Exercise 5

Read the information. Then complete the IELTS Speaking Part 2 response with the correct forms of the verbs in brackets. Watch the video and check your answers.

Using incorrect verb tenses is one of the most common mistakes made by students in the IELTS Speaking test. It is vital that the majority of the sentences that you produce in the test are error-free in order to achieve a higher band.

OK, the person I'm going to talk about is David Mitchell. I _____ **(start)** by saying that I'm afraid I _____ **(not / know)** much about the background of David, except that he is from the UK, that he once _____ **(work)** as an English teacher in Japan and that he has a son who suffers from autism. But I suppose the important question is, what is it that he does that is creative? Well, he is a novelist. In fact, he is an acclaimed prize-winning author, and I think he _____ **(publish)** about seven novels – well, seven that I know of, anyway – and many short stories, too.

Two of his novels _____ **(be)** among my favourite novels of all time. One is called *Cloud Atlas*, a set of stories from different times and places together that are interconnected in interesting ways. It almost feels like several different types of literature in the same novel. However, my favourite novel of his is called *Bone Clocks*, which is a kind of science fiction story that _____ **(follow)** the life of one character from childhood to old age. I really couldn't put

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it down. In fact, it was so good that as soon as I finished reading it, I _____ **(start)** it again.

Anyway, so turning to why I _____ **(admire)** David. I guess first and foremost it is for his writing ability. All the books of his that I _____ **(read)** were real page-turners, combining original and, at times, highly intricate plots with very convincing and compelling characters who the reader could emotionally invest in. That, I would say, is his talent – to take you on a roller-coaster ride through another world and keep you entertained throughout and rooting for the characters. I would even go so far as _____ **(say)** that he is one of the greatest living novelists in the world today. OK, so that's it really.

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