

PROSE SECTION – TEXT BOOKS

FLAMINGO

1. The Last Lesson

Points to Remember

- Notice on the Bulletin Board about the war front.
- Crowd gathered
- School quiet
- No sound of desks, lessons, teacher's rule M. Hamel.
- Did not scold / spoke quietly.
- 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, realised that he had not learnt the language, wished he had not wasted time.
- Felt sorry, repented for wasting time.
- Appreciated M. Hamel, accepted him with his faults.
- 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 amends
- 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 do 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 embarrassed 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
- is 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. After the order from Berlin had come, that only German would be taught in schools and not French 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 Houser, 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 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?

Long Answer Type Questions

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 to 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 language / Mother Tongue in our Life"

Value Points

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