

Exemplar Response to Specimen Paper for Component 2: Commissioned Writing

Commission 3

A manufacturer of soft drinks has decided to use product placement in creative writing as part of a new marketing campaign for their best-selling drink.

They have commissioned you to produce creative writing in which a can of their best-selling drink appears, and/or plays a significant part. You may respond in any of the four forms. You should aim to write approximately 500 words.

Steven's Big Day

Steven got picked for the team. He couldn't believe it! Every week for the past seven months he would walk down this corridor in school, his excitement building every time only to feel miserable as his name did not appear. But this week was different – he was in! OK, so he was only a sub, but at least that gave him chance. Plus, Archie, who was first choice had an ankle strain and the usual second choice Dylan, was away at band camp. This was it, he thought, my chance to shine in the football team.

The rest of the days of the week were an obstacle he had to jump over in order to get to Saturday, match day, but get there he did.

He'd been doing extra practice at home too, extra toe taps to keep his skills sharp and his head in the game.

"I'm really proud of you Stevie" his mum would say to him when he told her about his success.

"Thanks for all your support mum – I'm just so pleased to be on the team."

"Your dad would have been so proud, wouldn't he?"

Steven didn't say anything at that point – he simply nodded. He would do it for his dad.

So, Saturday arrived and he was raring to go. His boots were polished, his socks were pulled up and his jersey fresh.

"Come on Steven, or we'll be late." He paused at the top of the stairs looking at the picture of his dad before he ran down the stairs. "This one's for you, dad" he muttered quietly before storming out the front door.

The whistle blew and the game began. Halfway through the first half the other team scored a goal. Then it happened. Steven was on the wing, as another player was coming towards him, and he went in for a slide tackle, a big one.

"Aargh" came the noise.

It was Steven. He'd twisted his ankle. He'd twisted his ankle and the first half wasn't even over yet.

"Oh no" said Steven, "I'm always mucking things up!" clutching his ankle.

His mum ran onto the field within seconds.

"Don't worry Steven, pet, it'll be ok. You've been having a great game so far."

“No I haven’t”, said Steven, “I’ve been playing terribly.”

“Stop being so hard on yourself, Stevie.”

“Stop calling me Stevie!” he said, embarrassedly.

Then his mum stopped, reached for her bag and pulled out what looked like a cold can, covered in thin layer on condensation which glimmered in the light.

“Look, why don’t you have some of this new drink I was going to give you after the game.”

“COCO-LOCO? What is this stuff?” Steven said as he raised the can to read the label.

Cracking open the lid, and gulping down that magic black sparkling liquid he felt a strange sense of something go through him – which he later realised was a sense of everything being alright with the world.

“You know what, mum” he said with a new found sense of confidence, “my ankle feels alright now. I want to play on. I want to play on!”

The final whistle blew, and Steven’s team had won 3-1.

“You played a blinder” an opposition player said to Steven. “What the hell was that drink?”

“COCO-LOCO” said Steven over his shoulder, as he walked off triumphantly with his mum.

Exemplar Response to Specimen Paper for Component 2: Commissioned Writing

Commission 5

A magazine aimed at a young adult readership (ages 13 – 17) is commissioning writers to produce fiction that uses interesting characterisation to challenge traditional ideas about gender.

They have commissioned you to write a poem for magazine. You should respond in the form of poetry. You should aim to write approximately 20 lines.

I'm Coming Out

From my front room
I watch his process:
the way he lingers with his girlfriend
at the gate,
a lean against the garden wall
to show off his gym work.

He turns as she leaves
and the house lights come on
like a pinball machine,
tracking the migration
up to his room.

The music begins,
and he starts to groove
in every way Diana Ross
commands him to.

Her voice wafts out the window
and struts down our street.