

Corrigé

Compréhension

1. The six members of the narrator's family are:

- The narrator's mother and stepfather: Bob;
- The narrator's aunt: Betty;
- The narrator's brothers: Kevin and Tommy;
- The narrator's big sister: Kwan.

2. At the beginning, the scene is set in the customs area at San Francisco airport where the family has come to fetch and welcome the narrator's big sister, Kwan.

3. They expected to see a young, very slim, charming but shy teenage girl.

- "She'll probably be shy... And she'll be skinny as a beanpole."

In fact, she didn't look like what they had in mind. She looked strange and was badly dressed. She looked like an old lady. She was short and plump, very talkative and at ease.

- "...looked like an old strange lady, short and chubby, not exactly the starving waif Mom pictured or the glamorous teenage sister I had in mind."
- "She was dressed in drab gray pyjamas."
- "Kwan was anything but shy."
- "... still hooting and laughing, she jumped and squealed."

4. Kwan gave the narrator a small cage of wooden straw with a grasshopper in it. The narrator was scared by the animal which looked like a menacing monster to her and as a result she threw the present and started to cry.

5. The mother takes advantage of Kwan's presence to alleviate her mother's duties and to make the most of her free time and devote herself to her new husband, Bob as if they were on a honeymoon. Kwan plays the role of a baby-sitter and even takes the role of the narrator's mother; she becomes a surrogate mother for the narrator.

6. The narrator resented Kwan's presence and the role she played because she felt she was abandoned by her mother. Because of Kwan's behaviour, which she finds stupid, she also often felt embarrassed and ashamed.

7. The sentence reveals that the narrator was not pleased with the new situation at all. We may think the relationship between the narrator and her mother became tense and worsened with time. They were not as close as they probably were before Kwan arrived since the mother didn't take care of her daughter any longer.

8. The children were all sitting on the front lawn when two of Kevin's friends came unnoticed onto the property and turned the water on, consequently the sprinklers started to water the lawn.

Everybody had run away before getting wet as they had heard the sound of the water running in the system before it started, except Kwan who stayed on the lawn and who got soaked to the skin.

9. Je me souviens du jour où, pour la première fois, il me vint à l'esprit de me débarrasser de Kwan. C'était l'été, quelques mois après son arrivée/ sa venue/ après qu'elle fut arrivée.

Kwan, Kevin, Tommy et moi étions assis sur la pelouse devant la maison attendant que quelque chose se passe / arrive. Deux amis de Kevin se faufilèrent près de la maison et mirent le système d'arrosage automatique en marche/ en route.

Expression

1. *Ne pas oublier de présenter la travail sous la forme d'un dialogue (guillemets, changement de ligne chaque fois qu'un des protagonistes prend la parole, éventuel passage narratif quant à l'attitude ou à la réaction de tel ou tel personnage.) Compte-tenu des sentiments du narrateur envers Kwan, sa réaction sera très certainement plus amusée que celle des autres.*

2. At first, I would like to say that leaving one's home-country is quite a difficult decision to take whatever the reason. There would probably be many causes if I had to do so. Perhaps one of them would be to follow the person I love. Another reason would be to escape economic woes or religious persecution in my native country or even to apply for political asylum as it is often the case for many immigrants. The boring routine of everyday life could be another reason which could account for my desire to emigrate to another country. For all these different reasons, I think I would feel a strong wish to break away from my roots and my country and I would feel like starting anew and trying to adapt to another country. I would certainly go and settle in a land where people share about the same culture and values as mine so it would be easier to fit in there. I do not have a precise country in mind but it would certainly be a western country.

Of course I would miss a few things and it would be painful and hard to give up my way of living and to abandon my family surrounding. France is the place where I have my roots. Furthermore, I would certainly miss my relatives and my friends.

Moreover, once in a new country, I would have to adapt to new customs. At first, I would certainly have difficulties in starting from scratch. I would be torn between two cultures and two different ways of thinking. Anyway, before taking such a decision it is worth weighing up all the pros and cons. But I think that in spite of all the difficulties I might encounter, I would be ready to take the decision if I had to.