English Paper 2 Question 3

The Source Text (Text 1)

Read this modern non-fiction article about storm chasing in Tornado Alley, USA.

Chasing the Beast

The sky above the plains of Oklahoma did not look blue; it looked bruised. It was a deep, sickly shade of violet-green that signalled only one thing to veterans of the plains: the atmospheric recipe was complete. We sat in the reinforced steel cabin of our modified truck, the engine idling like a restless animal, waiting for the first sign of a rotation. Around us, the air had turned dead and entirely unmoving—the eerie, breathless calm before the sky decides to tear itself apart.

Suddenly, the radio crackled into life with a burst of static. "We've got a touchdown three miles north!" the dispatcher shouted, his voice strained to breaking point.

My driver, Jonas, slammed his foot onto the accelerator. The truck roared forward, plunging directly into a wall of blinding, torrential rain that hammered against the windshield like gunfire. Visually, the world vanished. There was only the white sheet of water and the violent, rhythmic slapping of the wipers. And then, as abruptly as entering a tunnel, we punched through the rain wall.

There it was.

It was a monolithic black pillar, twisting between heaven and earth with terrifying grandeur. It didn’t just spin; it breathed, swallowing up sections of soil, trees, and telephone poles, spitting them out into a swirling halo of debris. The sheer scale of the tornado choked the horizon. But it was the sound that struck me most. People always say a tornado sounds like a freight train. They are wrong. It sounds like a living, roaring entity—a chorus of a thousand screaming voices compressed into a single, deafening hum that vibrates right through the floorboards of your vehicle and deep into your chest cavity.

Jonas yelled something over the din, but his words were utterly swallowed by the storm. I checked the radar screen on the dashboard; the bright red hook echo was right on top of us. We were too close. The wind began to claw at the edges of the truck, tilting the multi-ton vehicle sideways. Fear, cold and sharp, spiked through my veins. Yet, staring out into the spinning vortex, I felt an intoxicating surge of awe. Nature was putting on its most violent, beautiful show, and we had front-row seats to the apocalypse.

The Exam Question

Question 3:
Analyse how the writer uses language and structure to interest and engage the reader.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text. **[15 marks]**