



Practice Exam - Lifestyle and Daily Routines

Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511 | Reading practice paper

Exercise 1

Read the article about flexible school start times then answer the questions.

Starting the school day later

Some secondary schools have tested later start times to see whether teenagers feel more alert in morning lessons. The idea is based on research suggesting that many teenagers naturally become sleepy later in the evening and find very early starts difficult. In one trial, the school day began thirty minutes later for older students, while younger students kept the usual timetable.

Teachers did not expect the change to solve every problem. Students still needed regular bedtime routines, and some continued to stay up too late using phones. However, attendance in first lessons improved slightly, and fewer students arrived without breakfast. The school nurse also reported that fewer pupils came to her office complaining of headaches before 10 a.m.

The change created difficulties for families. Some parents had to leave for work before their children, and bus companies had to adjust routes. Sports clubs also finished later in the afternoon, which was unpopular during winter when it became dark earlier. For this reason, the trial lasted only one term before governors reviewed the evidence.

Students were asked to keep a simple sleep diary during the trial. Many said the later start gave them time to eat properly and check their bags before leaving home. Others admitted they simply went to bed later and gained no extra sleep. Staff concluded that a later start can help, but only when students use the time sensibly. The trial also encouraged teachers to think about the first hour of the day. Some departments moved tests away from the earliest lesson, while others began with short review tasks before introducing new material.

The school has not made a final decision, but it has changed its advice to families. Instead of focusing only on bedtime, teachers now discuss evening screen habits, morning routines and travel time. They say sleep is not a single problem with one solution; it is connected to the whole pattern of a student's day. Researchers who advised the school said routines outside school still mattered. A later start could create an opportunity for more sleep, but it could not help students who simply filled the extra time with more screen use.

The trial did not affect every subject in the same way. Practical lessons needed extra planning because equipment had to be ready before students arrived, while clubs that usually met after school sometimes had less time before buses left.

Exercise 1 questions

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

1 How much later did the trial school day begin for older students? [1]

2 Which students kept the usual timetable? [1]

3 Which lesson period showed slightly better attendance? [1]

4 What did fewer students arrive without? [1]

5 Who reported fewer headache complaints before 10 a.m.? [1]

6 List three ways the school reviewed the effect of the later start. [3]

Exercise 2

Read the article about four daily routine changes (A-D). Then answer Questions 9(a)-9(i).

A Preparing clothes at night

Lina began choosing her clothes before going to bed because mornings felt rushed. The change seemed tiny, but it stopped her searching for missing socks when she was already late. She still forgets homework occasionally, so the routine has not solved everything. However, she says it gives her a calmer start because one decision has already been made. She later added a checklist by the door, but kept the clothes decision as the most important part. Her brother tried the same idea, although he used it for sports equipment instead.

B Walking after lunch

Mateo started taking a short walk after lunch instead of staying at his desk. He does not walk far, but the fresh air helps him return to afternoon work with more energy. Rainy days are a problem because the corridor becomes too crowded for a proper walk. He says the routine works best when a friend joins him and they avoid discussing schoolwork. On wet days, he replaces the walk with stretching because the main aim is to reset his attention. He avoids listening to fast music because it makes him hurry.

C Setting a reading alarm

Aisha wanted to read more, but she usually remembered only when she was too tired. She now sets an alarm for twenty minutes before bedtime. The alarm does not force her to read; it simply reminds her to put her phone away. She has finished more books this term, although she sometimes ignores the alarm when a family film is on. She keeps the alarm sound gentle so it feels like a prompt, not another demand. The alarm is set for the same time each night, including weekends.

D Packing a snack box

Jon packs a snack box on Sunday evening with fruit, nuts and crackers for the week. This stops him buying expensive snacks after school. He had to change the plan after realising that bananas became soft in his bag, but apples and small packets worked well. His parents like the idea because it reduces food waste at home. He now checks the box midweek so fresh items are eaten before they spoil. This has reduced arguments at home about buying snacks on the way to school.

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 daily routine change...	A-D
9(a)	helps someone avoid making one choice in the morning
9(b)	works better when another person takes part
9(c)	reminds someone to stop using a phone
9(d)	needed changing because one type of food was unsuitable
9(e)	does not prevent every school-related problem
9(f)	can be difficult when the weather is bad
9(g)	helps someone spend less money after school
9(h)	has helped someone complete more books
9(i)	is appreciated because it reduces waste

Exercise 3

Read the article about habit trackers then complete the notes.

Using a habit tracker carefully

Habit trackers are charts or apps that help people record repeated actions, such as drinking water, exercising or practising a skill. They can be motivating because progress becomes visible. However, experts warn that trackers work best when the habit is specific and realistic. A goal such as 'be healthier' is too general, while 'walk for ten minutes after school' is easier to record.

People often fail when they track too many habits at once. A long list can make an ordinary day feel like a test. For beginners, it is better to choose one or two routines and connect them to something that already happens. For example, a student might revise vocabulary after brushing their teeth or stretch after arriving home.

Trackers should also allow flexibility. Missing one day does not mean the habit has failed. Some apps encourage streaks, but this can make people give up completely after one mistake. Teachers who use trackers with students often include a reflection space where learners can write why a habit was missed and what could help next time. Some people share trackers with friends, but this is not always helpful. If the comparison becomes competitive, the tracker may create stress instead of supporting a routine. Teachers who use trackers with classes often ask students to focus on one habit at a time.

The most useful trackers are simple. They show patterns without taking too much time to complete. A paper calendar, a notebook or a basic checklist may work as well as an app. The aim is not to create a perfect record, but to notice what helps a routine continue. A good tracker should therefore be private enough to feel honest and simple enough to continue on a busy day. It should also allow a missed day without making the whole week look like a failure.

The tracker is more useful when students choose habits they can observe easily, such as reading for ten minutes or packing a bag before bed. Vague aims, such as being healthier, are harder to record honestly.

A weekly check is more useful than checking every hour. Students look for one pattern, such as a missed evening habit, and adjust the routine rather than adding more boxes to the tracker.

Exercise 3 questions

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

Notes	Write short answers
10 What makes a habit easier to track	- - -
11 Features of useful trackers	- - - -

Exercise 4

Read the article about changing a morning routine then answer the questions.

My quiet morning experiment

My mornings used to begin with my phone. I told myself I was only checking the weather or the bus timetable, but I usually ended up reading messages before I had even got out of bed. By breakfast, I already felt as if I was late. During exam month, I decided to try a quieter routine for two weeks.

The first rule was simple: no phone until after breakfast. This was harder than I expected because my hand reached for it automatically. I put the phone across the room, which helped, although I still wondered whether I was missing something important. After a few days, I realised most messages could wait twenty minutes.

I used the extra time to make breakfast properly and check my school bag. This did not make me cheerful every morning, but it stopped some avoidable problems. I no longer arrived at school without a calculator or with a half-finished sandwich in my hand. The routine was not exciting, which was probably why it worked.

The biggest change was my mood on the bus. Instead of scrolling, I looked out of the window or reviewed a few notes. I was surprised by how often I had been using my phone simply because I felt bored for two minutes. Boredom was not dangerous. Sometimes it gave my brain space to wake up. I also noticed that my morning mood affected other people. When I rushed downstairs annoyed, my family reacted to that energy before the day had properly begun.

I still use my phone in the morning now, but later and more deliberately. The experiment did not turn me into a perfectly organised person. It taught me that the first small choice of the day can affect the next few hours. A quiet start is not magic, but it is easier to think when the day has not already become noisy. The quiet routine did not take much time, but it gave me a small space between waking up and responding to everyone else. That space made ordinary problems feel easier to manage.

I did not become a different person after one week. I still forgot things, but I noticed that a calmer start made small problems feel less dramatic when I arrived at school.

Exercise 4 questions

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

12 Why did the writer decide to change his morning routine? [1]

- A His phone stopped showing the bus timetable.
- B He wanted to avoid breakfast.
- C He felt rushed after using his phone.

13 What made the first rule difficult? [1]

- A Checking the phone had become automatic.
- B He needed his phone for schoolwork.
- C His family sent urgent messages.

14 How did the new routine help before school? [1]

- A It made every morning enjoyable.
- B It reduced small practical problems.
- C It gave him more time to sleep.

15 What did he realise on the bus? [1]

- A He often used his phone because of brief boredom.
- B He needed more entertainment on journeys.
- C He learned best by reading messages.

16 What is his current phone habit? [1]

- A He has stopped using it completely.
- B He checks it before getting out of bed.
- C He uses it later and more deliberately.

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

- A Quiet routines solve every organisation problem.
- B A small first choice can influence the morning.
- C Boredom should always be avoided.

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Exercise 1

1. thirty minutes
2. younger students
3. first lessons
4. breakfast
5. the school nurse
6. students kept a simple sleep diary; teachers discuss evening screen habits; teachers discuss morning routines / travel time

Exercise 2

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

Exercise 3

10 What makes a habit easier to track

- specific and realistic
- walk for ten minutes after school
- connect them to something that already happens

11 Features of useful trackers

- allow flexibility
- include a reflection space
- show patterns
- without taking too much time to complete

Exercise 4

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

12 C - He says phone use made him feel late by breakfast.

13 A - His hand reached for it automatically.

14 B - He remembered things like his calculator and food.

15 A - He says he scrolled because he felt bored for two minutes.

16 C - He still uses it, but later and more deliberately.

17 B - He says the first small choice affects the next few hours.