

Read the following extract closely and answer questions 3 and 4.

This extract is also from *The Collector* by John Fowles. After admiring Miranda from a distance, Fred becomes rich by winning the pools (like winning the National Lottery today), so he buys an isolated house with a cellar, kidnaps Miranda and keeps her captive there. She writes a diary, which Fred finds, and this becomes the next section of the novel. This extract includes her description of him on the first morning after her kidnap, October 15th:

Simple as sneezing to put him on the defensive. His face has a sort of natural ‘hurt’ set. Sheepish. No, giraffish. Like a lanky gawky giraffe. I kept on popping questions, he wouldn’t answer, all he could do was look as if I had no right to ask. As if *this* wasn’t at all what he’d bargained for.

He’s never had anything to do with girls. With girls like me, anyway.

A lilywhite boy.

He’s six feet. Eight or nine inches more than me. Skinny, so he looks taller than he is. Gangly. Hands too big, a nasty fleshy white and pink. Not a man’s hands. Adam’s apple too big, wrists too big, chin much too big, underlip bitten in, edges of nostrils red. Adenoids. He’s got one of those funny inbetween voices, uneducated trying to be educated. It keeps on letting him down. His whole face is too long. Dull black hair. It waves and recedes, it’s coarse. Stiff. Always in place. He always wears a sports coat and flannels and a pinned tie. Even cuff-links.

He’s what people call a ‘nice young man’.

Absolutely sexless (he looks).

He has a way of standing with his hands by his side or behind his back, as if he doesn’t know what on earth to do with them. Respectfully waiting for me to give my orders.

Fish-eyes. They watch. That’s all. No expression.

(Taken from the Vintage 2004 edition.)

3. Think about this extract alongside the previous extract you read. This extract is from near the beginning of Miranda’s diary.

How has the writer structured the text to interest the reader? (8 marks)

You could write about:

- how and why the writer creates contrasting narrative voices
- how the writer presents the characters’ relationship
- any other structural features that interest you.

4. Focus this part of your answer on this extract only.

How far do you agree that the writer creates two characters he wants you to find unpleasant? (20 marks)

In your response you should:

- write about your own impressions of the characters
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text.

When planning your answer, think about the general description of Fred, but also the way that Miranda describes him:

- vocabulary choices, e.g. animal references, adjectives
- sentence lengths and forms – short to reflect Miranda’s anxious state of mind
- language features and techniques, e.g. repetition of ‘too big’ to make Fred sound like a fairy-tale story ogre
- use of first person narrative to show Miranda’s criticisms of Fred
- how tension is created.