

# Writing folder 2

## Part 2 Review

In Part 2 of Paper 2, you may be asked to write a review of a book, film, TV programme, concert, or other media event. In addition to reviewing your particular choice, you are likely to have to comment in a more general way, as in the sample task below. Read the question carefully, so you know exactly what is required.

- 1 Look at the photograph and write three descriptive sentences about the sea.
- 2 Read this exam task and look at the paragraph plan.



Your college magazine has invited students to contribute a film review to a special feature entitled *Special effects: essential nowadays – or distracting?* Write a review of a film you have seen that uses special effects and say whether you think they are an important aspect of today's films.

Handwritten paragraph plan on lined paper:

- Lead in to review
- Introduce film - 'The Perfect Storm'
- Describe its special effects
- Evaluate importance of special effects in general

- 3 Decide how well the sample answer on page 39 follows the plan. What improvements would you make in terms of content and organisation?

### EXAM ADVICE

- When writing a review, provide a balance of information and opinion.
- Do NOT describe the whole plot, as this is inappropriate.
- Introduce your opinions with a variety of linkers.
- Use rhetorical questions to preface opinions and ideas.
- Show your range of vocabulary, including specialist terms.
- Name the film (book, play, etc.) early in the review.

This is a very good example to consider. In one way, it is not a typical Hollywood film, as there is no happy ending, but in other ways - the actors used, the money spent, the special effects - it is.

Why is it 'perfect'? It is actually a weatherman who uses this word. As he tracks the worsening weather out at sea, we see him getting genuinely excited about the unique set of weather conditions. This was an interesting part for me.

The captain of the fishing boat, acted by George Clooney, does not care about the safety of his men. He only wants to find more fish and make lots of money. So he goes to sea, turning off the weather forecasts and ignoring the sensible advice of another captain (a very attractive woman), who is in love with him and doesn't want him to risk his life. And yes, they catch lots of fish, but then the ice-machine on board breaks down, which means that he needs to return to harbour quickly before the fish go bad, so he decides to go back right through the worst weather.

This is where the special effects start. They are really very good, and include some clever use of computers. You feel as though you are in the boat with them, facing those big waves. \* At the end, the ship goes down and we see one of the sailors - the film also has Mark Wahlberg - drifting on an empty sea, thinking beautiful thoughts about his girlfriend. Then the film shows the girlfriend, looking out to sea with an anxious look on her face.

Are special effects an essential part of all films today? \*\*

In this film, the special effects were probably its best thing.

Based on the sentences you wrote earlier about the sea, write a phrase or a sentence to follow the (\*), describing the waves.

- 4 In Part 2, it is important to demonstrate your range of language. Use these words and phrases as replacements in the text. They are in text order.

a blockbuster	i outstanding
b budget	j digital imaging
c sub-plot	k gigantic
d portrayed (by)	l stars
e heads out	m cuts to
f crew	n scanning the horizon
g eye of the storm	o prerequisite
h kick in	p feature

- 5 The final paragraph contains an example of a rhetorical question. This is a useful stylistic device for introducing opinions and works particularly well in essays and articles – and, as here, in the general comment in reviews.

The writer should have followed up the rhetorical question with some relevant opinions on the use of special effects. For example:

Speak to most Hollywood producers and they would probably argue the case. Yet they are no substitute for an original storyline or engaging dialogue. Used wisely, special effects blend into a film seamlessly, as demonstrated in Peter Jackson's Oscar-winning 'The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring'. If not, they will only irritate.

Write about 50 words of your own to follow the rhetorical question (\*\*).

- 6 Now answer this exam task in 280–320 words, following the advice on page 38. Make a paragraph plan and check useful vocabulary in a dictionary before you start writing.

An international film magazine wants readers around the world to contribute a review to a special edition entitled *The Art of Advertising: Selling Products through Film*. You decide to write a review of a particularly memorable advertisement. In your review, you should evaluate the visual impact of the advertisement, outline its other features, and assess how much influence such advertisements have on us.