

ANALYSIS OF A NARRATIVE ESSAY

Memory

I recalled when I was about 6 to 7 years old, I was young, playful and childish, as what I would describe my younger self now. My sister, 'Ah Mei' as I would call her, was 3 years my junior and we spent most of our time together. Playing was our only form of spending quality time together because as children, we did not have the luxury of freedom like an adult.

Living in the small confines of a HDB block meant being able to smell uncle Ravi's home-cooked curry dinner everyday, having to avoid the numerous rusty bicycles parked just outside the lift landing, and barely having enough space to play in. 'Catching' would not work; 'AEIOU' required more players; and 'Ice and Water' would not be interesting without Ahmad and Sally. With not much of a choice left, my sister and I resorted to fiddling with our furniture: first the sofa, then the television set, and finally the coffee table. That table marked the start of that agonising memory for me.

We crawled on top of the rectangular coffee table, cautious and mindful not to alarm our mother, who would bring the worn-out wooden brown cane out if she found out. Mei and I grabbed the opportunity when my mother on the phone with a distant relative of ours. After we sneaked up, we pretended to be pirates, mimicking those we watched on Kids Central. We tried risky activities, tipping toes on the edges of the table to see who fell off first. We got really excited and in our excitement, my sister unintentionally shoved me aside and the next thing I felt was that my mind had transformed into a piece of untouched drawing paper: blank, white, nothing. That excruciating moment was unbearable. I moaned. I groaned. I yelped. I cried for help, but no one came. Mei just stood there, guilt stricken and dumbfounded on the top of the table. After what seemed like a millennium, mum scurried in my direction and we immediately rushed down to hail a taxi.

I was supporting my right arm with my left and mother tried distracting me with a "stress-hanky"; I squeezed the handkerchief whenever I felt needles piercing my skin, but it did little to alleviate the agony I was going through. As much as I tried, I couldn't ignore the terrible stinging pain that was twisting my hand viciously.

It was finally my turn to see the doctor and mum immediately rushed me in. The Chinese physician or what we called a 'Sinsch', applied Chinese medicine onto my injured arm and my pain was finally relieved. I knew I should have never played a fool with my sister. Because of her, I had to suffer the pain for two full weeks and bear with the nauseating stench of the Chinese herbs. That was a memory which would be forever etched in my mind, cautioning me to the dangers around me.

(493 words)

ESSAY GRADE: A2

Strengths:

- Accurate punctuation and spelling
- Grammatically accurate: keeps to the past tense
- Keeps within the 500 word limit
- Paragraphs show evidence of planning
- Tone and style are appropriate

Areas to improve:

- Expression is simple and can be more effective with the use of more interesting detail
- Sentence structures show some variation for effect but are slightly repetitive

Comment [1]: LOCALISE: The student describes life in a HDB flat and the unique sights and smells of living there which provides details for the examiner.

Comment [2]: SHOW NOT TELL: Instead of saying that she was often beaten with the cane by her mother, describing the cane as being 'worn-out' implies that the cane was used often.

Comment [3]: METAPHOR: Good use of a metaphor where the pain is presented as having the ability to twist as well as a vicious nature.

Comment [4]: DETAIL: Again, another interesting detail about Chinese traditional medicine which is exotic and interesting for the examiner.