

COMPRÉHENSION

1. Who is the main character?

The main character is Amit.

2. In which country was he born? Justify by quoting from the text.

He was born in America / the USA. ll. 22-23 “people always assumed that he’d been born and raised in that country and not in Massachusetts.”

3. Explain how the main character is connected to the following places:

a) Langford is his new school / the boarding-school he was sent to when his parents went to

Delhi.

b) Winchester is the town where he used to live and go to school before Langford.

c) Calcutta is the city where his relatives live.

d) Delhi is the city his parents moved to.

e) Massachusetts is the state where he was born.

4. What do we learn about his parents (origin, occupation, social status)?

His parents are of Indian origin.

His father is a well-know doctor / famous eye-specialist / renowned surgeon. (Ne pas accepter

“teacher” seul.)

The family is well-off / quite rich / reasonably wealthy. However, Amit’s schoolmates’ parents in Langford are much wealthier.

5. What consequences did the father’s job have on the life of his family?

Because his father was such a renowned doctor, he and his wife travelled all over the world

and moved several times to different countries. That is why they sent their son to a boardingschool / Langford.

6. In your own words, explain to what extent Langford was a new experience to the main character. Justify by quoting at least five details from the text. (40-50 words)

• Academic level: the academic level at Langford was much higher / he had to work more

to remain a good student. ll. 4-5 “Academically it was far superior to the school he’d been attending” / ll. 26-27 “At his high school in Winchester he’d been a star student, but suddenly he’d had to work doggedly to maintain his grades.”

• The customs / habits / rules of the school were different:

– pupils called their teachers “masters” l. 28 “call his teachers “masters””

– students called each other by their family name l. 36 “calling boys by their last names”

– students had to go to church on Sundays l. 28-29 “attend chapel on Sundays”

– classes had different names l. 25 “sophomore year, which at Langford was called the fourth form”

• Dress code: pupils had to wear blazers. ll. 27-28 “He had to wear a jacket every morning to

his classes” and were forbidden to wear jeans l. 37 “jeans were not allowed”.

Corrigé Bac 2010 – Série S-ES – LV1 Anglais – Métropole www.sujetdebac.fr
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- **Social class:** the children came from wealthier families. ll. 29-30 *“he learned that his parents’ wealth was laughable compared to the majority of Langford boys.”*

- **Living conditions:** He had never been to a boarding-school before / he had never been away from his parents before l. 30 *“There was no escape at the end of the day”.*

Accepter: he felt homesick. ll. 31-32 *“he was crippled with homesickness”* / l.32 *“missing his parents”* / ll. 33-34 *“He sought traces of his parents’ faces and voices among the people who surrounded and cared for him.”*

7. (ll. 35-36) *“... he had slipped as best as he could into this world, ...”*. Explain the sentence in your own words.

Even if / even though Langford was a new experience to him, he did his best to adapt to / fit into the school by becoming a member of the swimming team and by adopting the customs of the school.

8. Why had his parents chosen Langford for him? (30-40 words)

Their ambition was for him to integrate one of the top universities in America. They chose

Langford because its excellent academic achievements would give a better chance to do brilliantly at university. They wanted him to succeed.

9. (l. 39) *“Still, he refused to forgive them”*. Comment on the sentence and explain the character’s feelings. (30-40 words)

Amit found ways to cope with his new life at Langford, and to some extent ended up appreciating his new independence. Yet he blamed his parents for leaving him behind and

depriving him of their presence. He bore them a grudge and wished they had included him in the decision instead of leaving him no choice.

10. Translate from *“From Langford ...”* (l.10) to *“... used to going.”* (l.14)

From Langford, during Christmas and after each academic year came to an end, Amit went to Delhi to be with his parents,

A Noël et à la fin de / après chaque année scolaire, Amit rejoignait ses parents et quittait Langford pour Delhi,

staying in their flat full of servants in Chittaranjan Park,

où il s’installait dans leur appartement rempli de domestiques / serviteurs à Chittaranjan Park,

in a barren room set aside for his
stays.

**dans une chambre dépouillée / spartiate /
vide, réservée à ses séjours.**

He never enjoyed his visits to Delhi, **Il n'aimait pas ses visites à Delhi,**
his broken Bengali of no use in that
city.

**son Bengali imparfait / approximatif /
hésitant / son mauvais Bengali ne lui
servant à rien dans cette ville.**

It made him miss Calcutta, **Ces séjours / visites lui donnaient la
nostalgie de Calcutta,**

where all his relatives lived, **où vivait toute sa famille,**
where he was used to going. **et où il avait l'habitude d'aller.**