

Section 4

Answer one question from this section, 7 or 8 or 9

7. Read this extract from a review of the film *I, Robot* and then answer the questions that follow it.

I, Robot is a “high-tech thriller” loosely based on a story by the sci-fi writer Isaac Asimov. As you would expect, it’s set in the future (Chicago, 2035), but not one in which the main achievement of mankind has been the ending of war, famine or disease. No, in this brave new world, they’ve managed to resolve another ancient and pressing problem of mankind: finding good home help. Thanks to robot helpmates, it’s a perfect world for house owners who take pride in their home. In this future, everyone wants a robot of their own – except Del Spooner (Will Smith).

Spooner is a man who does not fit in with this modern world. He wears old-fashioned trainers and listens to old-fashioned music on an old-fashioned CD machine. He may sound like a young fogey, but he’s a black homicide cop, the kind who swaggers around in a leather jacket like a cool street dude but is good to his granny and takes no jive from the rich and powerful. He’s a cop who suffers from bad dreams and has a bad attitude, especially when it comes to robots. Spooner hates them.

His prejudice becomes a problem when he’s called upon to solve the mysterious death of Dr Alfred Lanning (James Cromwell), the creator of a new generation of robots (the NS-5 Automated Domestic Assistant) that is about to be launched by US Robotics. On the eve of the launch, Lanning’s body is found on the lobby floor of US Robotics’ headquarters. Spooner, suspects Lanning was murdered – by a robot. This strikes everyone, especially Spooner’s boss, as pure fantasy mixed with prejudice, because everyone knows that, according to the “Three Laws of Robotics”, robots are programmed so they can’t hurt humans. Even Spooner has to admit there’s no record of a robot ever committing a crime. But when a robot called Sonny (voiced by Alan Tudyk) runs from the crime scene, Spooner enlists Dr Susan Calvin (Bridget Moynahan) – a kind of robot shrink – to help track him down. Things get out of hand when the new generation of robots starts to rebel.

I, Robot is one of those films that make a fantastic trailer, but disappoint as a film. Don’t get me wrong – it has some great moments, as when we see Spooner trying to find his robot suspect in a warehouse full of identical robots standing in rows.

- (a) Explain the term “high tech thriller”.

(5 marks)

- (b) The review describes Del Spooner, the main character in the film *I, Robot*. Based on your reading of the review, do you think you would find the character interesting or enjoyable? Give a reason for your answer. (5 marks)

- (c) From your reading of this review give **two** reasons why you would **or** would not like to see this film. (8 marks)

- (d) Write a review of a **film** you have studied. (12 marks)

