



People and Achievement

Multiple choice: personal success | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. What makes a speaker interesting to listen to?
2. Can shy people become strong public speakers?
3. Is winning the best measure of achievement?
4. What helps people practise difficult skills?

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 Daniel learn about achievement?

Training for a speech competition

by Daniel Park

I entered the speech competition because my English teacher said I had good ideas but hid them in written work. I did not believe public speaking was for me. Confident students seemed to enjoy being watched, while I became nervous answering a question in class. Still, the topic was about young people changing their communities, and I had strong opinions about it. I agreed to enter before I could talk myself out of it. I had seen competitions online where speakers looked completely relaxed, and I assumed that was the only acceptable style.

My first speech sounded like an essay read aloud. It had good sentences, but nobody would want to listen to them for four minutes. My teacher asked me to tell the story of the basketball court near my apartment, which students had helped clean and repaint. That story made my argument clearer because it showed young people doing something real. I learned that examples can carry an idea better than abstract language. Before that, my speech had made good points, but the audience had no picture in their minds.

Practising was uncomfortable. I recorded myself and noticed that I spoke too quickly whenever I reached a difficult sentence. I also looked down at my notes after every line, even when I knew the words. Instead of trying to memorise the whole speech perfectly, I marked three key points on small cards. That gave me enough structure without making me panic if I missed one exact phrase. The cards also forced me to speak to the audience instead of hiding behind a full sheet of paper.

On competition day, I was still nervous. One speaker before me had a powerful voice and used almost no notes. For a moment, I felt foolish holding my cards. Then I remembered that sounding natural mattered more than looking impressive. I slowed down during the basketball court story and saw a judge nod. That small reaction helped me continue. I did not become fearless, but I stayed in control. I realised that another speaker's strength did not have to make my own approach useless.

I came third. At first, I was disappointed because only the winner gave the speech at assembly. Later, several classmates said they remembered the court story and wanted to help with another clean-up. That meant more to me than I expected. The competition taught me that achievement is not always a trophy or a first place. Sometimes it is the moment when your voice finally reaches people. That changed my idea of public speaking from performance to communication, which made the whole experience feel more worthwhile.

3. Strategy focus

Watch for true details

A wrong option may include a true detail from the text but answer the wrong question. Check that the option matches the exact question focus.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

Question 1

Why did Daniel agree to enter the speech competition?

- A He wanted to prove he was the most confident student.
- B He had already spoken successfully in class.
- C He cared about the topic despite feeling nervous.

Question 2

Why did the teacher suggest the basketball court story?

- A It was easier to memorise than the original speech.
- B It made Daniel's argument more concrete.
- C It showed that Daniel enjoyed sport.

Question 3

What did Daniel discover when recording himself?

- A He needed a longer speech to explain his ideas.
- B His notes were too small to read clearly.
- C He spoke too quickly at difficult moments.

Question 4

Why were the small cards useful?

- A They gave structure without forcing perfect memorisation.
- B They made him look more professional than other speakers.
- C They helped him avoid practising too often.

Question 5

What helped Daniel while he was speaking in the competition?

- A noticing that a judge seemed interested
- B copying the style of the previous speaker
- C realising he no longer needed his cards

Question 6

How does Daniel finally define achievement?

- A as winning the chance to speak again
- B as having an effect on other people
- C as becoming completely confident

5. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: What achievement are you proud of that did not involve winning?
2. Strategy: Check one difficult question by underlining the evidence and crossing out the two wrong options.
3. Writing: Write advice for a nervous student preparing a speech.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to confidence, practice and achievement.

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2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: He learned that achievement can mean improving through practice and honesty, not only winning a competition.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

1. C - He had strong opinions about the topic even though he was nervous.
2. B - The story showed young people doing something real.
3. C - He noticed he spoke too quickly whenever he reached a difficult sentence.
4. A - They gave him enough structure without panic over exact wording.
5. A - A judge nodding helped him continue.
6. B - He values classmates remembering the story and wanting to act.