



Education and School Life

Multiple choice: study support | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. Do you prefer studying alone or with another student?
2. What makes revision effective?
3. Can students explain ideas better than teachers sometimes?
4. What problems might study partners have?

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 Noor learn from the study buddy system?

Trying a study buddy system

by Noor Hassan

Before our mock exams, our English teacher introduced a study buddy system. Each student was paired with someone who had chosen a different revision strength. I was good at remembering quotations from texts, while my partner, Ellie, was better at planning answers quickly. I was not excited at first. I usually revised alone because I liked controlling the pace, and I worried that working with someone else would become a chat rather than real study.

Our first meeting was not very successful. I read my notes aloud while Ellie listened politely, and then she showed me a planning grid she had made. We were sharing information, but neither of us was really learning from the other. At the end, Ellie admitted that she could not remember half the quotations I had listed. I had to admit that I liked her grid but would not use it unless I practised with it myself. Passive listening was not enough.

The next week, we changed the rules. I tested Ellie on quotations by giving clues, and she made me plan answers in five minutes before explaining my choices. This felt harder, but it worked better. When I forgot a point, Ellie did not simply tell me the answer. She asked what the examiner would want to see in that paragraph. That question helped me think about purpose, not just memory.

There were still problems. Sometimes Ellie arrived late because of music practice, and once I forgot to bring the past-paper question we needed. We decided to write a short plan before each session and send it to each other. That made it easier to notice whether we were prepared. It also stopped one person doing all the organising, which had happened in group projects before.

By the exam, I had not become a completely different student. I still needed quiet time alone, and Ellie still preferred planning to memorising. But the study buddy system helped because it made revision active. Explaining, questioning and checking each other showed gaps that silent reading had hidden. A good study partner is not someone who does the work for you. It is someone who makes it harder for you to pretend you understand.

3. Strategy focus

Spot the banana skin

Some options sound sensible but go further than the text. Check for words such as always, only, never or completely.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

Question 1

Why was Noor unsure about the study buddy system at first?

- A She did not know who her partner would be.
- B She liked revising alone and controlling the pace.
- C She thought Ellie was weaker in every subject.

Question 2

What was wrong with the first meeting?

- A They shared information too passively.
- B They forgot to bring any notes.
- C They argued about which exam to revise for.

Question 3

Why did the second meeting work better?

- A They stopped using exam questions.
- B Ellie gave Noor all the correct answers.
- C Both students had to produce answers actively.

Question 4

What did Ellie's question help Noor focus on?

- A the number of quotations only
- B the purpose of a paragraph
- C the fastest way to finish

Question 5

Why did they start sending a plan before sessions?

- A to avoid meeting in person
- B to let one student organise everything
- C to make preparation and responsibility clearer

Question 6

What is Noor's final view of study partners?

- A They should help you see what you really understand.
- B They should replace quiet individual revision.
- C They are useful only when both students have the same strengths.

5. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: What rules would make a study buddy system work well?
2. Strategy: For one answer, underline the evidence and write why the other two options are wrong.
3. Writing: Write a short study plan for two students preparing for an exam.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to revision, feedback and learning habits.

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2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: She learned that a study partner is useful when both students explain ideas actively and take responsibility.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

1. B - She usually revised alone and worried about chatting.
2. A - They shared information, but neither was really learning.
3. C - They tested, planned and explained rather than just listened.
4. B - Ellie asks what the examiner would want to see.
5. C - It showed whether both were prepared and shared organisation.
6. A - She says a partner makes it harder to pretend you understand.