

Narrative writing

Question 4

Script I

The overall structure in this response is easily followed, though the initial immediacy of the opening is lost through an overlong section offering simple facts about Michael, his girlfriend Sarah and their relationship in general terms. Slow release of cogent detail would have proved more effective in creating tension and building up to the gruesome discovery at the end.

Events are recorded, though not fully explained or exploited. It is unclear for example how or why Michael knew that Sarah was watching him and the vocabulary used to describe Michael's actions is adequate but lacks the precision required to communicate shades of meaning effectively. There is an attempt to suggest a sense of uncertainty, but the response reports factually what Michael does, rather than creates atmosphere or suspense as a narrative. Sentences are mostly correct, if fairly repetitive, with occasional error balanced by some awareness of audience.

Brief development of ideas offers little to draw in the reader. Sarah 'used to be full of spirit, now nothing'. Like Michael, we have 'no clue' why. Similarly, there is no sense of how that information connects to something having changed this time. There is little suggestion that the writer knows where the piece is set, has any detail in mind of the events leading up to this point or any exact idea of how and why Sarah has died. Though it is not necessary to reveal all details and successful narratives can keep their readers guessing, omissions need to be deliberate and pre-planned. A trail of evidence for the reader/narrator to follow as the realisation that something was now wrong grew stronger might have proved more effective than the prolonged and disconnected explanation at the outset.

Band 3 content and structure

Band 4 style and accuracy