



Work and Careers

Multiple choice: work experience | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. What would you want to learn during work experience?
2. Can creative jobs include routine tasks?
3. Why is feedback important at work?
4. What workplace skill might surprise students?

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 Jay learn about creative work?

My week at a design studio

by Jay Singh

When I arranged work experience at a design studio, I imagined a week of drawing logos and choosing colours. I enjoy art, and I thought design would feel like school projects but with better computers. On the first morning, the manager gave me a notebook and told me to listen more than I spoke. That sounded disappointing. I had hoped to show my ideas, but she explained that design begins with understanding what a client actually needs. I also expected the studio to be noisy and informal, but most of the work depended on quiet concentration and careful conversation.

My first task was to sit in a meeting about a poster for a community theatre. The client wanted something 'modern but friendly', which sounded simple until the designers started asking questions. Who was the poster for? Where would it be displayed? Did it need to attract families, teenagers or older visitors? I realised that a design could look beautiful and still fail if it did not speak to the right audience. The questions made me realise that 'modern' and 'friendly' were not instructions; they were starting points that needed clarifying. Different people in the meeting understood those words in different ways.

Later in the week, I helped search for images and organise old project files. It was not glamorous, but it showed me how much routine work supports creative decisions. A designer might spend an hour naming files clearly so another person can find them later. I used to think organisation was separate from creativity. At the studio, poor organisation wasted time and made good ideas harder to develop. Even the folder names mattered because several designers might work on the same project at different stages during the week. If one person saved something badly, the whole team lost time.

The most interesting moment came when a client rejected a design I thought was excellent. The designer did not look offended. She asked which part felt wrong and listened carefully. Afterwards, she changed the layout, kept one strong idea and removed two details that confused the message. I was surprised because at school I sometimes take criticism personally. In the studio, feedback was treated as information, not an insult. I noticed that the designer wrote down the criticism before replying, which gave her time to separate the problem from her feelings.

By Friday, I had not designed a logo, but I had learned far more than I expected. Creative work was still exciting, but it was also practical. Designers had to ask good questions, meet deadlines, keep files organised and revise ideas without becoming defensive. I left with a stronger interest in design, but also a more realistic one. Talent matters, but listening may matter even more. Now, when I see a poster or website, I wonder about the questions behind it, not only whether I like the final design. That feels like a more professional way to look at creative work. I also notice how often simple designs solve complicated problems.

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

What did Jay expect before his work experience started?

- A to mainly observe business meetings
- B to spend time doing creative visual tasks
- C to learn how to speak confidently to clients

Question 2

What did Jay learn from the poster meeting?

- A A design must suit its intended audience.
- B Friendly designs are usually better than modern ones.
- C Clients often know exactly what they need.

Question 3

Why does Jay mention organising project files?

- A to complain that work experience was less creative than promised
- B to explain why designers avoid sharing unfinished ideas
- C to show that routine tasks can support creative work

Question 4

How did Jay react to the designer's response to criticism?

- A He thought she should have defended the original design.
- B He was surprised by her calm, practical attitude.
- C He realised the client had misunderstood the whole project.

Question 5

What does Jay suggest about talent in the final paragraph?

- A It matters more than meeting deadlines.
- B It is less important than using good software.
- C It is useful but not enough on its own.

Question 6

Why does Jay mention that he had not designed a logo by Friday?

- A to show that he learned valuable things despite not doing what he expected
- B to explain why he felt the placement had been disappointing
- C to suggest that beginner designers are not trusted with creative work

5. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: What would you want to ask during work experience?
2. Strategy: Compare the correct answer with one wrong option. What detail makes the wrong option incorrect?
3. Writing: Write a paragraph about what students can learn from work experience.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to careers, feedback and workplace skills.

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2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: He learned that creative work involves listening, revising ideas and solving practical problems, not just producing exciting designs.

4. Exam-style multiple-choice questions

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

1. B - He imagined drawing logos and choosing colours.
2. A - The designers asked who the poster was for and where it would appear.
3. C - He says routine work supports creative decisions and prevents wasted time.
4. B - He contrasts her calm response with taking criticism personally at school.
5. C - He says talent matters, but listening may matter even more.
6. A - He contrasts his original expectation with the wider lessons he actually learned.