

Short-Answer Questions

Q.1. How was the scene in the school, on the morning of the last lesson, different from that on other days?

[CBSE Delhi 2008] [CBSE (AI) 2015]

OR

How was M. Hamel's class different the day Franz went late to school?

[CBSE (AI) 2008]

Ans. Generally, there would be a great bustle, closing and shutting of desks, lessons repeated loudly in unison, rapping of the teachers' ruler on the table, all of which could be heard out in the street. But that everything was quite different. There was no noise. All were in their seats, Franz walked in late and M. Hamel let him calmly. He then noticed that his sir was dressed in his best clothes and there were the elders of the village seated in the class. It was a bit later the Franz realised why the day was different. It was their Last French lesson.

Q.2. How does M. Hamel pay a tribute to the French language?

[CBSE (AI) 2008]

OR

What did M. Hamel tell them about the French language? What did he ask them to do and why?

[CBSE Delhi 2011, 2013C]

Ans. M. Hamel went on to talk about French language. He told that it was the most beautiful language of the world. It was the clearest and the most logical of all languages. He asked the people to guard it among themselves and never forget it. As long as people 'hold fast to their language, they have the key to freedom'.

Q.3. One order from Berlin changed the scenerio of the school. Comment.

Ans. The order from Berlin led to the announcement that French would not be taught anymore, and instead, German would be taught by a new master. This was to be their last French lesson. The class was quiet as it was a Sunday morning with no hustle and bustle. The teacher, M. Hamel was patient and calm but inwardly emotional. He was in his special dress. The sad villagers were sitting on the last benches like the other students and the teacher explained the lesson very patiently.

Q.4. “What a thunderclap these words were to me!” Which were the words that shocked and surprised little Franz?

[CBSE Delhi 2010; (AI) 2011]

Ans. M. Hamel said, “My children, this is the last French lesson. I shall give you. The order has come from Berlin to teach only German in the Schools of Alsace and Lorraine. The new master will come tomorrow. This is your last French lesson. I want you to be attentive”. These words of his teacher were a thunderclap for Franz.

Q.5. Who did M. Hamel blame for the neglect of learning on the part of boys like Franz?

[CBSE Delhi 2011]

Ans. M. Hamel blamed the parents for the neglect of learning of French language as they engaged the boys in farm work. He also blamed himself to some extent as he too assigned the work of gardening to boys like Franz. He also gave them a holiday whenever he wanted to go fishing.

Q.6. “This is your last French lesson.” How did Franz react to this declaration of M. Hamel?

[CBSE Delhi 2010]

OR

How did Franz react to the declaration that it was their last French lesson?

[CBSE Delhi 2013]

Ans. The announcement made by M. Hamel left a great impact not only on Franz but all the other citizens. Franz was shocked to hear that M. Hamel was leaving and that it was his last lesson. He realised that he would not be able to read and speak his own mother tongue and regretted his lack of interest and carelessness.

Q.7. How did M. Hamel say farewell to his students and the people of the town?

[CBSE (AI) 2012]

Ans. M. Hamel looked very pale and tall when he stood up in his chair. All the students were quiet. The village people—old Hauser, the former Mayor, the former postmaster and several others were present in the school room. The teacher told the villagers that French was the most beautiful language in the world. He ended the lesson by writing Vive La France on the blackboard. He made a gesture with his hand to indicate that the school is dismissed and students could go home.

Q.8. Why had the bulletin board become a centre of attention during the last two years?

[CBSE Delhi 2010]

Ans. For the past two years, the news of lost battles, the draft and the orders of the commanding officer were displayed on the bulletin board. People thronged the bulletin board to read all this information. This was the reason why it had become a centre of attention.

Q.9. What was tempting Franz to keep away from school ‘that morning’?

[CBSE Delhi 2010C]

Ans. Franz was supposed to learn participles as part of his schoolwork, which he had not done. Therefore he was afraid of being scolded by M. Hamel. Also he wanted to spend the day outdoors as it was warm and bright. The sight of the chirping birds and the Prussian soldiers drilling appealed to him more than the rules of participles.

Q.10. What was unusual about M. Hamel’s dress and behaviour on the day of his last French lesson?

[CBSE Delhi 2010C]

Ans. Whenever Franz arrived late, he was met by an angry teacher. This time however, he was astounded when he was welcomed by a kind and polite M. Hamel. This was quite contrary to his nature. Moreover, he was dressed in his best clothes, a beautiful green coat, frilled shirt and an embroidered black silk cap, which he wore only on inspection and prize days.

Q.11. Why had M. Hamel put on his fine Sunday clothes? Why were the old men of the village sitting there in the back of the classroom?

OR

Who occupied the back benches in the class room on the day of the last lesson? Why?

[CBSE Delhi 2015]

Ans. The back benches were occupied by the people of the village. Old Hansar, who had on his three Cornered hat, the former Mayor, the former post master and several other elders.

They had come to express their respect and regard for M. Hamel and sorrow that he had to leave from their midst.

Q.12. How did Franz perform when his turn came to recite? How did M. Hamel react?

Ans. Franz’s name was called and he was asked to recite. Despite his best efforts, he got mixed up on the first words. He stood there holding on to his desk. His heart beat fast. And he did not dare to look up. M. Hamel told him in a polite tone that he would not

scold him as he was not the only one who neglected learning French. Many others in Alsace shared his fate because of procrastination. He said that every one had a great deal to reproach themselves with.

Q.13. “We’ve all a great deal to reproach ourselves with.” Why did M. Hamel blame the parents and himself too for not showing due attention and care to the learning of French?

Ans. M. Hamel did not hold Franz responsible for neglecting the learning of French. Most people of Alsace only pretended to be Frenchmen. But they could neither speak nor write their own language. The parents were not anxious to have them learn. They preferred to put children on a farm or at the mills to earn a little more money. He even held himself responsible as he often sent his students to water his flowers instead of learning their lessons. He also used to give a holiday whenever he wanted to go fishing.

Q.14. What does M. Hamel say about French language? What did he urge upon his students and villagers to do?

Ans. M. Hamel talked at length about the French language. He considered French to be the most beautiful language in the world. It was the clearest and most logical language too. He urged his students to guard it among themselves and reminded them never to forget it.

Q.15. How does M. Hamel prove to be an ideal teacher?

[CBSE Sample Paper 2015]

Ans. M. Hamel brings home the message of importance of love of mother tongue and patriotism. He explains things well and asks students to continue learning French even when he is gone. Hence he proves to be an ideal teacher.

Q.16. How was M. Hamel dressed differently that day? Why?

[CBSE Sample Paper 2015]

Ans. M. Hamel wore a green coat, frilled shirt and black silk cap to the class. He announced that it was their last lesson in French and that German will be taught in the school in the future. He was proud of being French and was upset by occupation of Alsace by Germans. He was very attached to the town, the school and its people.