



Practice Exam - Food and Eating Habits

Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511 | Reading practice paper

Exercise 1

Read the article about a school breakfast service then answer the questions.

Breakfast before lessons

A secondary school in Wales introduced a breakfast service after teachers noticed that some students were arriving hungry. The service opens forty minutes before registration and offers toast, fruit, yoghurt and hot drinks. It is not advertised as support for low-income families only, because the school wants all students to feel comfortable using it.

The breakfast room is supervised by two members of staff and several older student volunteers. Students can eat quietly, finish homework or talk with friends before lessons begin. Teachers say the atmosphere is calmer than the playground, especially during bad weather when students would otherwise wait outside.

The menu was chosen carefully. Staff wanted food that was quick to serve, affordable and not too sugary. They also had to consider allergies and make sure ingredients could be stored safely. Local shops sometimes donate fruit, but the school avoids depending on donations because they can change from week to week.

After one term, staff compared attendance and behaviour records. They found fewer late arrivals among students who used the service regularly. Teachers also said some students seemed more ready to learn in morning lessons. However, the school has been careful not to claim that breakfast alone improves grades, because many other factors affect learning. The school also uses the breakfast service to notice students who may need extra support. Staff do not question students in front of others, but they can speak privately to a pupil who often seems tired or upset.

The main challenge is funding. The school receives some money from a local charity, but it still has to pay for staff time, equipment and cleaning. Even so, governors say the service will continue next year because it supports both nutrition and routine. A simple breakfast can make the start of the day feel more settled. Students helped choose the final menu after testing several options. Porridge was nutritious, but many students said it took too long to eat, so it is now offered only on colder days. The most popular choices are easy to carry, can be served quickly and do not leave much packaging behind.

The service is busiest on days when students have sport, music practice or early revision sessions. Staff noticed that some students took food away rather than eating in the hall, so they added a small collection table near the entrance for those who arrived just before registration.

Exercise 1 questions

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

1 Where was the breakfast service introduced? [1]

2 How long before registration does the service open? [1]

3 Who helps staff in the breakfast room? [1]

4 Where might students otherwise wait during bad weather? [1]

5 What kind of food did staff want to avoid serving too much of? [1]

6 Give three findings linked to the breakfast service. [3]

Exercise 2

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

A Market recipe cards

A town market gives shoppers free recipe cards beside seasonal vegetables. The cards use ingredients sold at nearby stalls and avoid expensive equipment. Stallholders say customers are more willing to try unfamiliar vegetables when they know exactly how to cook them. The cards are replaced every month. Market staff choose recipes that can be cooked quickly because shoppers may be trying the ingredient for the first time. Volunteers also explain how to store the food at home. The cards include one cheaper alternative if a vegetable is unavailable.

B School herb pots

Students grow herbs in small pots on classroom windowsills. The project is cheap and does not require a garden, but plants need careful watering during holidays. Teachers use the herbs in simple cooking demonstrations. Students say fresh herbs make ordinary food smell more interesting. Teachers rotate watering duties so the plants do not depend on one enthusiastic student. The club records which crops survive best in small containers. Students water the pots in pairs, so the task is not forgotten.

C Family meal boxes

A community centre sells low-cost meal boxes containing measured ingredients and instructions. The boxes are designed for families who want to cook but have little time to plan. They must be collected on Friday afternoons, which is difficult for some working parents. The centre changes the menu each week. The centre prints the cooking time clearly because families often collect boxes on busy evenings. A simple symbol shows whether the recipe needs an oven. Families can return the empty box the following week for reuse.

D Restaurant leftovers scheme

Several restaurants pack unsold food at the end of the day and sell it through an app at a reduced price. Customers do not know exactly what will be available until collection time. The scheme reduces waste, but it is not suitable for people with strict dietary needs because choices are limited. Restaurants label collection bags carefully, but customers still need flexibility because the contents change. The project avoids dishes that have been kept warm for too long, and buyers are warned when a meal contains common allergens. Restaurants record the collection time so food is not left out too long.

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 food project...	A-D
9(a)	helps people cook vegetables they may not know well
9(b)	can be done without an outdoor space
9(c)	requires collection at a particular time of the week
9(d)	offers cheaper food that would otherwise be thrown away
9(e)	changes its written material every month
9(f)	may be unsuitable for people who need specific foods
9(g)	provides exact amounts of ingredients
9(h)	needs attention when school is closed
9(i)	uses ingredients sold in the same place

Exercise 3

Read the article about planning meals for a sports day then complete the notes.

Food for sports day

Planning food for a school sports day is more complicated than simply selling snacks. Organisers need food that is easy to carry, safe in warm weather and suitable for students who are competing. Heavy meals can make students feel uncomfortable before races, while very sugary snacks may give quick energy followed by tiredness.

The first decision is where food will be served. Some schools use the canteen, but this can create long queues inside the building. Others set up outdoor tables near the field. Outdoor serving saves time, but food must be covered properly and kept away from direct sunlight. Drinks should be placed in more than one area so students do not crowd around a single table.

Allergy information must be clear. Labels should show common allergens, and staff should know which foods contain nuts, dairy or gluten. Students are often excited on sports day and may not read signs carefully, so adults need to check before serving food to younger pupils. Volunteers are given a short briefing before the event so they know where food is stored and who to contact if supplies run low. This prevents students leaving competitions to search for staff. A separate table is used for food that contains common allergens, so labels can be checked more easily.

Waste is another issue. Individually wrapped snacks are convenient, but they create a lot of rubbish. Some schools ask students to bring reusable bottles and provide large water containers for refills. At the end of the day, unopened food can sometimes be used by after-school clubs if it has been stored safely. Organisers also consider timing. Food should be available early enough for students competing later, but not so early that it becomes unsafe in warm weather. At the end, unopened food can be reused only if storage rules have been followed throughout the day.

The plan also includes a small area for students who bring their own food. This avoids mixing packed lunches with food prepared for sale, and it gives volunteers a clearer route when they are carrying water or fruit between events.

Exercise 3 questions

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

Notes	Write short answers
10 Food and drink choices for sports day	- - -
11 Safety and waste arrangements	- - - -

Exercise 4

Read the article about learning to cook rice properly then answer the questions.

The rice lesson

I used to think cooking rice was too simple to learn. You put rice and water in a pan, wait, and hope it works. Mine usually became sticky in the wrong way or burned at the bottom. I blamed the pan until my grandmother watched me cook and laughed at how impatient I was.

She did not give me a complicated recipe. She told me to rinse the rice, measure the water and stop lifting the lid every two minutes. The hardest part was leaving it alone. I wanted to check whether anything was happening, but she said steam was part of the cooking and I kept letting it escape.

The first successful pan of rice felt strangely satisfying. It was not a special dish, but it made the rest of the meal better. My grandmother explained that many everyday skills are invisible until they are missing. Nobody praises well-cooked rice loudly, but everyone notices when it is wrong.

After that, I began paying more attention in the kitchen. I noticed how my father chopped vegetables before heating the oil, and how my sister tasted soup before adding salt. Cooking was not just following instructions. It was watching, waiting and making small adjustments before a problem became too big. Before that lesson, I had treated cooking as something people either understood or did not. Watching my grandmother made me realise that many skills are built from repeated small corrections.

I still make mistakes, especially when I rush. But rice taught me that simple food is not always easy food. It also changed how I think about family cooking. Recipes matter, but so do the quiet habits people learn by standing beside someone more experienced. I also began asking questions instead of pretending I knew what to do. That made cooking with my family more enjoyable because I was learning rather than just trying not to fail. The recipe mattered, but the conversation around it mattered too.

When I cooked the same dish again the next week, I did not change everything at once. I measured the water, waited before lifting the lid and wrote down the time, which made the result easier to understand.

Exercise 4 questions

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

12 What was the writer's original attitude to cooking rice? [1]

- A He believed it needed special equipment.
- B He enjoyed experimenting with it.
- C He thought it was too basic to study.

13 What did his grandmother say he was doing wrong? [1]

- A using too much salt
- B being too impatient
- C choosing the wrong pan

14 Why was lifting the lid a problem? [1]

- A It allowed steam to escape.
- B It made the rice too salty.
- C It cooled the kitchen.

15 What did the writer realise about everyday skills? [1]

- A They are less important than special recipes.
- B They may be noticed only when done badly.
- C They should always be praised loudly.

16 How did the rice lesson affect the writer? [1]

- A He paid more attention to other cooking habits.
- B He stopped cooking with family members.
- C He decided recipes were unnecessary.

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

- A Simple food should be avoided.
- B Cooking is mainly about exact instructions.
- C Quiet habits can be learned from experienced people.

Practice Exam - Food and Eating Habits

Exercise 1

1. a secondary school in Wales
2. forty minutes
3. older student volunteers
4. outside / the playground
5. sugary food
6. donations can change from week to week; staff compared attendance and behaviour records; the service supports nutrition and routine

Exercise 2

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

Exercise 3

10 Food and drink choices for sports day

- easy to carry
- safe in warm weather
- suitable for students who are competing

11 Safety and waste arrangements

- food must be covered properly
- kept away from direct sunlight
- labels should show common allergens
- provide large water containers for refills

Exercise 4

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

- 12 C - He thought it was too simple to learn.
13 B - She laughed at how impatient he was.
14 A - She says steam was part of cooking.
15 B - His grandmother says everyone notices when rice is wrong.
16 A - He began noticing chopping and tasting habits.
17 C - He values habits learned beside someone experienced.