

# *You Should Have Seen the Mess* – Language

## **Language**

The I-narrator relates her story in a very assured and self-confident way. She is entirely convinced of her point of view and there is no hint of her questioning her position even though she must feel rather isolated. Only her parents seem to support and understand her.

## **Lorna's formal speech**

“*facilities*” (243) = a very formal word referring to the toilets

“It was my *duty* to make tea, mornings and afternoons.” (243)

“Mr Heygate’s *concern* was *flourishing*.” (243)

“I also kept in with [the Darby’s] for *the opportunity of meeting people*.” (244)

“The Leary family, which the Council *evicted* from our block” (244)

“A bath once a week was *sufficient*.” (245)

“I could wait for a man *in a better position*.” (245)

## **Opposites**

### **old, dusty, unclean**

“Grammar School” (242)

“Old-established firm” (242)

“old box files” (243)

“an old orange box” (243)

“cracked cups” (243)

“old-fashioned” furniture (244)

“a fourteenth-century cottage [...]

cracked and old” (246)

“The furniture was far from new.” (246)

### **modern, clean, tidy**

“Secondary Grammar School [...] was only constructed the year before”. (242)

Dad regularly re-modernises the kitchen. (243)

Low’s Chemical Co. is located in a “modern block”. (244)

“The typewriters are the latest models.” (244)

“contemporary furniture” (246)

“The suite is new” (247)

### **educated**

“I have had some certain experiences, with educated people.” (242)

“I have met other people, of an educated type” (244)

### **uneducated**

“[Mr Marwood] is well spoken, although he has not got a university education behind him.” (244)

## **Humour**

Humour is especially evident whenever Lorna feels embarrassed. Consider the following two passages:

“One day, [...] Mavis [...] put her head out of the window, and shouted to the boy, ‘John stop peeing over the cabbage at once. Pee on the lawn.’ I did not know which way to look.” (245)

“Mavis said, ‘Isn’t [her mother’s cottage] charming, Lorna?’ If that was a joke, it was going too far. I said to the old Mrs Darby, ‘Are you going to be re-housed?’ [...] Then old Mrs Darby said, ‘My dear, I shall be re-housed in the Grave.’ I did not know where to look.” (246)