



Practice Exam - Global Issues

Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511 | Reading practice paper

Exercise 1

Read the article about a school partnership with a water charity then answer the questions.

Clean water, clear choices

A secondary school has begun working with a charity that supports clean-water projects in rural areas. The partnership started when geography students studied how far some communities travel to collect water each day. Students wanted to raise money, but teachers encouraged them first to understand how water projects are planned and maintained. The charity also showed students photographs of repair teams, so they could see that long-term projects depend on local skills.

The charity explained that building a well is only one part of the work. Local committees need training to check water quality, collect small repair funds and decide who will look after equipment. Without this planning, a pump may stop working after a few months. Students were surprised to learn that maintenance can be more difficult than construction.

The school organised a water-use week. Students measured how much water was used in bathrooms, science labs and the canteen. They also carried containers across the sports field to understand how heavy water becomes over distance. The activity was not designed to copy another community's experience exactly, but it helped students think about effort and access.

Fundraising was linked to information. Instead of simply selling cakes, students created displays explaining why safe water affects health, education and time. They showed that children who spend hours collecting water may miss school, and that unsafe water can spread illness. Visitors were asked to donate only after reading the displays.

The partnership has raised enough money to support repairs to an existing water point. Teachers say this is a useful outcome because repair work is less dramatic than building something new, but often more sustainable. Students have learned that global issues need practical details, not just sympathy. After the project, the school added water use to its own environmental review, linking global learning to choices inside the building. Students now compare bottled drinks, tap-water stations and waste from school events.

The partnership avoids showing shocking images in school displays. Instead, students focus on practical choices, such as how water is collected, stored and tested before families can use it safely.

Students compare the charity's information with local water use at school. This makes the topic less distant, because they can see where clean water is used every day and where it is wasted.

Exercise 1 questions

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

1 What kind of areas does the charity support? [1]

2 What did students first study in geography? [1]

3 What can a local committee collect for repairs? [1]

4 What may stop working after a few months without planning? [1]

5 Where did students carry containers? [1]

6 List three outcomes of the clean-water partnership. [3]

Exercise 2

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

A Solar study lamps

A charity provides solar lamps for students in areas where electricity is unreliable. The lamps charge during the day and can be used for homework at night. The project also trains local repair workers, because broken lamps are not useful if spare parts cannot be found. The lamps are numbered so repair workers can track which parts fail most often. The lamps are numbered so repair workers can track common faults.

B School seed bank

A farming project helps schools store seeds from crops that grow well locally. Students learn why crop variety matters when weather changes. The seeds are labelled carefully and shared with families before planting season, but the bank avoids storing seeds that need specialist cooling. Families are asked to return a small amount of seed after harvest if the crop grows successfully. Families are asked to return seed after a successful harvest.

C Mobile health messages

A health organisation sends phone messages about vaccinations and clinic times. The messages are short and use simple language. They are translated into local languages, but organisers still need community workers to answer questions because not everyone trusts an unfamiliar message. Messages are sent at times when clinics are open, so people can ask follow-up questions soon afterwards. Community workers also check whether families have changed phone numbers. Messages are sent while clinics are open for follow-up questions.

D Refugee homework club

A volunteer group runs a homework club for young refugees who have recently entered local schools. The club provides language support and a quiet study space. Volunteers avoid asking students to tell personal stories unless they choose to, because safety and trust are more important than curiosity. The club also helps students understand homework instructions that contain unfamiliar school vocabulary. Volunteers keep bilingual dictionaries available, but they encourage students to try first. Volunteers keep bilingual dictionaries available but encourage students to try first.

The project descriptions focus on practical support rather than dramatic claims. Each one explains what is provided, who maintains it and what local knowledge is needed for the support to last.

The information also points out that outside support has to fit local routines. A project that works in one place may need different delivery, language or maintenance somewhere else.

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 global project...	A-D
9(a)	needs repair workers as well as equipment
9(b)	avoids pressuring students to discuss private experiences
9(c)	shares information about clinic appointments
9(d)	stores crops suited to the local area
9(e)	can help students work when power is unreliable
9(f)	uses translation but still needs local explanation
9(g)	does not store items that require specialist cooling
9(h)	offers language support in a quiet place
9(i)	is linked to changes in weather

Exercise 3

Read the article about organising a fair-trade information stall then complete the notes.

Explaining fair trade clearly

A fair-trade information stall can help students understand global supply chains, but it must avoid oversimplifying the issue. Organisers usually begin with familiar products such as chocolate, bananas, coffee or cotton. These examples help visitors connect everyday shopping with farmers and workers in other countries.

The stall should explain what fair trade tries to improve. This may include safer working conditions, more stable prices and community investment. Students should also be honest that fair trade is not a perfect solution. It cannot solve every problem in farming, and some products are still affected by transport costs, climate and changing demand.

Interactive tasks make the stall more memorable. Visitors might match products with countries, compare two price labels or follow a simple supply-chain diagram. A good task should make people think, not make them feel guilty. Organisers want visitors to ask better questions about products, not leave believing there is one easy answer. Students preparing the stall should avoid giving the impression that buying one product solves every unfairness in trade.

The stall also needs careful language. Phrases that make producers sound helpless should be avoided. It is better to describe farmers and workers as people with skills, businesses and choices. A respectful stall shows that global trade involves real people, not just distant problems. The most effective stalls invite visitors to compare choices and ask questions rather than simply accept a slogan. Students may also include one case study showing how a community used fair-trade income.

Students prepare examples from everyday shopping, such as chocolate, cotton and bananas. Concrete products help visitors understand the idea faster than a general speech about international trade.

The stall uses a small price comparison to show why cheap products can hide costs elsewhere. Students keep the explanation simple so visitors can understand it without a long lecture.

The stall also includes one question visitors can answer before they leave. This helps students check whether the explanation has been understood rather than simply delivered.

Students practise answering one difficult question politely, such as why fair-trade products may cost more. This prepares them for real conversations at the stall.

Exercise 3 questions

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

Notes	Write short answers
10 Familiar products used as examples	- - -
11 Ideas the stall should communicate	- - - -

Exercise 4

Read the article about joining a charity challenge then answer the questions.

The sponsored silence

I joined a sponsored silence because it sounded easy. The money would support children affected by conflict, and my friends were all taking part. I imagined a quiet morning, a few funny moments and then the satisfaction of handing in the money. I did not expect the silence to make me think about communication itself.

The first hour was amusing. We wrote notes, pointed dramatically and tried not to laugh. Then it became frustrating. In science, I wanted to explain something to my partner but could not do it quickly. At lunch, I realised how often I used small comments to include people or show that I was listening.

Before the challenge, the charity had shown us a short film about children who had moved to new countries and could not speak the language at school. At the time, I understood the message in a general way. During the silence, it felt more personal. I was choosing not to speak for one day; they had not chosen the barriers they faced.

After school, we counted the money raised. It was less than I expected because some people forgot to collect sponsorship properly. Our teacher said the amount mattered, but the learning mattered too. She asked us to write one action we could take, such as welcoming a new student or speaking more patiently to someone learning English. The writer had first treated the event as a school challenge rather than a way to understand another person's situation.

The challenge did not make me an expert on conflict or migration. But it moved the issue from a poster on the wall to something I had felt in a small way. I learned that charity events are most useful when they change behaviour as well as raise money. He also realised that awareness activities need a next step, or the feeling they create disappears quickly.

The silence also made me notice who usually gets heard in our class. Some students found other ways to communicate quickly, while others seemed relieved that nobody expected an instant answer.

By the afternoon, I was not thinking about winning anymore. I was thinking about how much communication depends on small looks, gestures and patience.

Exercise 4 questions

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

12 Why did the writer first think the challenge would be easy? [1]

- A It was happening after school.
- B It only required being quiet.
- C The teacher would do the talking.

13 What became difficult in science? [1]

- A reading the textbook
- B finding a partner
- C explaining something quickly

14 Why did the charity film feel more personal later? [1]

- A The writer experienced a small communication barrier.
- B The writer had moved to another country.
- C The film was shown again.

15 Why was less money raised than expected? [1]

- A The charity refused the money.
- B The event was cancelled early.
- C Some people forgot to collect sponsorship properly.

16 What action might students take after the challenge? [1]

- A stop learning languages
- B welcome a new student
- C avoid speaking at lunch

17 What is the writer's final view of charity events? [1]

- A They should affect behaviour as well as raise money.
- B They are useful only if they raise a large amount.
- C They should never include school activities.

Practice Exam - Global Issues

Exercise 1

1. rural areas
2. how far some communities travel to collect water
3. small repair funds
4. a pump
5. across the sports field
6. unsafe water can spread illness; money supported repairs to an existing water point; global issues need practical details

Exercise 2

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

Exercise 3

10 Familiar products used as examples

- chocolate
- bananas
- coffee

11 Ideas the stall should communicate

- safer working conditions
- more stable prices
- community investment
- farmers and workers as people with skills

Exercise 4

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

12 B - He imagined a quiet morning and funny moments.

13 C - He wanted to explain something but could not.

14 A - His silence helped him connect with the idea.

15 C - The text states this directly.

16 B - The teacher suggests welcoming a new student.

17 A - He says they are useful when they change behaviour too.