Dear Diary,

It was no surprise that the Japanese gardens were like palaces of nature and colour. (a beautiful simile!) With that much greenery and serenity, nothing you’ve ever seen would even compare to the beauty that these gardens show in the four seasons. (a wonderful opening!)

In the sweet spring, the water is mixed with the soft cherry blossom petals and the soft (I wouldn’t reuse the word ‘soft’ here. Maybe you could use ‘delicate’ instead) breeze, leaving trails of ripples behind. Colourful fish would always dominate the crystal waters as the sunlight reflects the surface, making it look like a mix of watercolour pens. Every time you (I like this second person ‘you’, it really involves the reader!) set foot onto the spiralling patterns of the polished pebbles, the golden goddess (this is a lovely metaphor, but I feel I’ve seen you use it in other writing. Could you come up with an entirely new one?) could feel your wonder and share a bit of ~~it’s~~ (its) light, making the pebbles glisten and glow. You would feel like you were stepping on an array of gemstones. (gorgeous!)

The summer brings not just the obnoxious heat, but roaring thunderstorms that shower~~s~~ the gardens with minute droplets of water. After the saturated sunrises, (I love this bit of sibilance, so stunning) the rushing stream’s supply of water would become jade green, dominated with disc-like lily pads. Nevertheless, the most beautiful feature is the arched willow tree washing ~~it’s~~ (its) flowing silk hair in the streaks of water. (really beautiful personification)

The autumn has a paintbrush. (really incredible imagery) Dabbing the leaves and pillars of the temples in the Japanese gardens randomly, they leave a trail of red and orange behind. The cool breeze will always pick up (watch your tense slightly throughout) around this time, chasing the pools of water. Winter has a different approach. It yields a pencil. Sketching along the lines of every garden in Japan. Even the ruby pillars cower in its presence, being drained of its colour slowly. As the frost comes, the stream freezes over, finally, it becomes a mirror.

I hope I can visit the garden of Japan every season again sometimes. Maybe the seasons would have a different approach.

-Sisley

**Style and Content: 17/20**

**Spelling and Grammar: 7/10**

**Overall: 24/30**

**What Went Well:**

-Your imagery is stunning throughout this piece, Sisley, and I see that you’ve taken on my feedback about being original and really stretching yourself! I absolutely adore your extended metaphor and personification of, ‘The autumn has a paintbrush… Winter has a different approach. It yields a pencil.’ I think this is so advanced, and so gorgeous. Well done!

-You use some great techniques such as sibilance and alliteration; I particularly like the phrase, ‘saturated sunrises’. I think this creates a really tranquil atmosphere, which you have captured so successfully.

-Your choice to write some of this in the second person, ‘you’ is fabulous! It really draws the reader in, so they feel like they’re standing in the gardens you are describing. Well done!

**Even Better If…:**

-There’s still a few grammar issues, such as switching into present tense (personally, I would have started in present tense and stayed that way for this one!). Also, make sure you fully read and take on my feedback, as you’re still struggling slightly with, ‘its’ and ‘it’s’. Just be vigilant when writing!

-I would love to see you using more juxtaposition and oxymoron in your work! These are phrases or word couplets that contradict each other, such as ‘painfully beautiful’ (oxymoron). You’ve used some juxtaposition, such as the stark contrast between the ‘roaring thunderstorms’ and the ‘cool breeze’, but I’d love to see you emphasising this, and making it very clear that these contrasts exist within a scene. These techniques are so impressive, and an examiner would love to see them used!

-You definitely come up with some very original pieces of description and imagery, but there are still moments that feel reused. I’ve pointed out the word ‘soft’ being switched out for ‘delicate’, but metaphors such as ‘golden goddess’ for the sun are slightly overused. Instead, could you say something like ‘angel of light’ or ‘the moon’s blazing brother’. This originality will capture the mind of your examiner, and make your writing truly enjoyable and imaginative!

Overall, outstanding work!