



Arts, Music and Entertainment

Multiple choice: performance and confidence | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. Would you rather perform on stage or work behind the scenes?
2. What makes a live performance different from a film?
3. Why might young people join a theatre group?
4. Can performing help people outside the theatre too?

Exercise 4 at a glance

Read one longer text and answer six multiple-choice questions. Choose A, B or C. The correct answer may depend on attitude, purpose or a detail across a whole paragraph, not just one matching word.

2. Read for overall understanding

Read the article. What did Isla learn from joining the youth theatre show?

My first youth theatre show

by Isla Morgan

I joined the youth theatre group because my best friend wanted company at the audition. She loved musicals and already knew half the songs. I planned to stand beside her, read a few lines badly and disappear. Instead, the director asked me to try a small part as a neighbour who appears in several scenes but never sings alone. I was relieved because I did not want a main role, although I also felt slightly disappointed that nobody expected more from me. I had always enjoyed watching performances from the audience, but being invited into one made the whole process feel much more exposed.

Rehearsals were less glamorous than I had imagined. We spent entire evenings crossing the stage in the right direction, repeating short lines and moving chairs without scraping them. At first I thought the main actors had the difficult job, while the rest of us were just background. Then the director stopped a scene because I had entered too early. My mistake made another actor miss her line, which made the music start late. I began to understand that small roles can hold a performance together. The director explained that the audience should never notice most of our work, because a smooth performance often looks effortless.

The hardest part was not remembering the words. It was listening. In one scene, my line came after a joke, and the audience reaction changed the timing every night. If I spoke too soon, the joke disappeared; if I waited too long, the scene lost energy. The director told me to stop counting seconds and start listening to the room. That advice sounded mysterious, but it worked. I learned to notice when the audience was ready to move on. That meant the same line could feel slightly different each night, depending on whether the audience laughed loudly or only smiled.

Backstage, the show depended on people the audience never saw. A quiet student in my class managed props with incredible concentration. Another repaired a torn costume five minutes before the opening night. Watching them changed my idea of performance. I had thought confidence meant standing in bright light and being admired. Now I saw that confidence could also mean doing a necessary job calmly when everyone else was nervous. Their work also made me realise that entertainment depends on organisation as much as talent.

On the final night, my friend sang beautifully and deserved the applause she received. I was proud of her, but I was also proud of my own smaller achievement. I had not become a star, and I no longer wanted to measure success that way. Theatre gave me a place to practise speaking clearly, reacting to others and trusting a group. Those skills followed me back to school, where class presentations suddenly felt less like tests and more like scenes I could prepare for. I still get nervous before speaking, but now I know nerves do not have to stop me from doing the job.

3. Strategy focus

Read around the answer

The answer may depend on the whole sentence or paragraph, not one phrase. Read before and after the likely answer line.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

Question 1

Why did Isla first go to the audition?

- A to compete for a singing role
- B to impress the director
- C to support her best friend

Question 2

How did Isla feel about the small part at first?

- A confident that it would be easy
- B both relieved and a little disappointed
- C angry that she had not been given a song

Question 3

What did Isla realise when she entered too early?

- A Small mistakes in minor roles can affect the whole scene.
- B The main actors depended too much on the music.
- C She needed to learn longer lines before performing.

Question 4

What does the director's advice about listening mean?

- A She should respond to the audience and timing, not just memorise.
- B She should wait longer after every joke.
- C She should count seconds more carefully before speaking.

Question 5

Why does Isla mention the students working backstage?

- A to explain why the audience enjoyed the show
- B to show that confidence can be quiet and practical
- C to suggest that backstage jobs are easier than acting

Question 6

How did theatre help Isla at school?

- A It made her want to become a professional actor.
- B It helped her sing more confidently in class.
- C It made presentations feel more manageable.

5. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: Which role in a performance would suit you best: actor, singer, director, designer or organiser?
2. Strategy: Check one difficult question by underlining the evidence and crossing out the two wrong options.
3. Writing: Write a short paragraph about an activity that can build confidence.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to performance, teamwork and confidence.

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2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: She learned that theatre is about listening, teamwork and confidence, not just being noticed on stage.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

1. C; 2. B; 3. A; 4. A; 5. B; 6. C

1. C - She says she joined because her best friend wanted company.
2. B - She was relieved not to have a main role but slightly disappointed.
3. A - Her early entrance caused another actor and the music to go wrong.
4. A - She learns to notice when the audience is ready, rather than counting seconds.
5. B - Their calm practical work changes her idea of confidence.
6. C - Class presentations felt more like prepared scenes and less like tests.