



# Practice Exam - Shopping and Consumer Life

Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511 | Reading practice paper

## Exercise 1

Read the article about a repair label scheme then answer the questions.

### Labels that help shoppers repair

Several independent shops in one town have started adding repair labels to selected products. The labels are not about price or style. They tell customers whether an item is easy to mend, whether spare parts are available and how long the shop expects the product to last with normal use. The scheme began after a local survey found that many shoppers wanted to buy fewer throwaway items but did not know what to look for. The survey also showed that shoppers often confused durability with price, assuming that the most expensive item would automatically last longest.

The first shops to join sold bags, lamps and small kitchen tools. Staff chose these categories because customers often replace them when one part breaks. A lamp may be thrown away because a switch fails, while a bag may be replaced because a zip cannot be repaired cheaply. The label gives a simple score from one to five, with five meaning that the product can usually be repaired without specialist equipment.

The shops had to agree common rules. A product could not receive a high repair score only because the shop owner liked it. Staff checked whether screws could be opened, whether batteries were replaceable and whether the manufacturer sold parts separately. If information was missing, the item received a lower score. This made the scheme stricter, but also more trustworthy.

Some customers use the labels to compare two products before buying. Others say the labels have changed the questions they ask in shops. Instead of asking only about discounts, they ask whether a handle can be replaced or whether a charger is a standard type. Shopkeepers say this has led to longer conversations, but also fewer complaints when products need simple repairs.

The scheme will not solve every consumer problem. A repairable product can still be too expensive for some shoppers, and not everyone has time to mend things. However, supporters argue that the labels make hidden information visible. If people understand repair before they buy, they may choose products that stay useful for longer. Shopkeepers now keep a folder of repair contacts behind the counter, so staff can suggest local services instead of simply replacing an item.

## Exercise 1 questions

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

1 What do the labels tell customers about apart from spare parts and how long products may last? [1]

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2 What did many shoppers want to buy fewer of? [1]

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3 Which three product categories joined the scheme first? [1]

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4 What simple score is used on the label? [1]

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5 What kind of equipment should not usually be needed for a product with a score of five? [1]

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6 List three ways repair labels affect product choices. [3]

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## Exercise 2

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

### A Receipt-free returns

A clothing shop allows customers to return items without a paper receipt if they used a loyalty account. Staff can find the purchase record digitally, which is useful for people who lose receipts. However, sale items still have a shorter return period, and customers must bring the original payment card. The account also records the date clearly, which helps staff check whether the return period has passed. Staff still check the original payment card before approving a return.

### B Refill station

A small supermarket has installed a refill station for rice, pasta and cleaning liquid. Customers bring containers or buy reusable ones in the shop. The station reduces packaging, but staff weigh empty containers first so customers pay only for the product. Clear labels are needed to prevent mixing similar-looking foods. Staff clean the area twice a day because spilled grains or liquid can make the station look unhygienic. Instructions are printed above each dispenser to prevent customers opening the wrong container. Instructions above each dispenser prevent customers opening the wrong container.

### C Price-watch shelf

An electronics store has a shelf of products whose prices have recently changed. Some prices are lower because newer models have arrived, while others are higher because parts are harder to import. The shelf helps customers notice changes, but it does not guarantee that every item is a bargain. Customers are advised to compare features as well as price, because an older model may not suit every buyer. Staff also mark whether display items are still covered by warranty. The shelf labels show whether the lower price is temporary or permanent.

### D Quiet shopping hour

A department store opens one hour early on Tuesday for customers who prefer a calmer environment. Music is turned off, bright display screens are dimmed and fewer announcements are made. The service was introduced for customers with sensory sensitivities, but older shoppers and parents with babies also use it. Staff receive training before the hour begins, so they know not to rush customers who need more time. Staff are trained not to rush customers who need more time.

The shopping guide points out that convenient services still have conditions. Customers need to check dates, labels, return rules or hygiene instructions before assuming a service will solve every problem.

## 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 shopping service...	A-D
9(a)	requires staff to weigh something before the customer fills it	.....
9(b)	can help customers who have lost a paper document	.....
9(c)	does not mean all products shown are cheaper	.....
9(d)	was designed for one group but is useful for others too	.....
9(e)	needs labels because some products may look similar	.....
9(f)	still has different rules for reduced-price items	.....
9(g)	may show higher prices as well as lower prices	.....
9(h)	reduces sound and screen brightness	.....
9(i)	requires customers to bring the card they paid with	.....

## Exercise 3

Read the article about planning a second-hand sale then complete the notes.

### A second-hand sale that runs smoothly

Second-hand sales can raise money and reduce waste, but they need careful organisation. The first decision is what to accept. Clothes should be clean, toys should be complete and electrical items are often refused unless they have been safety tested. Clear rules save time because volunteers do not have to make difficult decisions while people are arriving.

Sorting is important. Books, clothes and household items should be placed in separate areas, with signs large enough to read from the entrance. Prices need to be simple. Some sales use colour stickers, so all items with the same colour cost the same amount. This is faster than writing a different price on every object.

The payment area can become crowded if it is badly planned. Organisers usually need a table for cash, a separate place for card payments and bags for customers who have bought several things. Volunteers should know what to do if there is no change, if a payment fails or if a customer wants to reserve an item. Volunteers also need a clear place for rejected items, so donors do not feel publicly criticised if something cannot be accepted.

After the sale, leftover items must be handled responsibly. Some can be donated to charity shops, while damaged goods may need recycling. Organisers should not leave unsold items in a hall for someone else to clear. A good sale ends with a clean room, a record of money raised and a short note about what should change next time. A short review after the sale helps the team notice which categories sold quickly and which tables became crowded. This is especially useful if the sale will become a regular event rather than a one-off fundraiser.

The organisers set aside a table for items that need a clearer label or a lower price. This prevents volunteers from making rushed decisions while buyers are waiting in a queue.

Unsold items are sorted before the room is cleared. Sellers can collect them from one table, while donated items are packed separately for the charity shop.

Volunteers keep a small float of coins for change, but expensive items are paid for at a separate desk. This reduces mistakes when the room becomes crowded.

### Exercise 3 questions

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

Notes	Write short answers
10 Rules for accepting items	- ..... - ..... - .....
11 How organisers make the sale easier to manage	- ..... - ..... - ..... - .....

## Exercise 4

Read the article about buying a jacket online then answer the questions.

### The jacket in the picture

I bought a jacket online because the photograph looked perfect. The colour was exactly what I wanted, and the model in the picture seemed about my height. The reviews were mostly positive, although I ignored the few people who said the sleeves were strange. I wanted the jacket to work, so I paid more attention to the comments that agreed with me.

When the jacket arrived, the material felt thinner than I expected. It was not terrible, but it did not look like the photograph. The sleeves were also too long, which made me remember the reviews I had dismissed. I felt annoyed with the shop at first, but then I realised that some of the information had been there before I bought it.

I considered returning the jacket immediately. The return form was easy to find, but postage was not free unless the item was faulty. My sister suggested taking it to a local tailor to shorten the sleeves. That would cost extra, but it would also mean I could keep a jacket I still partly liked.

I decided to alter it. The tailor explained that online shoppers often bring clothes that nearly fit but not quite. She said photographs can show colour and style, but they cannot show weight, movement or comfort. That sentence stayed with me because it explained why the jacket had looked better on the screen than in real life. The writer had also been influenced by the discount countdown on the website, which made the decision feel urgent.

Now I read reviews differently. I still look at the positive ones, but I pay more attention to repeated complaints, especially about fit and material. Online shopping is convenient, but convenience can make decisions feel too quick. The jacket taught me that a product page is not only something to admire; it is something to question. This made him realise that online shopping can reduce the time between wanting something and paying for it.

When the replacement arrived, I checked the measurements before looking at the colour. That felt boring, but it was the first time I had treated online shopping as information, not just pictures.

## Exercise 4 questions

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

### 12 Why did the writer ignore some negative reviews? [1]

- A He wanted the jacket to be suitable.
- B He could not find the review section.
- C He had already seen the jacket in a shop.

### 13 What did the writer realise after the jacket arrived? [1]

- A The shop had sent the wrong colour.
- B All online reviews were false.
- C Some warning signs had been available earlier.

### 14 Why did the writer not return the jacket immediately? [1]

- A The return form was missing.
- B Return postage would cost money.
- C His sister wanted the jacket.

### 15 What point did the tailor make about photographs? [1]

- A They always make colour look darker.
- B They cannot show everything about clothing.
- C They are more useful than reviews.

### 16 How has the writer changed as a shopper? [1]

- A He never buys clothes online now.
- B He reads only positive reviews.
- C He pays more attention to repeated complaints.

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

- A Online product information should be questioned carefully.
- B Alterations are always cheaper than returns.
- C Product photographs are usually dishonest.

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## Exercise 1

1. whether an item is easy to mend
2. throwaway items
3. bags, lamps and small kitchen tools
4. one to five
5. specialist equipment
6. missing information gives an item a lower score; customers may ask whether a charger is a standard type; labels make hidden information visible

## Exercise 2

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

## Exercise 3

### 10 Rules for accepting items

- clothes should be clean
- toys should be complete
- electrical items are often refused unless safety tested

### 11 How organisers make the sale easier to manage

- separate areas
- signs large enough to read from the entrance
- colour stickers
- record of money raised

## Exercise 4

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

- 12 A - He says he wanted the jacket to work.
- 13 C - He remembered the reviews he had dismissed.
- 14 B - Postage was not free unless faulty.
- 15 B - She says they cannot show weight, movement or comfort.
- 16 C - He now focuses on repeated complaints.
- 17 A - He says a product page is something to question.