

**A Real Durwan:
Reading Questions and Retelling the Story**

Name _____
Date _____

Reading / Study Questions:

Who is the narrator?

Whose inner thoughts can the narrator see?

Who is Boori Ma? What are her living conditions?

What does she spend her time thinking about / talking about?

What is the story of her past?(70-3)

How do the other residents view Boori Ma? (70-1)

What is a "real Durwan"?

When Mr. Dalal brings home two washbasins, what is the effect on the building?
(77-80)

What is the effect of the washbasins on Boori Ma? (77-80)

Why does Boori Ma leave the building? What happens while she is gone? (81)

Why does Jhumpa Lahiri emphasize the stairs and the roof?

Quilts and blankets appear several times in the story. Why might Lahiri have included these as a motif? (73, 74, 75, 79, etc.)

Another possible motif is the broom, as it appears several times – especially significant is that it appears at the beginning and ending of the story. Why?

What do you believe is one message present in this story? Think about the title as you formulate your ideas.

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Retell Boori Ma's story through a: found poem, rap, spoken word poem, monologue, etc. Work with a small group.

1. Decide who is the storyteller. Boori Ma? Outside, neutral storyteller? Mr. Dalal? The residents? Multiple storytellers?
2. Include 3 details, facts, images, words, phrases from EACH page of story
3. Look for parallel structure, symbols, flashbacks, repetition, metaphors, images, etc.
4. Use the language of the story and examples of techniques in final product!
5. Make sure there is a refrain / message that somehow repeats to emphasize one part of the story
6. Come up with an appropriate title.

The story appears on pages 70-82. Include at least 2-3 details (words, images, phrases, ideas) from each page. Your final product should be 26-39 lines.