



Global Issues

Multiple choice: citizenship and cooperation | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. Why do countries need to cooperate?
2. Would you enjoy debating global issues?
3. Is compromise a strength or a weakness?
4. What makes a discussion fair?

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 Tomas learn from Model United Nations?

A Model United Nations surprise

by Tomas Silva

I joined Model United Nations because I liked debating. I imagined standing up, making a powerful speech and proving that my ideas were better than everyone else's. Our teacher assigned each student a country to represent during a debate on plastic pollution in oceans. I was given a small island nation. At first, I was disappointed because I had hoped to represent a large powerful country with obvious influence. I had watched clips of confident speakers online, so I thought success would depend on sounding forceful in front of the room.

Research changed my attitude. The country I represented was not producing most of the plastic waste, but it suffered from it through damaged beaches, fishing problems and expensive clean-ups. I began to understand that global issues do not affect everyone equally. In my speech, I wanted to blame larger countries. My teacher reminded me that the aim was to build agreement, not just express anger. That was harder than I expected. It was the first time I had seen how a problem caused mainly in one place could create serious costs somewhere else.

During the debate, I listened to students representing manufacturing countries, tourist destinations and countries with limited recycling systems. Some arguments sounded like excuses, but others revealed real difficulties. One country wanted stricter rules but said it lacked money to build waste facilities. Another worried that sudden bans would affect workers in packaging factories. I did not agree with every point, but I could no longer pretend the solution was simple. That advice made me rewrite my opening so that it still sounded urgent but invited other countries to respond.

The most useful part happened during an informal discussion. Instead of reading speeches, we had to write a shared proposal. My group suggested reducing single-use plastic, supporting recycling facilities and helping island communities with clean-up costs. Nobody got everything they wanted. I disliked one weak phrase in the final document, but another student accepted stronger language about protecting fishing communities. Compromise felt messy, but it made agreement possible. Those points did not remove responsibility, but they made the discussion less like a simple argument between good and bad sides.

At the end, our proposal did not win the top award. Strangely, I was not disappointed. I had entered the activity thinking debate was about defeating opponents. I left thinking it was about making disagreement useful. Global cooperation is slow because countries have different needs and responsibilities. That can be frustrating, but the alternative is everyone speaking loudly while nothing changes. I began to see that weak phrases sometimes kept people at the table long enough to agree on stronger action later.

3. Strategy focus

Spot the banana skin

Some wrong options sound sensible but go too far. Check for words that make an option too extreme or not quite supported by the text.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

Question 1

Why did Tomas originally join Model United Nations?

- A He enjoyed debating and wanted to argue strongly.
- B He wanted to study ocean pollution professionally.
- C He hoped to represent a small island nation.

Question 2

How did research change Tomas's view of his assigned country?

- A He realised it produced more waste than larger countries.
- B He decided it had more influence than he first thought.
- C He understood why plastic pollution affected it seriously.

Question 3

Why did the teacher stop Tomas simply blaming larger countries?

- A The information Tomas found was inaccurate.
- B The task required agreement as well as criticism.
- C Large countries were not part of the debate.

Question 4

What did Tomas realise while listening to other countries?

- A Some opposing views were based on real problems.
- B Most countries were pretending to care about pollution.
- C Recycling systems were more important than plastic bans.

Question 5

What does Tomas suggest about compromise?

- A It usually makes proposals too weak to matter.
- B It can be frustrating but necessary for agreement.
- C It is easier in speeches than in informal discussion.

Question 6

How did Tomas's understanding of debate change?

- A He decided winning awards was the main aim.
- B He learned that strong speeches solve global problems.
- C He saw it as a way to make disagreement useful.

5. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: What global issue needs better cooperation? Why?
2. Strategy: Check one difficult question by underlining the evidence and crossing out the two wrong options.
3. Writing: Write a short proposal for reducing plastic waste in a school or community.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to cooperation, global issues and responsibility.

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Multiple choice: citizenship and cooperation

2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: He learned that cooperation involves listening, compromise and understanding other viewpoints, not simply winning a debate.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

1. A - He joined because he liked debating and imagined making a powerful speech.
2. C - He learns it suffers from damaged beaches, fishing problems and clean-ups.
3. B - The teacher says the aim was to build agreement, not just anger.
4. A - He hears difficulties about money, facilities and workers.
5. B - He dislikes one phrase but sees compromise made agreement possible.
6. C - He entered wanting to defeat opponents but left valuing useful disagreement.