

■ Activity III (Character Sketch)

- ◆ Pick out the words used by the author to describe the character of Maggie.

Appearance

- thirteen years old
- anxious figure
- large eyes

Attitude towards others

- respectful
- caring
- poorly dressed

Qualities/Traits Your opinion about the girl

- hard-working
- disciplined
- polite
- an excellent character
- loves her relatives
- superstitious

- ◆ Establish the above points with the help of related evidence from the text, and sketch the character of Maggie.

In this story, Maggie is described as a young girl possessing an excellent character. She appears to be about thirteen or fourteen years old. Her large eyes have a sad expression. She is poor, but very polite in her manners. She is anxious to know whether the narrator was an Indian and inquires about him with the cashier. Later, when she meets the narrator directly, she expresses her anxiety about her brother working as a soldier in India. She wonders whether her information about India as a land of tigers, snakes and fevers is right. She invites the narrator to her home and introduces him to her mother. She also shares her mother's faith in the crystal ring

sent from India. When her mother becomes ill, she takes leave from the office to look after her. She requests the narrator to gaze at the crystal once more and tell her mother that her brother is alive and well, although it is a false claim. By doing so, she ensures the well-being of her mother. When the news of her brother's death comes, Maggie sacrifices a hard-earned shilling for buying flowers to be laid on her brother's grave. Thus, she proves herself to be a loving and caring girl.