

Character Motivation

Directions: Read the boxed passage from the short story “The All-American Slurp.” In the passage, the narrator remembers the first time that her Chinese family went out to an American restaurant. For the questions that follow, circle the **best** answer. Then explain your reasoning.

... As any respectable Chinese knows, the correct way to eat your soup is to slurp. This helps to cool the liquid and prevent you from burning your lips. It also shows your appreciation.

We showed our appreciation. *Shloop*, went my father. *Shloop*, went my mother. *Shloop*, *shloop*, went my brother, who was the hungriest.

The lady harpist stopped playing to take a rest. And in the silence, our family’s consumption of soup suddenly seemed unnaturally loud. . . .

It was too much. “I need to go to the toilet,” I mumbled, jumping to my feet. . . . I splashed cold water on my burning face, and as I dried myself with a paper towel, I stared into the mirror. In this perfumed ladies’ room, with its pink-and-silver wallpaper and marbled sinks, I looked completely out of place. What was I doing here? What was our family doing in the Lakeview Restaurant? In America?

—Lensey Namioka, “The All-American Slurp”

1. Why do the narrator’s family slurp the soup?
 - a. The family comes from a cultural tradition where slurping is polite.
 - b. The family want to be the center of attention.
 - c. The mother, father, and brother want to embarrass the narrator.

My Reasoning: _____

2. Why does the narrator go to the bathroom in the restaurant?
 - a. She goes to the bathroom because she ate too much.
 - b. She goes to the bathroom because she has burned her lips.
 - c. She goes to the bathroom because she is embarrassed.

My Reasoning: _____

3. Why does the narrator splash cold water on her face?
 - a. She has a fever and doesn’t want to appear sick.
 - b. She is upset and wants to calm down.
 - c. She is crying and wants to clean off her tears.

My Reasoning: _____