

Writing

Part 2

Review

1  Which of these films (1–5) would you be most likely to watch? Why?

1



2



3



2 Read the following Part 2 task and the model answer.

Which film shown in the five posters do you think the review is describing?

You see the announcement below on a film review website called *FilmScape*.

The Past is Back

The film industry has often turned to history as a source of inspiration, but some of its attempts to bring the past to life have been better than others. Next month we'll be bringing you our top ten recommendations for historical films, and we welcome your suggestions.

So, send in a review which describes a historical film, explaining why it is worth watching, and in what ways it could have been better.

Write your **review** in **220–260** words.

_____ is a spectacular dramatization of the events that took place in the early 17th century when English settlers first made contact with Native Americans. The legendary story of Pocahontas, a powerful chief's daughter, and how she saved the life of John Smith, has been told many times in literature, song and film, but in this period piece, director Terrence Malick takes a more honest approach.

Smith, played by Colin Farrell, is portrayed as a fantasist; a man who ignores the brutality of the 'noble savages' and at the same time alienates his fellow Britons who are struggling to survive the harsh winter. As for Pocahontas (actress Q'orianka Kilcher), the movie quite rightly implies that it is not love that makes her save Smith, but curiosity and empathy for the hardship this strange man faces. Indeed, the element of 'strangeness' is what really makes the film stand out. The Algonquin people and the Britons are shown regarding each other in complete wonder. There is a moving scene in which Smith and Pocahontas teach each other simple words; this sort of scenario often feels rather contrived, but here there is a genuine feeling of discovery.

This is a visually stunning epic, and skilfully avoids the usual stereotyping of Native Americans. However, if historical accuracy is what you are after, you may feel let down. Pocahontas is shown as a young woman, whereas in reality, she is said to have been ten years old when she first met Smith. Her later life in London also seems slightly idealized. All in all, a masterful film.

4



5



- 3 What is the purpose of each paragraph?
- 4 In your own words, say why the writer thinks the film is 'worth watching' and how it 'could have been better'.
- 5 Some sentences in the review use past forms of a verb and others use present forms. Underline four examples of each. Then decide why a present or past form is used.
- 6 Make a note of those adjectives used by the writer to express an opinion. Include any accompanying adverbs or nouns.

Example: *spectacular dramatization*

Divide the adjectives in section **B** on page 211 into two groups, positive and negative.

- 7 Complete each of the spaces with one of the nouns from the box.

objection development fact adaptation performances clichés eyes

- 1 Both lead actors give remarkable _____ which won them each an Oscar®.
- 2 Told through the _____ of a young soldier named Jamie, it opens on a sweet note and quickly turns tragic.
- 3 This is a clever _____ of the original story, and goes on to explore the motives of the hero.
- 4 Unfortunately, the film relies too heavily on special effects rather than character _____.
- 5 It was let down by the usual _____ of most action movies; the big speech just before the battle, for example.
- 6 My one _____ to the movie is that the accents of the supporting cast are often unconvincing.
- 7 The end of the film is hardly based on _____. Indeed, no survivors were ever found.
- 8 Now write your own answer to the task in **220–260** words.

Don't forget!

- Aim to grab the reader's interest from the beginning.
- Express your opinions throughout your answer.