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Class 12 English Notes

THE LAST LESSON



Key Notes and Important Questions with Answers

PROSE SECTION – TEXT BOOKS

FLAMINGO

1. The Last Lesson

The lesson highlights the importance of mother tongue that helps the people of a country to come together for a bigger cause. It's human tendency to procrastinate (to postpone things for tomorrow) and realise the importance of things when they are snatched. M. Hamel the French language teacher ignites patriotism among the students and refers mother tongue as a key to their freedom

Points to Remember

- notice on the Bulletin Board about the war front.
- crowd gathered
- school quiet
- no sound of desks, lessons, teacher's ruler
- did not scold / spoke quietly.
- M. Hamel wore green coat, frilled shirt, black silk-cap.
- announced last lesson in French, German to be taught.
- villagers, Hauser, Postmaster, others on back benches.
- everyone working very quietly.
- only sound heard was the scratching of pens over paper.

Franz's Reaction to Last Lesson in French

- shocked surprised and realised that he had not learnt the language, wished he had not wasted time.
- felt sorry, repented for wasting time.
- appreciated M. Hamel, felt sorry for him
- wanted to impress M. Hamel but fails in his recitation of participle rules.
- understood presence of villagers.
- to thank master
- to show solidarity for the country.
- repenting for not attending the school.

M. Hamel made the Class realize they were

- reluctant to learn, postponed learning
- parents sent them to work
- himself sent students to water his plants.
- all to blame for the situation
- too late to make amendments
- no time to make up for lost time
- Germans would laugh at their inability to speak French

Main Characters

1. M. Hamel

- sincere French teacher, teaching French for the last 40 years.
- knows subject very well
- passionate about French
- considers French - clearest, most beautiful and logical language.
- feels language as a key to guard oneself.
- proud of being French
- upset by occupation of Alsace by Germans
- attached to town, School & People.
- particular about discipline and learning
- last day made students to exercise on all aspects of language.
- blamed himself for being selfish.
- emotional, could not utter a word at the end of the class

2. Franz

- sensitive, honest
- blames himself for ignoring lessons
- feels greatly embarrased after the announcement by M. Hamel about the lesson being the last lesson
- filled with a deep sense of regret.
- pays the utmost attention to every word

- fears that even the pigeons would have to coo in German
- understands feelings of Hauser
- a good observer, notices changes
- empathizes with M. Hamel
- understands M. Hamel's emotions, accepts him with his faults.
- The Last Lesson – becomes the most memorable lesson for him.

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions in about 30-40 words each :–

1. Why was Franz reluctant to go to school?

Ans. His French teacher said that he would ask questions on participles He had not prepared and learnt the rules about participles.

2. Why had M. Hamel put on his fine Sunday clothes?

Ans. The order from Berlin stated that only German would be taught in schools and not the French language. M. Hamel knew that it was his last French lesson. It was honour of the last lesson that he had put on his fine Sunday clothes which he put on inspection and Prize Distribution Day.

3. Why were the villagers sitting there in the back of the classroom?

Ans. The villagers - Old Hauser, postmaster and several others were there in the classroom because it was their way of showing respect for their country and thanking M. Hamel for his forty years of faithful service. They too felt sorry that they had not been to school.

For Practice :

1. For Franz, what was more tempting than going to school and why?
2. Why was M. Hamel sad and emotional on his last day at school?
3. How were the parents and the teacher responsible for the lack of interest for studies among students?
4. What is the significance of the last words written on the Black board by M. Hamel?
5. How does M. Hamel appreciate their mother tongue? Why?
6. "These words were thunderclap for me." What was the impact of thos words on little Franz ?

Long Answer Type Questions / Extrapolation Question

1. Our language is a part of our culture and we are proud of it. Describe how regretful M. Hamel and the village elders are for having neglected their native language.

Ans. **Value Points**

- according to the latest order from Berlin, only German was to be taught in the schools of Alsace & Lorraine
- this affected everyone badly as everyone was repenting on having wasted the time and not learning French
- M. Hamel felt guilty for sending his students for his personal tasks
- the parents of the students never bothered and sent children to work on a farm or at mills
- elders showed regret too – they neither learnt French themselves nor did they encourage their children
- of course, M. Hamel, villagers and even Franz - all were honest enough to accept the mistake of neglecting French language

2. Write a Speech for your morning assembly on the topic "Significance of lanuage / Mother Tongue in our Life"

Value Points

- language empowers countrymen, binds together
- Better understanding of the Subject-matter
- used as a weapon to fight a cause, shows strength of nation
- better expression
- everyone should feel proud of one's mother tongue.

3. Write an article on 'The Need of Patriotic Feeling' among the youth as we feel modern youth lacks in patriotic spirit for motherland.