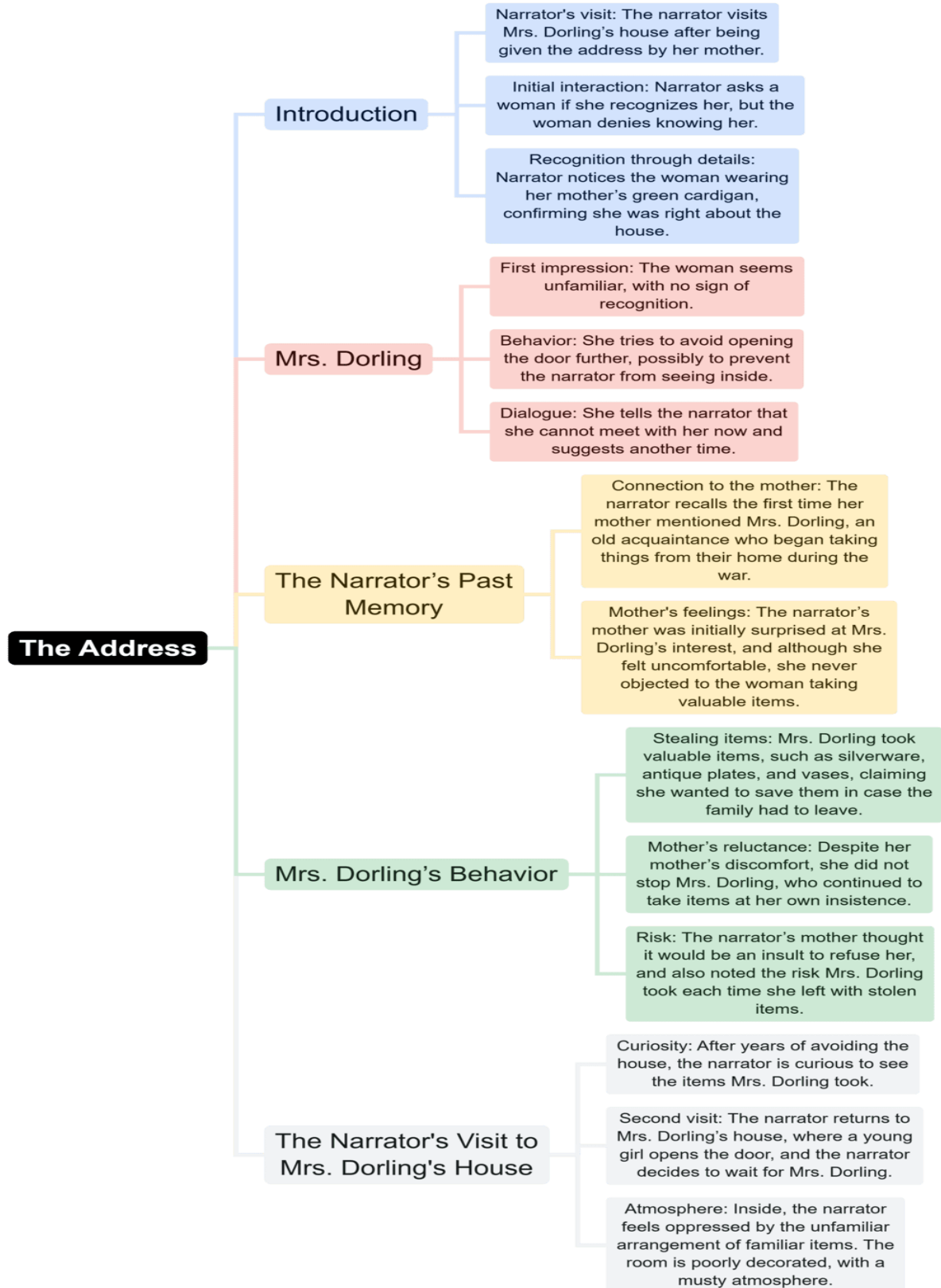




INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH (2026-27)
CLASS – XI
QB- ADDRESS

MIND MAP



INTRODUCTION- "The Address" is a short story by Marga Minco. It explores the emotional aftermath of war, human greed, and the painful process of letting go of the past.

KEY PLOT POINTS

- **Pre-War Trust:** An acquaintance named Mrs. Dorling visits the narrator's mother and takes away their valuable belongings (silverware, antique plates, table-utensils) under the pretext of keeping them safe during the war.
- **The First Visit:** After the war, the narrator returns to Holland and goes to **Number 46, Marconi Street**, to find her things. Mrs. Dorling opens the door wearing the narrator's mother's green cardigan, but coldly pretends not to recognize her and refuses to let her inside.
- **The Second Visit:** Driven by a desire to see her old things, the narrator goes back. Mrs. Dorling's daughter lets her in.
- **Disillusionment:** Inside the living room, seeing her family's precious items arranged in a tasteless, strange environment makes her feel uncomfortable. The objects lose their emotional value in an alien setting.
- **The Resolution:** The narrator decides to leave it all behind and resolves to forget the address, realizing that material things cannot bring back her dead mother or her past life.

MAJOR THEMES

- **Aftermath of War:** Highlights how war destroys lives, displaces families, and leaves survivors with deep emotional scars.
- **Human Betrayal:** Exemplified by Mrs. Dorling, who selfishly exploits a wartime crisis to steal belongings, assuming the family would never return.
- **Memory and Detachment:** Shows that memories reside in people and feelings, not in dead objects that lose meaning when stripped of their context.

MAIN CHARACTERS

- **The Narrator (The Daughter / Marga Minco):** A young Holocaust survivor who returns after the war to look for her dead mother's belongings. She is emotional at first, but later decides to forget the address and move on from the painful past.
- **Mrs. S (The Mother):** The narrator's warm, trusting mother who gave her valuable antique possessions to an old acquaintance for safekeeping during the war, unaware of the woman's true intentions.
- **Mrs. Dorling:** An old acquaintance of Mrs. S living at House Number 46, Marconi Street. She is greedy, selfish, and cold, taking advantage of the war chaos to steal and keep the family's valuable belongings.
- **Mrs. Dorling's Daughter:** A 15-year-old girl who is polite, innocent, and hospitable, completely unaware that the items in her house actually belong to the narrator's family.

Character	Traits	Role in the Story
Narrator (Jewish girl)	Sensitive, thoughtful, nostalgic, resilient, emotionally attached to memories	She returns after the war to reclaim her family's belongings, but realizes material objects cannot replace emotional bonds or heal the trauma of loss.
Mrs. Dorling	Practical, cold, selfish, opportunistic, lacking compassion	An old acquaintance of the narrator's mother. She takes away their valuables during the war under the pretext of safekeeping, but refuses warmth or empathy afterward.
Narrator's Mother	Trusting, kind-hearted, unsuspecting	Entrusted family belongings to Mrs. Dorling during the war, believing they would be preserved for her children. Represents the lost warmth and security of home.
Mrs. Dorling's Daughter	Innocent, polite, curious	Lets the narrator into the house in her mother's absence. She unknowingly reveals the narrator's old possessions arranged in their home.

CENTRAL IDEA OF THE ADDRESS

The central idea of *The Address* is the futility of clinging to material possessions after the loss of loved ones. Through the narrator's visit to Mrs. Dorling's house, Marga Minco shows how objects once tied to warm memories become meaningless in a new, unfamiliar setting. The story highlights the trauma of war, displacement, and human insensitivity, stressing that true comfort comes from memories and emotions, not from reclaiming things. It underlines that while war may strip people of their homes and belongings, the deeper loss is the emotional connection that no material object can ever restore.

MESSAGE-The core message of *The Address* by Marga Minco is that war brings immense human suffering, displacement, and loss. It highlights the futility of clinging to material possessions, teaching us that memories and peace of mind matter more than dead objects from the past.

- **Impact of War:** Shows how conflicts destroy homes, separate families, and leave deep emotional scars on survivors.
- **Material vs. Emotional Value:** Material things lose their meaning and warmth when separated from the loved ones who once used them.
- **The Decision to Let Go:** The narrator chooses to forget the address (46, Marconi Street) and move on because holding onto old items only brings back painful memories.

Assertion and Reasoning Questions

Directions: In the following questions, a statement of Assertion (A) is followed by a statement of Reason (R). Choose the correct option: (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A. (b) Both A and R are true but R is NOT the correct explanation of A. (c) A is true but R is false. (d) A is false but R is true.

1. **Assertion (A):** The narrator was certain she had arrived at the correct house during her first visit. **Reason (R):** The woman who opened the door was wearing the narrator's mother's green knitted cardigan.
2. **Assertion (A):** Mrs. S was grateful to Mrs. Dorling for taking away their precious belongings. **Reason (R):** Mrs. Dorling was a selfless friend who wanted to ensure the items were safe from the war.
3. **Assertion (A):** During the second visit, the narrator felt "horrified and oppressed" while sitting in the living room. **Reason (R):** The familiar objects were arranged in a tasteless manner and the room had a muggy smell.
4. **Assertion (A):** The narrator resolved to forget the address, 46 Marconi Street. **Reason (R):** She realized that the items had lost their emotional value once they were severed from their original life.
5. **Assertion (A):** Mrs. Dorling was an old friend of the narrator's mother. **Reason (R):** She was an acquaintance who only renewed contact when the war in Holland was about to break out.

1. Read the extract and answer the questions:

"Perhaps I was mistaken. I thought, perhaps it isn't her. I had seen her only once, fleetingly, and that was years ago. It was most probable that I had rung the wrong bell."

- **Q1:** Why did the narrator initially think she had rung the wrong bell?
- **Q2:** Identify the word in the extract that means "for a short time."
- **Q3:** What confirmed to the narrator that she was, in fact, at the right address?

2. Read the extract and answer the questions:

"I was home for a few days and it struck me immediately that something or other about the rooms had changed. I missed various things. My mother was surprised I should have noticed so quickly."

- **Q1:** What specific changes did the narrator notice in her home during the war?
- **Q2:** Who was responsible for the "missing" things, and what reason did she give?
- **Q3:** What does the mother's surprise reveal about her character compared to the narrator's?

3. Read the extract and answer the questions:

"I was in a room I knew and did not know. I found myself in the midst of things I did want to see again but which oppressed me in the strange atmosphere."

- **Q1:** Explain the paradox "knew and did not know."
- **Q2:** Which specific item in the room had a "burn mark" that helped the narrator identify it?
- **Q3:** Why did the narrator choose not to wait for Mrs. Dorling after seeing these things?

4. Read the extract and answer the questions:

"She had a broad back. 'There is my daughter,' said my mother. She beckoned to me. The

woman nodded and picked up the suitcase under the coat-rack."

- **Q1:** Describe the physical appearance of the woman as noted by the narrator.
- **Q2:** What was the significance of the "suitcases and bags" the woman constantly carried?
- **Q3:** What address did the mother tell the narrator to remember at this moment?

5. Read the extract and answer the questions:

"Of all the Nicest things I can do is to forget the address. Forgetting is forgiving. Forgiving is a noble virtue."

- **Q1:** Why did the narrator conclude that forgetting the address was the "nicest" thing to do?
- **Q2:** How does this resolution show a transformation in the narrator's character?
- **Q3:** Based on the sources, what does "forgiving" imply in the context of the narrator's experience with Mrs. Dorling?

Assertion and Reasoning Answer Key

1. **(a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.**
 - *Explanation:* The narrator confirmed she was at the right house specifically because she recognized her mother's green knitted cardigan with its faded wooden buttons
2. **(c) A is true but R is false.**
 - *Explanation:* While Mrs. S was grateful and believed Mrs. Dorling was "saving" her things, the reason is false because Mrs. Dorling was actually a greedy acquaintance who used the items for herself
3. **(a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.**
 - *Explanation:* The narrator felt oppressed because the familiar objects were arranged in a tasteless, ugly way in a strange atmosphere with a muggy smell
4. **(a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.**
 - *Explanation:* She resolved to forget the address because the objects had lost their value once they were severed from the familiar life of former times
5. **(d) A is false but R is true.**
 - *Explanation:* Mrs. Dorling was not an "old friend" but an "old acquaintance" whom the mother had not seen for years until she suddenly reappeared before the war

Reference to Context Answer Key 1. Extract 1 (Ringing the wrong bell):

- **Q1:** She had only seen the woman once, very briefly (fleetingly), many years ago.
- **Q2:** Fleetingly
- **Q3:** Seeing the woman wearing her mother's **green knitted cardigan**

2. Extract 2 (Things changed at home):

- **Q1:** She noticed that **various things were missing** from the rooms
- **Q2:** **Mrs. Dorling**; she claimed she wanted to **"save"** their nice things from being lost in the war

- **Q3:** The mother is portrayed as **simple and trusting**, while the narrator is more **observant and skeptical** of Mrs. Dorling's motives

3. Extract 3 (Room I knew and did not know):

- **Q1:** She "**knew**" the room because it contained her mother's belongings, but she "**did not know**" it because the items were in a strange, tasteless, and oppressive atmosphere
- **Q2:** The **woollen tablecloth**, which had a **burn mark** on the edge that had never been repaired
- **Q3:** The items had **lost their real value** for her because they were **severed from their original life** and stored in such an ugly way

4. Extract 4 (The woman with a broad back):

- **Q1:** She had a **broad back**, wore a **brown coat**, and a **shapeless hat**
- **Q2:** The suitcases and bags were filled with the narrator's family's **precious belongings** (silver, antique plates, vases) that she was taking to her own house
- **Q3:** **Number 46, Marconi Street**

5. Extract 5 (Resolution to forget):

- **Q1:** Because the objects no longer had the same meaning and only triggered **painful memories** of a life and family that no longer existed
- **Q2:** It shows a shift from being **trapped by the past** to having an **optimistic, forward-looking view** to start a new life
- **Q3:** In this context, forgiving implies **letting go of the resentment** toward Mrs. Dorling and the "**sour past**" to make the future easier

SHORT ANSWER QUESTION

Question 1: How did Mrs Dorling react when the narrator said, m Mrs S's daughter?"

Ans: Mrs Dorling put her hand on the door as if to stop it opening any further. Her face showed no sign of recognition and she stared at the narrator in silence without speaking.

Question 2: What two reasons did the narrator give to explain that she was mistaken?

Ans: First, she thought the woman might not be Mrs Dorling since she had seen her only once and that was years earlier. Second, she considered the possibility that she had rung the wrong bell.

Question 3: How did the narrator conclude that she was right?

Ans: The narrator recognised her mother's green knitted cardigan and noticed the pale wooden buttons from frequent washing. When Mrs Dorling saw the narrator looking at the cardigan she half hid herself behind the door; that behaviour convinced the narrator that she had reached the correct address.

Question 4: What was the outcome of the interview between Mrs Dorling and the narrator?

Ans: The meeting failed for the narrator. Despite her repeated requests, Mrs Dorling refused to see or speak with her and effectively shut the narrator out.

Question 5: Who had given the narrator the address, when and under what circumstances?

Ans: The narrator's mother gave her the address years earlier, during the first half of the war. The narrator had returned home for a few days, noticed some things missing from the rooms and, in the course of explaining, her mother mentioned Mrs Dorling and told her the address.

Question 6: What did the narrator learn about Mrs Dorling from her mother?

Ans: She learned that Mrs Dorling was an old acquaintance of her mother who had not been seen for many years, but who had suddenly reappeared and renewed contact; she was the person who took some of the mother's possessions to her home for safekeeping.

Question 7: The story is divided into pre-War and post-War times. What hardships do you think the girl underwent during these times?

Ans: The story is based on the pre-War and post-War period. The family of the girl was rich before the war and they had valuable possessions in their house. When the war started, Mrs. Dorling established contact with them and started visiting them again. She started taking the possessions with her whenever she would visit as she believed if they would leave the place, such things should not be wasted. The girl suffered a lot, her mother died and she had to live in a rented place. She found it really difficult to go back to the place where her childhood was spent and she wanted her belongings back. When she went to meet Mrs. Dorling, she noticed how the things were arranged in a tasteless manner. She could no longer connect to them and she lost her interest in them and partly she was afraid. The girl finally decided to leave the house and forget the address.

Question 8: Why did the narrator of the story want to forget the address?

Ans: Mrs. Dorling kept the valuable items in her house until the war was over as she didn't want them to lose during the war in case they decided to leave the place. Her mother gave her the address of Mrs. Dorling '46, Marconi Street'. She remembered the address and decided to visit her anyway. She was afraid to visit the place again as it brought back many past memories. When she saw all the possessions, they were arranged in a tasteless manner and she lost interest in them. She could not connect with the things and thought that she would not stay at the house any longer, she would destroy the good memories she had with those items. She finally decided to forget the address and not to go back to that place.

LONG ANSWER QUESTION

Q1. 'The Address' is a story of human predicament that follows war.' Comment.

Answer. Yes, it's quite aptly said that 'The Address' is a poignant story of human predicament that follows war. The story appears to be about the loss of a young girl after the war in Holland. Mrs S's daughter led a very happy and peaceful life with her family during the pre-war period. She had large vases, silver cutlery, antique plates, crockery, Hanukkah candle-holder, pewter plates, and a white pot with a gold border on the lid in her home. To put it another way, the girl had nothing to complain. Then the fatal war broke out, and a mysterious old acquaintance named Mrs Dorling, who lived at Marconi Street No. 46, appeared out of nowhere. She 'assisted' the protagonist's mother in keeping their household belongings safe. She took all of their belongings to her own house and never looked back. Losses for the poor girl were also unafraid to fall on her.

War wreaked havoc on her not only material but also emotional life. She had lost all of her relationships, her home, and everything else associated with her happy past life. She felt like

a lost soul when she went to look at her old possessions. She was so depressed that she left the place, never to return. War made her so severe that she resolved to erase the address from her memory.

Q2. Give a pen portrait of the narrator.

Answer. The narrator lives in Holland. Her life has changed dramatically since the liberation war. She enjoyed a happy life with her family. She had all the belongings in her house to make life comfortable and cozy. The liberation war in Holland brought a sea-change in her life. She used to have everything to cling to; relatives and possessions; now she doesn't. She even had to leave her house. She now lives in a rented small room, attempting to tie up the loose ends of her life. Following the war, life had resumed its normal course. She became curious to see and touch her old belongings that were safe in-house No. 46 on Marconi Street. She took a train and went there. Mrs. Dorling, on the other hand, refused to acknowledge her. The girl had no choice but to return. But again, she tried. Mrs Dorling's fifteen-year-old daughter opened the door this time. The narrator discovered her old familiar things lying in an unsightly manner in a strange environment. She was shocked and oppressed. She made the decision to forget her past and begin her life anew with a rented room and less cutlery. The narrator's final resolve talks about her optimistic view about life. Life has to go on. Better forget the sour past to make your future a bit easier.

Q3. Who was Mrs Dorling? What did the narrator learn about her from her mother?

Answer. Mrs Dorling was an old friend of the narrator's mother, Mrs S. While the narrator was away at college, Mrs. Dorling unexpectedly called upon the old friend. She gained her friend's trust. She was interested in her friend's belongings. She must have mentioned that she might lose all of her silver and antiques during the war. She proposed taking the risk herself. She transported all of those items to her home in bags and suitcases. During one of her visits, the narrator learned about Mrs Dorling and her address. She remembered the address her mother had given her. She wanted to see, touch, and remember her mother's belongings at the end of the war. So, she visited Mrs Dorling's house but got a very cold welcome. The dishonest Mrs Dorling kept all precious things to herself.

Q4. Describe the narrator's first visit to Marconi Street, No. 46.

Answer. After the liberation, the narrator returned home. Even though she had lost interest in her old possessions, she still desired to see, touch, and remember them. She took the train to Marconi Street and knocked on House No. 46's door. Mrs Dorling pushed open the door. She was taken aback to see the visitor come to life after the war. Mrs S's green knitted cardigan was on her. She was filled with remorse. She refused to speak to the narrator for even a second. Inside, her own daughter was present. But the narrator's door was shut, and she walked back to the station with a heavy heart.

Q5. What were the narrator's experience and reaction when she went to Mrs Dorling's house a second time?

Answer. During her first visit to Marconi Street, the narrator had a bad experience. Mrs Dorling gave her a cold shoulder. But the narrator's desire to see and touch her belongings did not fade. She decided to try a second time. Mrs Dorling's daughter opened the door this time. The mother had left. Her daughter led the narrator inside a room. The narrator found herself in the midst of familiar things which were scattered in a tasteless way all around. The sight oppressed her. The candle holder and the woolen tablecloth caught her eye. In that small, musty room, she noticed her mother's beautiful tea set and silver cutlery being used by that family. Mrs Dorling had no idea how to use those priceless items. All those things

oppressed her now. She decided to leave the house at the earliest. Her belongings brought back memories of her previous life, and she was now living in a small rented room. So she resolved to forget her belongings as well as Mrs Dorling's address.

Q6. Give a brief character-sketch of Mrs S's daughter.

Answer. The narrator was a young Jewish girl living with her mother in Holland. When World War II broke out, the Nazi army began evacuating all Jews from Europe. The narrator and her mother became very insecure. During this time, an old friend of Mrs S befriended her and offered to keep all of her valuable possessions in her safe custody. Mrs S was a noble and trusting lady. She allowed Mrs Dorling to take away her precious antiques and cutlery etc. The narrator had some doubts about Mrs Dorling but her mother silenced her. The narrator survived the war and returned to her hometown. Now her mother was dead, her house belonged to someone else and she had no worldly possessions. Still, she was content to be alive and attempting to build a life for herself. One day she felt an urge to go to Mrs Dorling's house and see all her mother's precious belongings. But when she discovered that Mrs Dorling had kept all of her mother's beautiful possessions in a deplorable manner and was even using them, the narrator lost all interest in them. She returned to her own rented room, feeling detached, and decided to restart her life. She was a strong and self-assured young lady. She did not want to live in her past glory. She wanted to live in the present.

Q7. Write a brief note on Mrs Dorling.

Answer. Mrs Dorling was once a friend of Mrs S. However, the two were not in contact. They both had a daughter. Mrs Dorling was a cruel, greedy, and dishonest woman. She gained Mrs S's trust and carted away all the table silver and valuable antiques to her own home. She had assumed that the narrator and her family would not return alive from the war. The sight of the narrator at her doorstep gave her a shocking surprise. She refused to let the narrator into her home. She dejectedly sent her away. When she saw the narrator arrive at her door, she became concerned that the narrator would see all of her mother's valuables and demand that they be returned. Mrs Dorling was a thief and a jerk. In fact, when she offered to take away all of Mrs S's antiques and valuables to keep in her safe custody, her intention was not at all honourable. She had every intention of grabbing everything. She was certain that Mrs S and her family would not survive the war.

Q8. Describe the narrator's first post-War meeting with Mrs Dorling.

Answer. Mrs Dorling did not recognise the narrator when she knocked on her door and introduced herself as Mrs S's daughter. She held the door open, indicating that the narrator was not welcome. She stared quietly at the narrator for a while, realizing that it was not the person she had been looking for. The narrator noticed her wearing her mother's green knitted cardigan when Mrs Dorling let her in. When the lady noticed her staring at the cardigan, she hid herself partially behind the door. When the narrator mentioned her mother, she stated that she had assumed that no one who had left would return. The lady expressed regret at her inability to do anything for the narrator but the narrator insisted on talking to her, having come all the way for it. However, the lady refused to talk to her, claiming it was not a convenient time, the narrator had no option but to leave.

Q9. Contrast the character of the narrator's mother and Mrs Dorling.

Answer. The narrator's mother was a woman who could be trusted. Mrs Dorling, an old acquaintance who had unexpectedly appeared and renewed their contact, had become a regular visitor, she told her daughter. The mother did not doubt her kindness and was obliged that she insisted on taking all her nice things with her to save them. The mother was

concerned that Mrs Dorling would get a crick in her back from carrying the crockery and heavy vases. She was irritated when the narrator expressed her scepticism. Mrs Dorling, on the other hand, was an opportunist. She re-established contact primarily to take the narrator's mother's antiques. When the narrator returned after a long absence, she made her feel unwelcome because she did not want to part with the items that had belonged to the narrator's mother. She was rude and brusque to the narrator and refused to let her into the house.

MCQ'S

Unlike Mrs. Dorling, her daughter was _____ towards the author.

- A. rude
- B. mature
- C. hospitable**
- D. mean

What was the protagonist's reaction when she entered the living-room?

- A. Thrilled
- B. Emotional
- C. Nervous
- D. Horrified**

"I was in a room I knew and did not know." What does author mean by this?

- A. She saw familiar things but in unfamiliar surroundings**
- B. She saw unfamiliar things but in familiar surroundings
- C. She did not recognize the things she saw
- D. She did not want to remember anything

How does the author describe the living room?

- A. Muggy smell
- B. Strange atmosphere
- C. Sophisticated
- D. Both (A) and (B)**

In what condition did the author find the living room?

- A. Haphazard**
- B. Well arranged
- C. Empty
- D. Old fashioned

According to the author, when do we notice the things in the house?

- A. When they are out of our sight**
- B. When they are used
- C. When they are shown
- D. All of the above