

Section 1:

#1: Opening paragraph

Strengths:

- You've created a vivid picture of the setting using sensory details like the cool breeze and the colourful sky
- Your description of the natural environment helps readers feel like they're standing right there with you

Awkward Pacing

→ The opening moves too quickly between different observations without giving readers time to settle into each moment. You jump from palm trees to your hair to sweat to the sky to waves within just two paragraphs. This creates a scattered feeling rather than drawing readers smoothly into the scene. Consider focusing on one or two key details and exploring them more fully before moving on. For example, you might spend more time on either the approaching storm (suggested by the changing waves) or the peaceful sunset moment, but not both at once in such quick succession.

Exemplar: *I stepped outside and paused, letting the unexpected breeze wash over my face. The palm trees swayed above me, their movements graceful despite the building humidity. For a moment, I forgot about the heat.*

#2: The emergency response (paragraphs 3-6)

Strengths:

- You show the urgency of the situation through short, punchy sentences like "I dropped to my knees and checked her pulse. Nothing"
- The details about your actions (grabbing the walkie-talkie, tossing the first aid kit) help readers understand the emergency procedure

Underdeveloped Emotional Response

→ You tell us what happened during the emergency, but we don't fully understand what you're thinking or feeling during these crucial moments. When you discover there's no pulse, this would be a terrifying realisation for a lifeguard, but you move straight to calling the ambulance without showing us your inner reaction. Similarly, when performing CPR or waiting for the ambulance, you'd likely be experiencing fear, determination, or professional focus. Adding brief glimpses of your thoughts would help readers connect with the gravity of the situation and understand the weight of responsibility you're carrying.

Exemplar: *I dropped to my knees and pressed my fingers against her wrist, searching for any sign of life. Nothing. My stomach twisted. Stay calm, I told myself. Do your job.*

#3: The conclusion (final three paragraphs)

Strengths:

- The final line "She lost a part of herself — a part that now lived only in her memory" creates a powerful, emotional ending
- You show the lasting impact of the tragedy rather than just describing the immediate event

Tell Rather Than Show

→ The ending paragraphs list what Kristy lost ("the person who always supported her," "the person who helped her overcome difficult times") rather than showing us specific evidence of this relationship. You're explaining the sadness to readers instead of letting them feel it through concrete details. What did Kristy do or say that revealed her bond with her sister? Did she clutch something of her sister's? Did she say anything? Did you notice something specific about how she reacted that showed their closeness? These kinds of observed details would make the loss feel more real and affecting than general statements about their relationship.

Exemplar: *Kristy stared at her sister's beach bag, still propped against the lifeguard tower where they'd left it together an hour ago. Her hand reached out, then pulled back, as if touching it would make everything real.*

■ Your piece tells an emotionally powerful story about a tragic event, and you've clearly thought about how to create impact through your writing. The emergency scene has energy and movement, and you

understand how to use shorter sentences to build tension. Your ending recognises that this event affects people beyond just the immediate moment, which shows mature thinking about your subject.

To strengthen your writing, focus on deepening the emotional content throughout. Right now, you move very quickly through events, which sometimes makes the piece feel like a list of things that happened rather than a fully lived experience. In your opening, try slowing down and staying with one moment longer before jumping to the next observation. Additionally, in the emergency section, let us glimpse what you're thinking and feeling as events unfold—this will help readers understand the human side of being a lifeguard facing a crisis.

The ending would benefit from showing us Kristy's grief through what she does and says, rather than telling us about her relationship with her sister. What specific actions or words revealed her devastation? Also, consider your role in this final section. You observe Kristy's pain, but how does witnessing this tragedy affect you? What do you take away from this experience? Adding your own reflection would complete the story's emotional arc and give readers a stronger sense of why this moment matters to you personally.

Overall Score: 41/50

Section 2:

#1 As I stepped outside, the palm trees danced, emitting a cool breeze — a miracle in the humid summer weather. Their elegant movements swayed my chestnut hair as the sweat sticking to my face started to evaporate. ~~I gazed in awe at the breathtaking sky, painted with hues of lavender and fuchsia. I watched the glistening sun slowly sink into the horizon— an every day thing which still feels surreal. The once timid waves began to hastily run to the shore, roaring at the people.~~ [I gazed at the breathtaking sky, painted with hues of lavender and fuchsia, and watched the glistening sun slowly sink into the horizon—an everyday thing which still feels surreal.] Their anger made me ~~realise~~ [realise] I needed to put the tide warning out.

~~I hastily devoured the succulent sandwich, relishing my mouth as my taste buds danced in jubilation.~~ [I devoured the succulent sandwich, savouring each bite as my taste buds danced in jubilation.] I glanced across and noticed an abundance of people — who looked tinier from the elevated perspective of my lifeguard chair ~~huddled~~ [huddled] around in a circle. I peered through, and shock pierced my heart.

#2 Sprinting ~~outside~~ [down], I tossed the heavily mounted first aid kit onto my shoulder ~~tip-toeing~~ [before tip-toeing] across the scorching sand. As I got closer, I could see a lady, partially unconscious, with sting bites from a box jellyfish. Her leg was writhing in pain. Her eyes were filled with agony, as if she had been bitten by a shark.

I dropped to my knees and checked her pulse. Nothing.

Without hesitation, I grabbed the walkie-talkie and called an ambulance while one of my co-workers performed CPR. The atmosphere suddenly felt tense. Each breath echoed into the ripples of the waves.

Minutes passed, and soon a stampede of people surrounded us. Some were filming for pure entertainment, while others stood distressed.

As I heard the faint sound of the ambulance sirens growing louder, I noticed someone crying. Behind the crowd, there was a girl — around the same age as the unconscious lady — tucked in with her legs, head facing down. I soon found out she was the woman's younger sister. Something inside me softened, seeing her in such misery. Her heart was mangled, barely clinging to hope. Her whole body was shaken in apprehension of what could happen.

Once the nurses arrived, all of us lifeguards ensured no one was standing around — except for the poor girl, whose name was Kristy. The nurses ran some tests. Every second we waited was a lifetime.

After what felt like hours, one of the doctors spoke to Kristy privately.

"I'm sorry for your loss."

#3 Kristy paused. Silence. Then, one by one, tears ran down her face like a waterfall.

~~She was utterly devastated and couldn't overcome the melancholy brought on by the doctor's heartbreaking words. The agony she felt was worse than her sister's. She had just lost her sister—the person who always supported her. The person who helped her overcome difficult times. The person who was always there for her. [She was utterly devastated, unable to overcome the melancholy brought on by the doctor's heartbreaking words. The agony she felt was unimaginable. She had just lost her sister—the person who had always supported her, helped her through difficult times, and been there when she needed someone most.]~~

That day, Kristy didn't just lose her sister.

She lost a part of herself — a part that now lived only in her memory.