



Digital Life and Technology

Short-answer questions: Elements of AI in Finland | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. What do you already know about artificial intelligence?
2. Should everyone learn the basics of AI, or only technology students?
3. What makes an online course easy to complete?
4. How could AI change school, work or daily life?

Exercise 1 at a glance

Read one factual text. Answers are in the text. Copy exact words and check the question carefully before choosing your answer.

2. Read for overall understanding

Read the text. Why did Finland create a free online course about AI?

Finland's Elements of AI Course

Artificial intelligence is often discussed as if it belongs only to programmers and scientists. In Finland, however, one project tried to make the topic easier for everyone to understand. Elements of AI is a free online course created by the University of Helsinki and the Finnish technology company Reaktor.

The course was launched in 2018. Its aim was not to train people to become professional coders in a few weeks. Instead, it introduced basic ideas about artificial intelligence, such as what AI can do, what it cannot do, and how it may affect work and society.

The design of the course was important. Learners did not need advanced mathematics or programming experience to begin. The material used short explanations, examples and exercises, so people could study at their own speed. This made the course suitable for adults in different jobs, as well as students who were curious about technology.

Finland first challenged itself to teach the basics of AI to one percent of its population. The target sounded ambitious, but the course attracted wide interest. According to the University of Helsinki, nearly 90,000 people from 80 countries had enrolled within four months.

The project later became international. During Finland's presidency of the Council of the European Union, the course was offered to people in other EU countries for free. It was also translated into different languages, so that more learners could access the material.

Elements of AI is a useful example of digital learning because it connects technology with citizenship. People do not all need to build AI systems, but they may need to understand how algorithms can influence news, shopping, jobs and public services. A clear online course can help people ask better questions about the technology around them.

3. Strategy focus

Check the purpose of each detail

A text may mention the course designers, the learners and the wider aim. Check whether the question asks who created something, who used it, or why it was created.

4. Exam-style short-answer questions

Answer the questions using words from the text.

1. Which Finnish technology company helped create Elements of AI? [1]

2. What was the course not designed to turn people into within a few weeks? [1]

3. What experience did learners not need before starting the course? [1]

4. What target did Finland first set itself? [1]

5. How was the material made accessible to more learners? [1]

6. According to the text, what are three topics or issues that the course helped people think about? [3]

5. Vocabulary notebook

Underline five useful words or phrases. Check their meaning, then record them in your vocabulary notebook.

6. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: Should AI lessons be part of school education?

2. Summary: Summarise Elements of AI in about 50 words.

3. Creative task: Write three tips for someone starting an online course.

4. Research: Find another free online course and explain who it is useful for.

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4. Exam-style short-answer questions

1. Reaktor
2. professional coders
3. advanced mathematics or programming experience
4. to teach the basics of AI to one percent of its population
5. translated into different languages
6. Any three from: what AI can do; what it cannot do; how it may affect work and society; how algorithms can influence news; shopping; jobs; public services.

Notes for checking

1. Answers should be short and clearly based on the text.
2. Accept bracketed or optional wording if the meaning is clear.
3. For the final question, learners need three separate details.