



Home and Local Area

Multiple choice: local area | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. Would you prefer to live in a big city or a smaller town?
2. What can make a new neighbourhood feel like home?
3. Why might moving be difficult for teenagers?
4. What local places help people meet others?

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 moving change Tarek's view of his new town?

Moving to a smaller town

by Tarek Ali

When my parents told me we were moving from the city to a smaller town, I reacted badly. I imagined empty streets, slow buses and nothing to do after school. My parents talked about cleaner air and lower rent, but I was thinking about leaving friends, football courts and the corner shop where everyone knew my order. On the first weekend in the new town, I walked around with my headphones on and decided, far too quickly, that I would never like it. I was especially worried about weekends, because in the city I could always find somewhere busy without planning anything in advance.

The first few weeks were awkward. The town centre had only one cinema, and the buses stopped earlier than I expected. I missed being able to choose between three different places for everything. At school, people were friendly, but many had known each other since primary school, so conversations were full of shared memories. I felt like someone reading the middle chapter of a book without knowing the beginning. Even simple questions, such as where to sit at lunch, reminded me that I was new in a place where other people already had routines.

Things changed because of the library, which sounds unlikely but is true. I went there to use a computer printer and noticed a poster for a weekend football group at the sports centre. I nearly ignored it because joining a group alone felt uncomfortable. Then I remembered that doing nothing would not make the town more interesting. The football was not very serious, but it gave me a reason to speak to people without forcing conversation. The group included students from different year groups, so it also helped me learn names beyond my own class.

After that, I started noticing details I had missed. The bakery opened early, the park had a quiet path beside the river, and the same bus driver waited if he saw students running from school. In the city, I liked the choice and noise. Here, I began to understand the value of recognising people and being recognised. That could feel too public sometimes, but it also made the place feel safer. Those details were easy to miss when I was busy proving to myself that the town was disappointing.

I still miss the city. I miss the food, the buses and the feeling that anything might be happening somewhere nearby. But I no longer describe the town as boring. It is quieter, yes, but quiet is not the same as empty. I had to stop comparing every street with my old neighbourhood before I could see what was actually here. Moving did not give me the home I expected, but it has given me one I am learning to understand. I think I needed time to build my own map of the place, not just learn the street names.

3. Strategy focus

Track a change in thinking

Some questions ask how the writer's view changes. Compare what the writer thought at first with what they understand later.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

Question 1

Why was Tarek unhappy about moving at first?

- A He believed his parents had chosen the town too quickly.
- B He expected the new town to offer fewer possibilities.
- C He had already visited the school and disliked it.

Question 2

What does Tarek mean by comparing conversations to the middle of a book?

- A He felt he did not share other students' history.
- B He found local stories more interesting than expected.
- C He thought people were deliberately confusing him.

Question 3

Why was the library important for Tarek?

- A It replaced the activities he missed from the city.
- B It became the first place where he made close friends.
- C It indirectly helped him find a way to meet people.

Question 4

What does Tarek suggest about being recognised in town?

- A It is less useful than having many places to go.
- B It makes teenagers feel watched all the time.
- C It can be both uncomfortable and reassuring.

Question 5

How has Tarek's view changed by the end?

- A He sees value in the town without pretending it is perfect.
- B He now prefers the town to the city in every way.
- C He thinks quiet places are always better for teenagers.

Question 6

Why does Tarek say quiet is not the same as empty?

- A He wants his parents to stop worrying about him.
- B He has learned to notice what the town does offer.
- C He thinks the town will become busier soon.

5. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: What helps a new place feel like home?
2. Strategy: For one difficult question, write the paragraph where you found the evidence.
3. Writing: Write a paragraph about advantages and disadvantages of your local area.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to neighbourhoods, transport and community.

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Multiple choice: local area

2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: He first saw it as quiet and limiting, but later valued its routines, places and stronger sense of community.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

1. B - He imagined empty streets, slow buses and nothing to do.
2. A - He felt others had shared memories he did not know.
3. C - A poster in the library led him to the football group.
4. C - He says it could feel too public but also made the place feel safer.
5. A - He still misses the city but no longer calls the town boring.
6. B - He stops comparing and begins seeing the town's own routines and places.