

**CORRECTION: William Boyd The New confessions  
COMPREHENSION**

**corrigé**

1. Where does the scene take place?

**It takes place at Donald's house, in the library. 2X0.5 pt**

2. Give the narrator's name and say how old he was when he met Donald for the first time.

**Johnny. 0.5 pt**

**He was seven years old when he met Donald for the first time. 1 pt**

3. At what moment of the day does the scene take place? Justify your answer with two quotations.

**in the evening, (after dinner time) 1 pt**

**• line 3 : 'dinner dishes' 1 pt**

**lines 37/38 : darkening summer evening. 1 pt**

4. '*I should have shown you these*' (line 12). What exactly does '*these*' refer to?

**these are photos of the narrator's mother. 2 pts**

**Read from line 14 to line 21.**

5. a) What do '*I looked at her as if for the first time*' and '*a slim small-breasted woman*' reveal about the way the narrator considers his mother?

**He doesn't consider her as his mother, but as an attractive young lady / stranger.**

**2X2 pts**

b) Further down in the text, pick out a phrase confirming your answer.

**lines 14/15 : ' I looked at her as if I were a groom in an arranged marriage  
contemplating his distant bride.' 2 pts**

**(ou line 42 : 'this pretty young stranger.')**

c) Why does the narrator see his mother that way?

**She died the day he was born so he never knew her. 2X2 pts**

6. '*It was strange too ..... limber*' (lines 19-21). What does the narrator realise about his father?

**The narrator is surprised to discover his father as a young man, as a man in love with a woman. 2X2 pts**

**From line 22 to line 33 :**

7. a) What are the three different things the narrator learns from Donald?

**He learns that his father asked Donald to take pictures of his mother. She came to Donald's house. She came several times. (Accepter également: his mother, his father and Donald went on excursions together) 3X2 pts**

b) Explain what's going on in the narrator's mind at that stage.

**He can feel his mother's presence in the house. He starts realising something strange has happened, picturing his mother in Donald's house (bonus pour without his father) and he can't help feeling strange about it.**

**Exiger 2 éléments. 2X2 pts**

**Read from line 34 to the end**

8. a) " 'I offered the album to your father after she....' Donald said. 'But he didn't - said he couldn't bear to have it.' "

There are words left unsaid in these sentences. Find them and rewrite the sentences.

'I offered the album to your father after she **died**' Donald said. 'But he didn't **want / accept / take / it - he** said he couldn't bear to have it. ' **1.5 pt**

b) What is Donald's state of mind and how does the narrator interpret it?

**Donald is unable to pronounce the verb 'die'. He must be very sad, remembering her death. He deduces that Donald was in love with his mother. **6 pts****

9. In your own words:

a) Say what this discovery represents in the narrator's life. (50 words)

**This discovery represents his first adult secret. He feels he is no longer a child. As he has understood the nature of the relationship between his mother and Donald, he feels very proud. What is more, he is pleased with being able to keep his secret. This discovery symbolizes a passage from childhood to adulthood.**

**Exiger quatre éléments. 4X2.5 pts**

**Bonus pour : the narrator shares a secret with his mother and is closer to her than he has ever been. +1 pt**

b) Explain the change it caused in his relationship to his father.

**It enabled him to understand / accept why his father was distant and unpleasant with him.**

**2X2 pts**

10. How would you account for the father's attitude to his son? (30 / 40 words)

**He may resent his son for being responsible for his wife's death. He may also suspect that Johnny is not his son but Donald's. **2X3 pts****

**Accepter également : he may be angry with his wife because he suspects she had an affair, and as Johnny looks like his mother, he is angry with him too.**

11. Focus on the narrative.

To what extent do '*I remember*' (lines 1-2) and '*I remind you*' (line 39) justify the title of the book?

It's a first person narrative in which the narrator is talking about himself to somebody (you). He is looking back on his past (remember).

Exiger 3 éléments. 3X2 pts

12. Imagine the reasons that led Donald to show the narrator the album on that particular day. (100 words) 15 pts (5X3 pts)

Johnny being 13, he is old enough to know the truth about relationship between Donald and his mother.

He may feel some kind of remorse and can't go on living with that secret;

He may want the boy to feel less concerned by his father's coldness towards him;

Being a motherless child is not easy, and he may want to help the narrator to build up his identity;

Donald doesn't want to keep the album, perhaps because the memories are too painful.

## TRADUCTION

Translate the passage from line 22 ('Donald explained....') to line 33 ('... Washington DC 1954.')

### Accepter le tutoiement.

1. Donald explained that my father had asked him to take my mother's portrait. **6 pts**  
**Donald expliqua que mon père lui avait demandé de faire le portrait de ma mère.**
2. They had had several sessions, which explained the number of studio shots **9 pts**  
**Il y avait eu plusieurs séances / ils avaient organisé plusieurs séances, ce qui expliquait / justifiait le nombre de prises en studio**
3. (he used an empty upstairs bedroom as a makeshift studio, he said). **6 pts**  
**(il utilisait / se servait d'une chambre vide / inoccupée à l'étage comme studio de fortune, dit-il / expliqua-t-il).**
4. 'You mean she came here, was in this house?' **6 pts**  
**'Vous voulez dire qu'elle est venue ici, dans cette maison?'**
5. 'Many times' **3 pts**  
**'De nombreuses fois'**
6. I felt an odd tautening of my spine. I looked over my shoulder. **9 pts**  
**Je sentis un étrange frisson me parcourir l'échine / le dos. Je regardai par dessus mon épaule.**
7. I tried to see my mother in this room. **6 pts**  
**J'essayai d'imaginer ma mère dans cette pièce.**
8. I felt strange. **3 pts**  
**Je me sentis tout chose. / Cela me fit une drôle d'impression. Je me sentis bizarre.**
9. I turned back to the album. **6 pts**  
**Mon attention se porta à nouveau sur l'album.**
10. The other pictures came from excursions and jaunts they all three had taken as friends. **9 pts**  
**Les autres photos avaient été prises au cours / lors d'excursions et de balades / de virées auxquelles les trois amis avaient participé. (ne pas pénaliser : en tant qu'amis)**
11. There must have been fifty or sixty photographs in all. **6 pts**  
**Il devait y avoir cinquante ou soixante photos en tout / au total.**
12. (Donald gave the album to me. **3 pts**  
**(Donald me donna l'album.**
13. It became one of my most treasured possessions **6 pts**  
**Il devint l'un de mes biens / l'une de mes possessions / les plus précieux / précieuses**
14. and I kept it with me through all my travels and ordeals over the years **9 pts**  
**- et il m'accompagna pendant des années dans tous mes voyages et dans toutes les épreuves / péripéties / tous mes moments difficiles**  
**ou**  
**- et il m'accompagna dans tous mes voyages et toutes les épreuves que je traversai au fil des années.**
15. until a thief stole the suitcase in which it was contained from my hotel room in Washington DC in 1954). **9 pts**  
**- jusqu'à ce que, en 1954, un voleur ne dérobe / dérobât la valise dans laquelle il se trouvait dans une chambre d'hôtel de Washington DC).**  
**ou**  
**- jusqu' au moment où, en 1954, un voleur me dérobe la valise dans laquelle il se trouvait dans une chambre d'hôtel de Washington DC).**

**corrigé**

**Récapitulatif du texte de William Boyd**

**COMPREHENSION**

1. 1 pt
2. 1.5 pt
3. 3 pts
4. 2 pts
5. a. 4 pts (2X2 pts)  
b. 2 pts  
c. 4 pts (2X2 pts)
6. 4 pts
7. a. 6 pts (3X2 pts)  
b. 4 pts (2X2 pts)
8. a. 1.5 pt (3X0.5 pt)  
b. 6 pts (2X3 pts)
9. a. 10 pts (4X2.5 pts)  
b. 4 pts (2X2 pts)
10. 6 pts (2X3 pts)
11. 6 pts (3X2 pts)
12. 15 pts (5X3 pts)

Total : 80 pts

**EXPRESSION**

60 pts

**TRADUCTION**

60 pts

(Total des pts obtenus sur 96. Diviser par 1,6 pour ramener la note sur 60 pts.)

**TOTAL SUR 200**