It was 7.30 pm and Alfie’s bag was empty. The continuous drone of words, going in through his right ear and passing out through his left, lulled him to sleep. Cold air rushed in through the open window and Alfie tucked his hands into his pockets to secure some warmth. It was dark and foggy outside and there was no natural light to illuminate the room, the flickering light just revealed the damp walls and cobwebs. Stood in front of a blackboard with scrawled notes on it was Ms Briggs, she was sad, depressed in fact, teaching here at Station Secondary School wasn’t what she had planned. Alfie and the other children of Station School were ‘lucky’, as they were told by Mr Williams in his weekly assembly.

Mr Williams was a short, fat, red faced and disciplinarian headmaster, he stood in front of all 600 pupils to address them every Sunday. He told them how fortunate they were that the school was an old power station and therefore, they were one of the few schools left with power worldwide. Mr Williams was increasingly nervous each week and he told all 600 pupils that the power was running out.

Alfie was searching through his bag for a pen, he couldn’t find one. Nobody had ever forgotten a pen for English before, and Ms Briggs was in a particularly bad mood today. Alfie timidly raised his hand and 20 bored teenage pupils looked his way, hoping for some drama. Sat next to Alfie was Michael and Michael nudged him to see what the problem was. Alfie was lucky, Michael had a spare pen, and he was safe from the wrath of Ms Briggs.

Ms Briggs turned to the class and told them that today they had to write a short story. Alfie already knew what he was going to write. He was going to write about the power running out. Everyone began writing and Alfie began ‘Station: The day the lights went out’. After 20 minutes of solid writing, Alfie had finished. He set the pen down on his paper and looked up. Alfie shivered as the wind blew harder and he raised his hand again. Ms Briggs walked over to him and read aloud ‘... the lights went out...’ Then, the lights went out.

Paragraph construction and cohesion

Paragraphs lengths vary and help to craft meaning. In this instance, the candidate has used a paragraph to explain incidental details about a character before returning to the main narrative.

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