



Practice Exam - Digital Life and Technology

Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511 | Reading practice paper

Exercise 1

Read the article about using AI captions in lessons then answer the questions.

Captions in the classroom

A school has begun testing AI-generated captions during some video lessons. The captions appear at the bottom of the screen while a teacher or presenter is speaking. The aim is to support students who find listening difficult, including students learning English, students with hearing difficulties and students who concentrate better when they can read key words. The trial team also compared captions on short clips and longer explanations, because students used them differently depending on the pace of the lesson. In faster clips, students often used captions only to confirm key words.

The school chose science and history lessons for the first trial because these subjects often include specialist vocabulary. Teachers found that captions helped students notice important terms, but the system was not perfect. It sometimes misunderstood names, dates or technical words. For this reason, teachers still provided vocabulary lists before longer videos.

Students were asked how they used the captions. Some said they read every line, while others looked only when they missed a word. A few students found the moving text distracting, especially when the captions appeared a second later than the speech. Teachers therefore learned to pause after important explanations so students had time to process both sound and text.

The trial also raised questions about accuracy. Students were told not to copy captions automatically into their notes. If a word looked strange, they should check with the teacher or compare it with the worksheet. This turned the captions into a useful discussion point about technology: helpful tools can still make mistakes.

The school has decided to continue the trial but not use captions in every lesson. Teachers say the tool works best when it supports a clear learning purpose, not when it is added simply because it is available. The captions have helped many students, but they have also reminded the school that technology needs thoughtful use. Teachers now keep a short list of common caption errors, so students learn to question the text rather than trust it automatically.

Teachers remind students that captions are a support, not a replacement for listening. In group work, students are sometimes asked to check whether the written captions match what they actually heard.

Exercise 1 questions

Answer the questions using information from the article. Write short answers.

1 Where do the AI-generated captions appear? [1]

2 Which students may be supported apart from those learning English and those with hearing difficulties? [1]

3 Which two subjects were chosen for the first trial? [1]

4 What kind of vocabulary do these subjects often include? [1]

5 What did teachers still provide before longer videos? [1]

6 List three limits of using AI captions in lessons. [3]

Exercise 2

Read the article about four AI tools (A-D). Then answer Questions 9(a)-9(i).

A Vocabulary suggester

A vocabulary suggester gives learners alternative words for simple phrases in their writing. It is useful when students want to avoid repeating the same adjective. However, the tool may suggest words that are too formal, so students must check whether the tone fits the task. Students are asked to keep the original sentence too, so they can compare the effect of each word choice. It also lets students switch off non-urgent alerts during lessons.

B Pronunciation coach

A pronunciation coach listens to short spoken answers and highlights sounds that may be unclear. Students can repeat the phrase several times and compare attempts. The tool works best in a quiet room, because background noise can make the feedback unreliable. The coach gives feedback on one phrase at a time, which prevents learners becoming overloaded. The entry warns that the shelf location may change after stock checks.

C Revision quiz maker

A revision quiz maker turns notes into multiple-choice questions. It saves time, but teachers tell students to check the answers because the tool can misunderstand copied notes. It is most useful after students have already studied the topic, not as their first introduction. Teachers sometimes add their own questions to cover ideas that the tool has ignored. Teachers can remove unclear example sentences before the deck is shared.

D Image description assistant

An image description assistant writes a short description of a picture for students who need visual information explained. It can identify objects and colours, but it may miss humour, symbolism or cultural details. Teachers use it as a starting point, not a final interpretation. Students compare the description with the image and add missing details before using it in class. This comparison helps them understand both the usefulness and limits of automated support, especially with humour or symbols. A practice mode hides the clock so nervous speakers can rehearse first.

The webpage also asks users to compare privacy settings before choosing a tool. Some options store personal examples, while others work only during a live lesson, so the safest choice depends on what the student needs to save.

The comparison also asks whether each tool helps learning or simply makes work faster. Students are encouraged to notice when a shortcut reduces useful thinking.

Exercise 2 questions

For each statement, write the correct letter A, B, C or D on the line. Each letter may be used more than once.

No.	Which AI tool...	A-D
9(a)	may give language that is too formal
9(b)	is affected by noise in the room
9(c)	should be checked because it may misunderstand notes
9(d)	can describe objects and colours in a picture
9(e)	helps students avoid repeating simple words
9(f)	allows learners to compare repeated attempts
9(g)	is better after revision than before learning
9(h)	may miss cultural details
9(i)	creates multiple-choice questions

Exercise 3

Read the article about making classroom technology more responsible then complete the notes.

Using technology responsibly

Responsible classroom technology begins with a clear purpose. Teachers should decide whether a tool helps students practise, create, research or communicate. If the purpose is unclear, the tool may waste time or distract students from the learning task. A simple worksheet can sometimes be better than a complicated app.

Privacy is another important issue. Students should not enter personal information into unfamiliar websites. Teachers need to check whether accounts are required, what data is collected and whether student work becomes public. If possible, schools should use approved platforms rather than asking each class to create accounts on different sites.

Students also need guidance about honesty. Technology can help with planning, checking and practising, but it should not replace the student's own thinking. Teachers may ask students to explain how they used a tool, what they changed afterwards and which parts of the final work are their own. Teachers also need to model responsible use, because students notice when adults accept online answers without checking them.

Finally, access must be considered. Not every student has a fast device or quiet internet connection at home. If homework depends on technology, schools should provide alternatives, extra time or access to school devices. Responsible use means thinking about fairness as well as innovation. A class discussion after using a tool can help students separate convenience from quality. It also helps them notice when a fast answer still needs human judgement, checking and revision.

The class agrees which tasks should stay human-led, such as checking sources, choosing examples and deciding whether advice sounds fair. This prevents the technology from becoming a shortcut for every decision.

The group also writes a short rule for each tool. A rule might say when it can be used, what must be checked afterwards and what information should never be entered.

Students review one example where technology gave unsuitable advice. They discuss what warning signs they noticed, such as missing sources, strange tone or information that sounded too certain.

The class keeps one example of a good use and one example of a risky use. Comparing them makes the rules easier to remember.

Exercise 3 questions

Complete the notes using information from the article. Write short words or phrases.

Notes	Write short answers
10 Questions teachers should ask about tools	- - -
11 Responsible technology use should consider	- - - -

Exercise 4

Read the article about using a homework app then answer the questions.

The app that helped too much

I downloaded a homework app because it promised to organise my tasks automatically. At first, it seemed brilliant. I photographed worksheets, and the app created reminders. It grouped tasks by subject and even suggested how long each one might take. I felt as if I had finally found a way to stop forgetting deadlines.

After two weeks, I noticed a problem. I was checking the app constantly, but not actually starting the work sooner. If the app said a task would take twenty minutes, I believed it, even when I knew the reading was difficult. I had begun treating the app's estimate as more reliable than my own judgement.

One evening, the app failed to recognise a handwritten note from my teacher. I nearly missed a small assignment because I had not written it anywhere else. That annoyed me, but it also showed me that I had given the app too much responsibility. A tool can remind you, but it cannot care about your homework.

I changed how I used it. Now I still photograph tasks, but I also write the most important deadlines in a notebook. On Sundays, I check the app and adjust the times myself. If a task looks short but difficult, I plan extra time. The app is useful again because I am using it as a helper, not a manager. The writer had mistaken reminders for planning, which made the app seem more powerful than it really was.

Technology often works best when it supports a habit you already understand. The app did not make me organised by itself. It became helpful only when I stopped expecting it to think for me. He also learned that a backup system can be simple, but it must exist before technology fails.

I still use the app, but I now write my own first sentence before opening it. That small rule stops the tool becoming the writer and keeps it as a helper.

That rule has not made my homework perfect. It has made the mistakes feel more like mine, which means I can actually learn from them.

I also began showing teachers which parts I had changed after using the app. That made the tool less secretive and helped me explain my own choices.

Exercise 4 questions

For each question, choose the correct answer, A, B or C.

12 Why did the writer first like the app? [1]

- A It completed homework for him.
- B It connected him with classmates.
- C It organised tasks and reminders automatically.

13 What problem appeared after two weeks? [1]

- A The app deleted all subjects.
- B He checked the app but did not start earlier.
- C Teachers refused to use it.

14 Why did the writer nearly miss an assignment? [1]

- A He lost his notebook at school.
- B The teacher changed the deadline.
- C The app did not recognise a handwritten note.

15 What did this mistake show the writer? [1]

- A He had trusted the app too much.
- B The assignment was unnecessary.
- C All apps should be avoided.

16 How does the writer use the app now? [1]

- A as a helper alongside his own planning
- B as the only place for deadlines
- C only for taking photographs

17 What is the writer's final message? [1]

- A Apps can think for students.
- B Technology is useful when it supports human judgement.
- C Organisation is impossible without technology.

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Exercise 1

1. at the bottom of the screen
2. students who concentrate better when they can read key words
3. science and history
4. specialist vocabulary
5. vocabulary lists
6. some students found the moving text distracting; students should check strange words with the teacher / compare them with the worksheet; the tool works best when it supports a clear learning purpose

Exercise 2

9(a) A; 9(b) B; 9(c) C; 9(d) D; 9(e) A; 9(f) B; 9(g) C; 9(h) D; 9(i) C

Exercise 3

10 Questions teachers should ask about tools

- whether a tool helps students practise
- what data is collected
- whether student work becomes public

11 Responsible technology use should consider

- privacy
- honesty
- access
- fairness

Exercise 4

12 C; 13 B; 14 C; 15 A; 16 A; 17 B

12 C - It created reminders and grouped tasks.

13 B - He was checking constantly without starting sooner.

14 C - The app failed to recognise the note.

15 A - He had given it too much responsibility.

16 A - He uses a notebook and adjusts times himself.

17 B - It became helpful when he stopped expecting it to think for him.