



# Food and Eating Habits

Multiple choice: cooking skills | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

## 1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. Should every student learn basic cooking skills?
2. What makes cooking lessons useful rather than just fun?
3. Why might some teenagers avoid cooking?
4. What food skill would help people in everyday life?

### 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. How did cooking lessons change Mia's view of food?

### Learning to cook at school

by Mia Chen

Before this year, my idea of cooking was heating noodles or helping my dad decorate cakes at birthdays. I liked food, but I thought proper cooking required expensive ingredients and a kitchen full of equipment. When our school announced a six-week cooking project, I expected it to be a relaxing break from normal lessons. I did not expect to learn anything that would change my daily life. The first lesson proved me wrong almost immediately. I was used to judging meals by taste, not by the planning, cost and timing that happen before anyone sits down to eat.

We began with vegetable soup, which sounded boring until our teacher explained the challenge. Each group had a small budget and had to choose ingredients that were cheap, filling and not too difficult to prepare. I wanted to buy ready-chopped vegetables because they looked convenient, but another student pointed out how much more expensive they were. That was the first time I really compared prices by weight rather than just looking at the packet. The budget made the task feel like a real decision rather than a pretend classroom activity, especially when we had to justify each choice. Suddenly, a few coins changed what the whole group could make.

The cooking itself was less smooth. Our group cut the carrots unevenly, added too much salt and forgot to turn the heat down. The soup was edible, but not exactly impressive. What mattered was the discussion afterwards. We worked out which mistakes affected the taste and which ones simply made the process slower. I liked that because it made cooking feel less mysterious. A mistake did not mean the meal was ruined; it meant there was something to adjust next time. Our teacher also asked us to write down one improvement for next time, which made the feedback feel practical rather than embarrassing.

Later lessons included packed lunches, food waste and simple dishes from different cultures. My favourite was a rice dish suggested by a student's grandmother. It used leftovers, but it tasted better than many meals sold near school. We also talked about allergies and food labels, which made me realise that cooking for other people involves responsibility. It is not only about making something delicious; it is about making something safe and suitable. That lesson stayed with me because a meal can look simple while still needing careful decisions about ingredients and people.

At home, I now cook once a week. I am still slow, and my younger brother complains if there are too many vegetables, but I understand food differently. I check what is already in the fridge before asking for takeaway, and I know that affordable meals do not have to be dull. The project did not turn me into a chef. It gave me enough confidence to try. I also waste less food now, because I understand that leftovers can become part of another meal instead of being forgotten. That small change has made cooking feel useful on ordinary school nights.

### 3. Strategy focus

#### Underline the key words

Before reading the options, underline the key words in the question. Watch for small traps such as time, reason, attitude or change.

### 4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

#### Question 1

What did Mia expect from the cooking project at first?

- A a useful way to improve family meals
- B an easy activity rather than serious learning
- C a chance to use expensive ingredients

#### Question 2

What did Mia learn during the first lesson?

- A Soup is usually cheaper than other meals.
- B Packets should be chosen by appearance.
- C Convenient ingredients may cost more.

#### Question 3

Why did Mia value the discussion after making soup?

- A It helped her understand mistakes as things to adjust.
- B It showed that taste matters more than preparation.
- C It proved her group had followed the recipe correctly.

#### Question 4

What point does Mia make about cooking for other people?

- A Cooks need to think about safety and suitability.
- B Traditional dishes are usually the safest choice.
- C Food labels are more important than taste.

#### Question 5

How has the project affected Mia at home?

- A She cooks confidently without needing more practice.
- B She has persuaded her brother to eat more vegetables.
- C She thinks more carefully before choosing takeaway.

#### Question 6

Why does Mia mention her younger brother's reaction?

- A to suggest that her family dislikes healthy food
- B to show that cooking at home is still a real-life challenge
- C to explain why she prefers cooking at school

### 5. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: Which cooking skill would be most useful for teenagers?
2. Strategy: For one difficult question, write the line number or paragraph where you found the answer.
3. Writing: Write a short paragraph explaining why schools should or should not teach cooking.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to cooking, cost and food choices.

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## 2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: They helped her see cooking as practical, affordable and connected to confidence rather than just following recipes.

## 4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

1. B - She expected a relaxing break and did not expect it to change her daily life.
2. C - She compared ready-chopped vegetables with cheaper alternatives by weight.
3. A - She says mistakes did not mean the meal was ruined; they showed what to adjust.
4. A - She links allergies and labels to responsibility when cooking for others.
5. C - She checks what is in the fridge before asking for takeaway.
6. B - The detail shows that her cooking is useful but still imperfect in ordinary family life.