

Correction Bac 2011 Série L

This is a suggested correction, some points may be elaborated or discussed with your teacher...

I. Comprehension – Expression

1. The narrator went to a good American University, (l.1) “attended an Ivy League college » « after high school” but only for a short time , line1 'less than one term' (*one term = 3 months*). So he was approximately 18 or 19 according to the average age of people who attend college in the US. He says he was then (l.7-8) “only that year’s token poor kid, imported from a small New Hampshire mill town” so he came from a modest, working class family living in a small industrial town of a small northern state.

2.

a. In October 1958, he was admitted to an Ivy League College.(line1)

b. In December 1958, he ran away from school and returned home. (line 10)

c. During the Christmas holidays of 1958, he stayed with his family working as a salesman in a clothing store.(line 25)

d. In January 1959, he left home and arrived in Florida.(line 19-23)

e. At the end of 1959, he was married and lived in central Florida.(lines 1 -2)

3. The narrator, who comes from a poor family, was (l.5) “rewarded” for his very good results in high school, he was a high achiever or a 'whiz kid' consequently he obtained a scholarship (a grant), (l.5-6) “with an academic scholarship as fat as the starting quarterback’s at a Midwestern state university”.

4. a) When he was at college, he felt to be a misfit because he was with “elegant, brutal” (l. 7) students who had got into college not only thanks to their academic achievements but because most of them were the sons of successful business men. He was also frustrated because he had to sleep alone in a dormitory room while the others were allowed to share a room with a friend. He didn't feel he belonged there.

b) He decided to leave school because it was too much for him to bear. (l. 9)

c) His family and the people he knew were shocked and disappointed with his decision. They thought he had lost a lifetime opportunity and that he had let everyone down, including himself, by dropping out of college.(line 19 - 23)

5. a) During the narrator’s childhood, his father had abandoned his mother and her three children to run away with another woman. (Line 29 - 31)

b) As the eldest child, his family had expected him to succeed in his studies and earn a living in order to provide well for his family, thus compensating for his father's abandoning them. Indeed he was to get revenge for his father's bad treatment by becoming a success.

6. Instead of feeling regret when he left his family he felt relieved probably because of their high expectations. Having made the final decision to free himself of his obligations it was his chance to start a new life and to finally do what he really wanted, to live his own life and accomplish his own dreams.

7. CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

1. One year later, the narrator goes back home and has to confront his family. Imagine the conversation.

A dialogue. Look at the text and decide what sort of questions and explanations could be made by the characters involved.

His mother would want him to tell her why he left and what he had done, she may reproach him for his attitude, or she may have realized he had done the right thing to go away as he had found a wife.

2. "...now I can start to dream my own dreams, not everyone else's." To what extent is it important to fulfil one's dreams?

What sort of dreams do we have and why ?

How important is it to achieve them ? Can we feel frustrated if we can't do everything we should like to ? Why ?

Give examples to illustrate your answer, you can talk about your personal experiences or those of someone you know...

II. Suggested Translation.

Par une nuit enneigée de décembre, seul dans ma chambre (ils n'avaient pas jugé convenable pour moi d'avoir un camarade de chambre, ou peut être qu'aucun profil ne correspondait au mien), je mis mes vêtements et quelques livres dans un sac de toile, attendis que la plupart des lumières du campus soit éteintes, traversai discrètement le couloir, passai l'entrée principale et descendis la colline en laissant derrière moi les dortoirs en briques du XVIIIe siècle et les salles de classe avant de me retrouver devant le grand boulevard, où les grandes résidences étudiantes néoclassiques se succédaient sous des ormes anciens.

NB : No real problems but a need for general knowledge of the American way of life. Look up the vocabulary in a dictionary..