



Family and Relationships

Note-taking: peer mentoring | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. Who do students usually talk to when they have a school problem?
2. Why might a younger student prefer advice from an older student?
3. What makes someone a good mentor?
4. Should peer mentors receive training?

Exercise 3 at a glance

In this activity, you will read one factual text and complete notes using information from the text. In the exam, this task is usually worth 7 marks. This practice version includes extra notes to help you build confidence. Use short words or phrases from the text, not your own ideas.

2. Read for overall understanding

Read the text. What is the main purpose of peer mentoring?

Peer Mentoring in Schools

When students move to a new school, they often have questions that feel too small to ask a teacher. They may not know where a classroom is, how to join a club or what to do if they miss a bus. Some schools use peer mentoring to help younger students settle into school and find support more easily. The mentors are usually older students who volunteer for the role. Meetings may happen during form time, at lunch or after school, depending on how the school timetable works.

Mentors do not replace teachers or counsellors. Their job is to listen, explain everyday routines and notice when a younger student seems isolated. A mentor might show a new student around the building, introduce them to a lunchtime club or explain how homework is usually handed in. These small acts can reduce anxiety during the first weeks of school. They can also prevent small problems from becoming larger because the younger student knows who to approach.

Training is important. Mentors learn how to keep conversations private, when to speak to a teacher and how to avoid giving advice about serious problems. They also practise asking open questions, because younger students may not explain what is wrong immediately. Teachers say the best mentors are patient, reliable and able to remember that their own school experience may be different from someone else's.

Peer mentoring can also benefit the older students. They develop confidence, leadership skills and a stronger sense of responsibility. Some mentors say the role helps them understand peer pressure more clearly because they hear what younger students worry about. The main challenge is time: mentors need regular meetings, but they also have exams, homework and their own friendships to manage. For this reason, teachers often keep the programme small at first and add more mentors once the system is working well.

3. Strategy focus

Check who the note is about

In texts about people, check whether the detail refers to mentors, younger students, teachers or parents before copying it.

4. Practice note-taking task

Complete the notes using information from the text. Use short words or phrases from the text. Do not add your own ideas.

Notes	Write short answers
Questions new students may have	- - -
What mentors do	- - -
What mentors learn in training	- - -
Benefits and time challenges for mentors	- - -

5. Vocabulary notebook

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

6. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: What qualities would make a student a good peer mentor?
2. Strategy: Choose three answers and underline the words before or after them that show who they refer to.
3. Writing: Write a short notice inviting older students to become peer mentors.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to support, friendship and responsibility.

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2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: to help younger students settle into school and find support more easily.

4. Practice note-taking task

Questions new students may have

- where a classroom is
- how to join a club
- what to do if they miss a bus

What mentors do

- listen
- explain everyday routines
- notice when a younger student seems isolated

What mentors learn in training

- keep conversations private
- when to speak to a teacher
- asking open questions

Benefits and time challenges for mentors

- leadership skills
- sense of responsibility
- regular meetings

Notes for checking

This is an extended practice version of the IGCSE ESL note-taking task. The live exam normally has fewer marks, but this version includes extra notes to build confidence and selection skills.

Accept short phrases that keep the same meaning.

Learners should avoid copying a whole sentence if a shorter note answers the heading.

Some answers need more than one or two words, especially when the key detail is a phrase.