**AO4 Secure Therapy:**

**Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual reference.**

Read the extract below, then read the guidance and complete tasks in order.

The round tower soared up, black and glistening, against the slate grey of a late-October sky. As Rachel and her brother walked towards it across the moor, from the east, it was framed by two leafless, skeletal ash trees. It was the hour before dusk on a windless afternoon. When they reached the trees, they would be able to rest on the bench that stood between them, and look back towards Beverley in the near distance, the neat clusters of houses and, rising up in the midst of them, the monumental, answering greyish-cream towers of the Minster.

Nicholas flopped down on the bench. Rachel – then only six years old, eight years his junior – did not join him: she was impatient to run up towards the black tower, to get close to it. She left her brother to his rest and scurried onwards, squelching her way through the cow-trodden mud that surrounded the foot of the tower until she was right up against it, and could lay her hands upon the gleaming black brickwork. The flat of both hands upon the tower, she looked upwards and could not comprehend the size and scale of it, the perfect, lucid curve as it arched itself, like a sway back, against a threatening sky through which a pair of rooks were now skimming, cawing and circling endlessly.

***Guidance***

*You will be expected to have an opinion on not just the effect, but the writer’s methods and how effective they are.*

**Task One**

*Read the extract, and then label each statement from most to least convincing (1 being most, 3 being least)*

1. The writer’s use of structure creates tension within this extract
2. The use of language in the description creates a sad and lonely atmosphere
3. The most interesting part for the reader is the description of the characters

**Task Two**

Once you have decided on your response to the statement, you will have to prove it with analysis and by selecting appropriate evidence.

Find a quotation to prove that the setting creates a sad atmosphere:

e.g. ‘slate grey’

………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Now underline any other words which particularly create a sad or depressing effect.

**Task Three**

You will be expected to give your opinion on what happens in the text, as well as the order in which it happens. Complete the grid so that every reference to the structure has an effect as well.

**Structure hint:** This extract is the opening of a novel so you can use opinion words like *instantly* and *immediately*.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What happens and when** | **Effect** |
| The boy and girl are introduced together in the opening of the extract. | e.g. instantly suggests an important and close relationship in the opening of the extract. |
|  | This sentence length cleverly emphasises important things about character/setting. e.g. the time and weather of the setting in ‘It was the hour before dusk…’ |
| Setting is the focus in the extract rather than character.  |  |

**Task Four**

Now you are going to combine your ideas from Tasks One, Two and Three to write an answer to the following question:

*‘The most interesting part of this extract for the reader is the description of setting.’*

To what extent do you agree with this statement?

**Use the essay structure below to help you.**

1. Do you agree/disagree? WHY is it the most interesting thing? What does the setting do?
2. Point about the setting, evaluate it to show the effect it creates for the reader
3. Point about structure, how does this link to the statement?
4. **Use evaluative language which gives an opinion**
5. Link these points back to the statement and your view.

Here is an example answer:

*I agree that the setting is very important in the extract because it creates an atmosphere of sadness; however, the writer’s use of structure also shows the significance of the relationship between the boy and girl within the extract.*

 *Firstly, the writer effectively creates a sad and isolated atmosphere through the use of imagery. The ‘slate grey’ sky and ‘greyish’ have bleak connotations and so create interest for the reader. They clearly create interest because the setting suggests to the reader something bad may happen to the brother and sister.*

*However, the writer also cleverly uses structure by using the setting to build tension in the first paragraph, and the reader is then more interested in the characters in the second paragraph as a result. The combination of the ‘threatening sky’ and that ‘she looked upwards and could not comprehend the size and scale of it’ creates an effect of tension for the reader as the girl is made to seem vulnerable.*

*In conclusion, although I do agree with the statement that the description of setting obviously creates interest, it is also the introduction of the two characters after this which subtly creates tension and, therefore, interest for the reader.*

**Task Four**

Underline any useful words / phrases / connectives from the model answer, then use the planning from Task One and Two to answer the question yourself in your own words.

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