篇课文了。

The small one fails; the big one is further still.

别说 A , 就是 / 连 B 也 / 都

- 1 **A — the bigger case, set aside** 别说整篇演讲稿,
- 2 **B — the smaller case, which fails** 就是一段开场白我也写不出来。
- 3 **Another** 别说夜跑十公里, 连车站到家这段路我都走不动。

Decision

别说 here means 'never mind', not 'don't say'; the verb phrase shows the real limit, often with 不, 没 or 不了.

连 A 都, 更不用说 B 了

- 1 **Even the small case fails** 连地铁站也找不到，
- 2 **Let alone the bigger one** 更不用说博物馆了。
- 3 **Another** 连今天的生词我都没记住，更不用说整篇课文了。

Decision

The **连** clause comes first; **更不用说** introduces the bigger case, and **了** closes the remark.

Your turn: small to big

Your turn

He has not even been to Shanghai; going abroad is a bigger step. Which sentence moves from the smaller case to the bigger one?

- A. 别说国外，连上海他都没去过。
- B. 连上海他都没去过，更不用说国外了。
- C. 更不用说国外了，连上海他都没去过。

Your turn: finish the 别说 sentence

Your turn

别说一部长篇小说，_____。 She cannot even finish a two-page story.

- A. 连一篇只有两页的故事她都看不完
- B. 更不用说一篇只有两页的故事了
- C. 连一部长篇小说她都看不完

Answers: let alone

- 1 **Shanghai** 连上海他都没去过，更不用说国外了。
- 2 **The novel** 别说一部长篇小说，连一篇只有两页的故事她都看不完。
- 3 **The manual** 她连这份说明书都看不懂，更不用说合同了。
- 4 **The parent says no** 别说五百块，就是十块钱我也不借给你。

Decision

The same refusal, small to big: 连十块钱我都不借给你，更不用说五百块了。

Check yourself

Your turn

He cannot even swim one length of the pool. Which sentence says he could never swim across the river?

- A. 别说游过这条河，就是游泳池的一个来回他也游不了。
- B. 别说游泳池的一个来回，就是游过这条河他也游不了。
- C. 连游过这条河他都游不了，更不用说游泳池了。