

Questions and Answers of The Last Lesson

LONG-ANSWER QUESTIONS:

Q.1. The people in the story suddenly realize how precious their language is to them. What shows you this? Why does this happen?

Ans: The story was written in the days of the Franco-Prussian war in which France was defeated by Prussia. In this story the French districts of Alsace-Lorraine have passed into Prussian hands. M. Hamel is the teacher of French and a boy, Franz who never serious in the class of M. Hamel. One day he was late for school. He feared that his teacher would scold as he was not very sure about participles which the teacher, M. Hamel, is going to test that day. But finally he decided to go to school. As he entered he saw the crowd has gathered round the bulletin board. He did not stop there. On arriving at school, he noted an unusual silence. He entered into the class and was greeted with a strange sight. The last benches which were always empty were occupied by the village elders who look grim and solemn. Franz noticed M. Hamel was dressed nicely and asked Franz to sit so that he could start his lesson. The teacher made a startling announcement that this would be their last lesson in French as the new teacher would be arriving the following day. He said, “The order has come from Berlin to teach only German in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. The new teacher comes tomorrow. This is your last French lesson. I want you to be very attentive.” There came a sudden change in the minds of the people and they developed a new profound love French. Franz was overcome with a feeling of remorse and regretted for wasting his time in trivial pursuits. He decided to pay attention to the lesson since school had become very important for him. The people and Franz himself realized how precious their language is to them. M. Hamel had been teaching in that school for last forty years. His dedication, devotion, discipline impressed them. He realizes the real worth of his school and the teacher whom they have all taken for granted all these years. M. Hamel in his last address told about the importance of French. He called that it was the most beautiful language in the world. It is the clearest and the most logical one. M.Hamel was overcome by strong emotions and in large letter he wrote on the board ‘Viva La France’ – long live France!

Q.2 Franz thinks:’ “Will they make them sing in German, even the pigeons?” What could this mean?

Ans: The Alsace and Lorraine districts were under the regime of France. During the FrancoPrussian war in which France was defeated by Prussia led by Bismarck and both these districts have passed into Prussian hands. Earlier they were learning their own language, French. As per new set up, an order was passed that German was to be taught in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine.M. Hamel who had been teaching the French for the last forty years. In his last lesson he told that from the next day in the schools of both districts would teach only German instead of French from a new teacher. They won't be learning their own most beautiful, clearest and logical language. He told the importance of their own language, this feeling of M. Hamel aroused their patriotic feelings. There came a sudden change in Franz. He disliked learning German. He heard and saw the pigeons. He immediately remarked:

“Will they make them sing in German, even the pigeons?” It is meant that the German can impose German language on the people of Alsace and Lorraine but they can’t impose this language on the birds etc. They can enslave the people but have no authority to compel the cooing pigeons.

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS:

Q.1. What was Franz expected to be prepared for school that day?

Ans. Franz was expected to be prepared the topic of ‘participles’ for school that day. But he did not know even the first word about them. So he was under great dread of being scolded by his teacher, M.Hamel.

Q.2. What did Franz notice that was unusual about the school that day?

Ans: Franz noticed that it was all so still, calm and quiet like Sunday morning while on other days there used to be a great hustle and bustle. The same could be heard out in the street. The opening and closing of the desks, lesson repeated in unison very loud. But on that day the school looked so strange.

Q.3. Why was there a crowd in front of the bulletin board set up at the town hall?

Ans: It was set up for all kinds of information and news for the public. For the last two years, the people received all the bad news from there like the news of the lost battles and the orders of commanding officer etc. When Franz was passing the Town Hall, he saw a large crowd in front of the bulletin board reading the news which stated that the German would be taught in the districts of Alsace and Lorraine.

Q.4. How did the teacher describe the French language? Or What was the advice of M. Hamel about the importance of the French language?

Ans: M. Hamel was very dedicated teacher of French language. While teaching his last lesson, he touched upon many aspects of French. He called it the most clear and logical language in the world. He urged all to guard it and never to forget it. In case they hold fast in their language, they had the key to their prison.

Q.5. How did M. Hamel teach his last lesson in the class?

Ans: It was the last day of M. Hamel in school. He was in his fine dress. The villagers had come there to pay their last respects. M.Hamel taught his lesson on French so decently that the students realized French is an easy language. At last he became emotional. He could not speak, he dismissed the school with writing on the blackboard, “Viva La France.”

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS:

Q.1. What was the narrator's greatest fear as he moved towards the school?

Ans: Franz had started late for school and thus was afraid of being scolded . His fear gripped him further for he was also unprepared. He had not learnt his lesson regarding the rules of participles and thus dreaded the teacher's anger.

Q.2. What was more tempting to Franz rather than going to school?

Ans: The weather was pleasant, warm and bright. The chirruping birds were inviting him, the soldiers drilling in the field were also outdoors and Franz was not prepared with participles.

Q.3. What was the news which was put up on the bulletin board?

Ans: For the last two years all bad news – the lost battles, the orders of the commanding officer was displayed on the notice board. That day, the news that only German would be taught in school of Alsace and Lorraine was displayed on the notice-board which made the crowd gather there to read the news.

Q.4. What was so unusual about the school on that day?

Ans: Usually there would be a great bustle of opening and closing of the desk, lesson repeated loudly and the teacher's ruler rapping on the table but that day was very calm and quiet like Sunday morning. The back benches which were usually empty were occupied by the village people and M. Hamel wore his special dress and was pacing up and down with a ruler under his arm.

Q.5. Why were the villagers seated on the back benches?

Ans: All the village elders were seated on the back benches as a tribute to the teacher who had put in 40 years of sincere service. It was also their way of expressing regret for not learning their mother tongue when they had the chance. They were also expressing their patriotism and solidarity with France

Q.6. Franz didn't learn French whom did M. Hamel blame?

Ans: M. Hamel didn't blame Franz for not learning but his parents who were not anxious to have him learn. Instead they wanted him to work on a farm or at the mill to earn money. Even M. Hamel was also to be blamed for sending him to water the flowers instead of learning and when he wanted to go fishing he declared holiday.

Q.7. What did M. Hamel say about French language?

Ans: He said that it is the most beautiful language in the world- the clearest, the most logical. He requested them to guard it so that they can be united and fight back for their freedom.

Q.8. What happened when the church clock struck 12?

Ans: The moment the church clock struck 12 the Prussian army came to take over and M. Hamel stood up, wanted to tell something but his voice was choked. He gathered his strength and wrote on the black board as large as he could – ‘Vive La France’ and dismissed the school.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q.1. Justify the title of the story “The Last Lesson”. Value Points

Ans: People always feel there is plenty of time to learn—so also in Alsace—now no time—parents not keen—preferred children , work in farms, mill—Franz looked opportunity to escape school—never serious—receive orders from Berlin—people realize importance of their language—attend the last lesson by M. Hamel.