



# Public Places and Services

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

## 1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. What makes waiting for public transport easier?
2. Should young people help design public spaces?
3. Why might a simple shelter matter to a community?
4. What public service in your area could be improved?

### 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 Erin learn from the bus stop project?

### Redesigning a bus stop shelter

by Erin Walsh

The bus stop outside our sports centre used to be easy to miss. It had a bent sign, no shelter and a timetable that was almost impossible to read after rain. Most students treated it as an ordinary annoyance, but my neighbour, who uses a walking frame, said she avoided evening classes because waiting there felt uncomfortable and unsafe. That comment made the problem seem less small. A bad bus stop could quietly limit where people felt able to go.

Our design class decided to suggest improvements. My first sketch included bright colours, a curved roof and a digital screen. It looked attractive, but when we interviewed bus users, they asked for simpler things: a seat at the right height, lighting that did not shine into nearby houses, clear timetable information and a roof that protected people from sideways rain. I realised I had been designing for a poster, not for the people who actually waited there.

The council officer who visited our class explained that public designs have to survive weather, cleaning costs and vandalism. That sounded discouraging, but it also made the task more interesting. We had to think about materials, visibility and maintenance, not only appearance. One student suggested transparent panels so passengers could see the bus coming and drivers could see whether anyone was waiting. That idea solved a safety problem without making the shelter feel closed in.

Our final proposal was not as colourful as my first sketch. It included a wider pavement space, a bench with armrests, a clearer timetable board and a solar-powered light. We also recommended moving the rubbish bin because it blocked wheelchair access. When the council later used parts of our proposal, the change looked modest. Some students joked that we had spent weeks designing a bench and a roof.

I did not mind the jokes. The first evening I saw my neighbour waiting there after her class, I understood the value of modest changes. Public places do not always need dramatic redesigns. Sometimes they need careful attention to who is being left out by small inconveniences. A better bus stop will not transform the town, but it can make everyday journeys feel possible for more people.

### 3. Strategy focus

#### Find the purpose of an example

When the writer mentions a person or small detail, ask what problem or idea that example is showing.

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

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

#### Question 1

What made Erin see the bus stop as a serious problem?

- A The sports centre wanted a new entrance.
- B Her neighbour avoided activities because of it.
- C Students were no longer allowed to use buses.

#### Question 2

What did Erin realise after interviewing bus users?

- A Digital screens were the only important feature.
- B Bright colours made people feel safer.
- C Useful design should start with users' needs.

#### Question 3

Why were transparent panels suggested?

- A They improved visibility for passengers and drivers.
- B They made the shelter cheaper to clean.
- C They stopped rain entering from the side.

#### Question 4

What was included in the final proposal?

- A features for access, information and lighting
- B a large digital advertising screen
- C a shelter moved away from the sports centre

#### Question 5

How did Erin feel when students joked about the result?

- A She agreed the project had been a waste of time.
- B She still saw value in the modest changes.
- C She wished the design had been more colourful.

#### Question 6

What is Erin's main message?

- A Public transport problems need dramatic redesigns.
- B Young people should avoid council design projects.
- C Small design details can make public places more inclusive.

### 5. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: What small change would make a public place more accessible?
2. Strategy: For one question, decide what problem the paragraph is mainly trying to show.
3. Writing: Write a proposal for improving a bus stop, park bench or waiting area.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to public services, access and design.

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## 2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: She learned that small public-service designs can affect safety, comfort and independence for different users.

## 4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

1. B - Her neighbour avoided evening classes because the stop felt unsafe and uncomfortable.

2. C - Users asked for practical features, not just the attractive design she imagined.

3. A - They let passengers see buses and drivers see waiting people.

4. A - It included pavement space, bench, timetable board, light and bin movement.

5. B - She says she did not mind and noticed her neighbour using it.

6. C - She says careful attention to small inconveniences can include more people.