

THE LAST LESSON

Brief Introduction

'The last lesson ' written by Alphonse Daudet narrates about the year 1870 when the Prussian forces under Bismarck attacked and captured France. The French districts of Alsace and Lorraine went into Prussian hands. The new Prussian rulers discontinued the teaching of French in the schools of these two districts. The French teachers were asked to leave. Now M. Hamel could no longer stay in his old school. Still he gave the last lesson to his students with utmost devotion and sincerity as ever.

One such student of M. Hamel, Franz who dreaded French class and M. Hamel's iron rod, came to the school that day thinking he would be punished as he had not learnt his lesson on participles. But on reaching school he found Hamel dressed in his fine Sunday clothes and the old people of the village sitting quietly on the back benches. It was due to an order from Berlin. That was the first day when he realized for the first time that how important French was for him, but it was his last lesson in French.

The story depicts the pathos of the whole situation about how people feel when they don't learn their own language. It tells us about the significance of one's language in one's life for the very existence of a race and how important it is to safeguard it.

Main points

1. Franz is afraid of going to school as he has not learnt participles.
2. Wants to enjoy the beauty of nature - the bright sunshine - the birds chirruping in the woods - Prussian soldiers' drilling but resisted.
3. On reaching school Franz notices: unusual silence - Villagers occupying the last benches - teacher well dressed – everybody looked sad.
4. M. Hamel announces: Today is the last lesson in French.

5. Franz regrets and realizes why he had not taken his lesson seriously.
6. Understands the reason why teacher is well dressed and villagers sitting at the back.
7. M. Hamel realizes that all three, he himself, the children and the parents are to be blamed for losing respect and regards for the mother tongue.
8. Hamel says: French language – most beautiful, clear and logical language in the world. Always keep close the mother tongue to your heart as it is a key to the prison of slavery.
9. Hamel becomes emotional and writes on the black board “Vive La France”
10. Franz remembers the last lesson very well.

Important Short Answer Type Questions

Q1. What was Franz expected to be prepared with for school that day?

Ans: Franz was expected to be prepared with participles that day for school, as Mr. Hamel had said that he would question them on participles.

Q2. Why was Franz tempted to play truant from school?

Ans. The French teacher M Hamel was going to ask questions on participles which Franz had not prepared. To avoid being scolded he was tempted to play truant from school and spend the day out doors in a pleasurable manner.

Q3. What was unusual about the school that Franz noticed when he entered the school?

Ans. On entering the school, Franz noticed that there was unusual silence. There was no noise of opening and closing of desks. The village elders had occupied the last benches that were always empty. M Hamel was in his very fine Sunday clothes. Everybody looked sad.

Q4. What had been put up on the bulletin-board?

Ans: Franz had a negative view about the bulletin-board as for the last two years only bad news had come from it. That day was no exception as Germans had

put up an order passed from Berlin on the bulletin-board to teach only German in the school of Alsace and Lorraine.

Q5. What changes did the order from Berlin cause in school that day?

Ans: The order from Berlin caused many changes in the school that day. The entire school seemed strange and solemn. The old villagers were sitting on the back benches of the classroom quietly to thank M. Hamel for his forty years of faithful service and for showing their respect for the country. M Hamel also had put on his best dress on that day though it was not an inspection or prize day. The order from Berlin also brought a sense of repentance for those who in spite of having time didn't learn the French properly.

Q6. How did Franz's feelings about M Hamel and school change?

Ans: Earlier Franz didn't like M. Hamel much because of his ruler and cranky nature and he would feel fear from him but now all those feelings were entirely changed for M Hamel.

The message conveyed by M Hamel about the order from Berlin was a thunderclap for little Franz. He immediately felt sorry for not being sincere in the school and for not learning the French language and other lessons properly. His books, which seemed a nuisance and a burden earlier were now Franz's old friends.

Q7. What reasons did M Hamel give for their lack of interest in learning French?

Ans. The lack of interest in learning French was:

- (a) due to the parents who wanted their children to work in farm or mill to earn,
- (b) due to the students who were reluctant to learn and often put off the lesson for the next day
- (c) and due to himself as he asked them to water the flower and gave them off when he had to go for fishing

Q8. Why doesn't M Hamel want the people to forget French?

Ans. M Hamel wanted them not to forget French as it is the most beautiful, clear and logical language in the world and as long as they hold fast to their language it would be as if they had the key to the prison.

Q9. Franz thinks, “Will they make them sing in German, even the pigeons?”
What could this mean?

Ans. The Frenchmen were highly patriotic and took a pride in their language. A strong feeling of revolt was in the air against the Germans. It shows that Franz did not accept their rule and thought that they can't tame pigeons.

Q10. Describe how M Hamel conducted the last lesson.

Ans. In his last French class though M. Hamel was emotional he fully involved himself in the teaching learning process. He heard every lesson to the last sitting motionless in the chair. When the church bell struck twelve he stood up pale and wrote ‘Vive La French’ and with a gesture he communicated that the school is dismissed.

Q11. What did M Hamel say about the French language?

Ans: M Hamel said that French language was world's most beautiful, clearest and logical language and therefore it should be guarded and should not be forgotten by them. He also added that the love with one's own language can be proven as the key to the prison for the people who are enslaved.

Q12. Why did villagers come to school that day?

Ans: The old men of the village came to the school that day to thank M Hamel for his forty years of faithful service. They also came to show their respect for the country that was theirs no more.

Q13. How did Franz find teaching and learning that day?

Ans: Franz found teaching and learning very interesting that day. He was very attentive and careful. Franz also realized that M Hamel had never explained everything with so much patience. It seemed almost as if the poor man wanted to give them all he knew before going away. M Hamel wanted to put it all into their heads at one stroke as it was their last lesson.

Important long Answer Type Questions

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Q1. How did M Hamel react when Franz failed to recite rule for the participle?

Ans. Franz's name was called to recite the rule for the participles. But he got mixed up on the first word. He was standing there, holding on to his desk, his heart beating and not daring to look up. But M. Hamel instead of scolding, he told Franz that he must feel bad enough. He said that every day we think that we have plenty of time and we will learn it tomorrow. And now you see where we have come out by putting off learning till tomorrow. Now those fellows out there will have the right to say to you, "How is it; you pretend to be Frenchman, and yet you can neither speak nor write your own language?"

Then M Hamel told Franz that only he was not to be blamed. His parents were not anxious enough to have him learn. They preferred to put Franz to work on a farm or at the mills, so as to have a little more money. M. Hamel blamed himself for it also. He said that quite often he had been sending Franz to water his flowers instead of learning his lessons. And when he wanted to go for fishing, he would just give him a holiday.

Q2. What does M Hamel tell about the significance and safeguarding of French language? How does he conclude his last lesson?

Ans. M Hamel said that French was the most beautiful, clear and logical language in the world. They must guard it among them and never forget it because when the people are enslaved, as long as they hold fast to their language it is as if they had the key to their prison.

Then M. Hamel opened a grammar and read the students their lesson. All he said seemed so easy. He had never explained everything with so much patience: After the grammar, they had a lesson in writing. M Hamel had new copies for the students, written in a beautiful round hand: France, Alsace, France, Alsace. He had the courage to hear every lesson to the very last. It seemed almost as if he wanted to give us all he knew before going away and put it all into their heads at one stroke. He wanted to say something, but he could not go on. Then he turned on the blackboard, took a piece of chalk and wrote "Vive La France!" Lastly he said: "School is dismissed—you may go."

Q3. What impression do you form of M Hamel on the basis of your study of the story "The Last Lesson"?

M. Hamel is an experienced teacher who has been teaching in school for forty years. He imparts primary education in all subjects. He is a hard task master and students like Franz, who are not good learners, are in great dread of being scolded by him.

The latest order of the Prussian rulers upsets him. He has to leave the place for ever and feels heart broken. He feels sad but exercises self-control. He has the courage to hear every lesson to the last.

His performance during the last lesson is exemplary. He is kind even to a late comer like Franz. He uses a solemn and gentle tone while addressing the students. He has a logical mind and can analyze problems and deduce the reasons responsible for it. The problem for Alsace is that it puts off learning till tomorrow.

He knows the emotional hold of a language over its users. He is a good communicator and explains everything patiently. Partings are painful and being human, M. Hamel too is no exception. He fails to say good-bye as his throat is choked. On the whole, he is a patriotic gentleman.

Q4. Franz' attitude towards school as well as towards M. Hamel changes when he comes to know about the takeover of his village by Prussians. Do you agree? Discuss with reference to the 'Last Lesson'.

Ans. The orders from Berlin to take over the village where Franz lives have been pasted on the school notice board. Only German language would be taught in the school and French teacher had to go. Franz felt sorry for not learning his lessons in French any more. His books that had seemed such a nuisance a short while ago, which he found so heavy to carry seemed to him old friends. His feelings about his French teacher M Hamel Were changed. He decided to pay attention to the lesson. The school became very important for him. The idea that the teacher was going away, genuinely upset Franz who became too serious for history and grammar. I fully agree with it as one has to take one's deeds seriously when he feels the loss of it.

Q5. Give a brief description of M Hamel.

Ans: M Hamel was a very devoted, dedicated and a strict man of discipline. Students were afraid of his cranky nature and iron ruler. He was a true patriot and a sincere teacher who dedicatedly served the school for long forty years. The heart of this true Frenchman totally broke when he received the order from Berlin to vacate his place to make the space for a new German teacher. He remained upset during his last class. This changed his behavior too and he behaved rather very politely and patiently. When Franz was not able to say his lesson correctly, he, instead of scolding him, just made him understand about the importance and relevance of learning the mother tongue. He preached everyone present in the class that important things should never be postponed as time flies very fast.

Q6. What is linguistic chauvinism? Is it possible to carry pride in one's language too far?

Ans. Linguistic chauvinism means an aggressive and unreasonable belief that your own language is better than all others. This shows an excessive or prejudiced support for one's own language. Sometimes pride in one's own language goes too far and the linguistic enthusiasts can be easily identified by their extreme zeal for the preservation and spread of their language. In their enthusiasm, love and support for their own language, they tend to forget that other languages too have their own merits, long history of art, culture and literature behind them. Instead of bringing unity and winning over others as friends, having excessive pride in one's own language creates ill-will and disintegration. The stiff resistance to the acceptance of Hindi as national language by the southern states of India is a direct outcome of the fear of being dominated by Hindi enthusiasts. The result is that "one India" remains only a slogan.

LOST SPRING.

This story narrates about the children of the bangle makers of Firozabad. The essay does so through the lives of two children, Saheb-e-Alam and Mukesh whose spring or childhood is lost in misery and poverty. Saheb is the son of two parents who migrated from Bangladesh. They came to Delhi in 1971 as their house was swept away by repeated storms. Then they began to live in Seemapuri, a slum of Delhi. Saheb like many other children of the slum was a

rag picker. They searched the rags and garbage and tried to find out coins. Sometimes they found one rupee coins and sometimes even ten rupee coins. Saheb did not attend any school as there was no school nearby. He was too poor to wear chappals. Saheb liked the game of tennis. Someone gave him a pair of tennis shoes. But he would never get the chance to play the game himself. At last, Saheb got employed in a tea stall. He was not happy as he had lost his freedom. But he had no choice in the matter.

The life of Mukesh at Firozabad was no better. Mukesh lived with his elder brother who was a bangle maker. He wanted to be a driver and a motor-mechanic, not at all eager to continue bangle making. But the people thought that it was their karam or the result of their karma in the previous birth that they were born into the caste of bangle-makers. So they were destined to make bangles and they could not do anything else. Thousands of children are engaged in bangle making and many of them lost their eyesight before becoming adults. They did not know that it was illegal for children to work in that hazardous condition in the glass factories. The story is the same in every family. Mukesh took the writer to his house where the writer came to know that his grandfather had become blind working in the factory. Similarly in another family, the author came to know how the husband was happy that he had been able to make a house for his own family to live in but the wife complained that she did not get a full meal in her whole life.

Hundreds of years of slavery had killed the initiative of people to think of a better life. They carried on their miserable life as they did not have the courage to rebel against tradition. They did not have money enough to start their own new kind of enterprise. If someone dared to start a new line, there were police, middle-men, saukars and politicians to persecute them. Police, middle-men and others would not allow them to take any other vocation. Justice after all is the right of the rich and the powerful, not of the helpless like Mukesh. The condition of the life of Saheb or Mukesh was far from desirable. It should not be allowed to continue. But some people must bell the cat. The writer was happy when he came to know that some young men like Mukesh was ready to take the plunge, rebel against tradition and start a new life.

Second story:

Raju works at a roadside dhaba for sixteen hours a day. Idrees has lost his memory and bears on his body the scars of being tortured at the carpet-manufacturing unit where he worked. Saheb scrounges the garbage dumps on the streets of Delhi for his daily wages. Munni has travelled long distances from her village home, looking for work as a domestic help in the city. Like Raju and

Idrees, Saheb and Munni, millions of children all over the country are doomed to a life of backbreaking toil. Half adult, half children, victims of physical and mental abuse, they represent the dark underbelly of India's economic growth. In *Lost Spring: Stories of Stolen Childhood*, best-selling author Anees Jung exposes a national shame: children cleaning floors and tables in shanty restaurants; making locks, slates and fireworks; rolling bidis; weaving saris and carpets; packing and hauling loads in factories and stone quarries. With her trademark sensitivity and insight, she analyses the grinding poverty and traditions sanctified by caste and religion which condemn these children to a life of exploitation. In this bleak world, the author also finds stories of resilience and fortitude-children who have refused to accept their condition, thus opening new vistas for themselves and others like them. She also documents incredible profiles in courage-individuals and institutions who battle not only governmental and bureaucratic apathy but also social values and cultural norms that support and accept the concept of child labour

DEEP WATER

Introduction

In this story, Douglas talks about his fear of water and how he finally overcomes it with strong will power, courage, hard work and firm determination. Once he took courage, the fear vanished. That shows most of our fears are baseless. Fear creates dangers where there is none. The writer's experiences further confirm the proverbial truth, "Where there is a will, there is a way."

Summary

The story, "Deep Waters" tells us how the writer overcame his fear of water and learned swimming with sheer determination and will power. He had developed a terror of water since childhood. When he was three or four years old, the writer had gone to California with his father. One day on the beach, the waves knocked the child down and swept over him. The child was terrified but the father who knew, there was no harm, laughed. The experience bred a permanent fear of water in the child's sub-conscious mind. Still another incident, more serious, increased his terror. The writer was trying to learn swimming in the Y.M.C.A. swimming pool in Yakima. One day while he was waiting for other boys, a big boy suddenly played a dangerous prank and pushed him into the water. The writer was terribly frightened. He went down nine feet into the water. When he reached the bottom, he jumped upward with all his strength. He

came up but very slowly. He tried to catch hold of something like a rope but grasped only at water.

He tried to shout but no sound came out. He went down again. His lungs ached, head throbbed and he grew dizzy. He felt paralyzed with fear. All his limbs were paralyzed. Only the movement of his heart told him that he was alive. Again he tried to jump up. But this time his limbs would not move at all. He looked for ropes, ladders and water wings but all in vain. Then he went down again, the third time. This time all efforts and fear ceased. He was moving towards peaceful death. The writer was in peace. When he came to consciousness, he found himself lying on the side of the pool with the other boys nearby. The terror that he had experienced in the pool never left him. It haunted him for years and years to come. It spoilt many of his expeditions of canoeing, swimming and fishing. It spoilt his pleasures in Maine Lakes, New Hampshire, Deschutes, Columbia and Bumping Lake etc.

But the writer was determined to conquer his terror. He took help of a swimming instructor to learn swimming. The instructor taught him various actions necessary in swimming part by part. He put his face under water and exhaled and inhaled raising it above water. He practiced it for several weeks. He had to kick with his legs a few weeks on the side of the pool. At last he combined all these actions and made the writer swim. He learned swimming but the terror continued. So deep goes our childhood experiences! So fearful is the fear of fear! Whenever he was in water the terror returned. Hence forward the writer tried to terrorize terror itself. He tried to face the new challenge. When terror came, he confronted it by asking it sarcastically as to what it can really do to him? He plunged into the water as if to defy the fear. Once he took courage the terror vanquished. He faced the challenge deliberately in various places like the Warm Lake. He conquered it at last.

Main points

1. Douglas had a desire to learn swimming since childhood.
2. At the age of three or four, he was knocked down and buried by a wave at a beach in California.
3. He developed a great aversion to water.
4. At the age of ten or eleven he decided to learn to swim with water wings at the Y.M.C.A. pool since it was safe at the shallow end.
5. While sitting alone and waiting for others to come at the Y.M.C.A. pool, a big boy came and threw Douglas into the deep end of the pool.
6. Douglas swallowed water and went straight down to the bottom of the pool.

7. While going down he planned to make a big jump upwards but came up slowly.
8. Stark terror seized him.
9. Tried to shout but could not.
10. As he went down the pool the second time he tried to jump upwards but it was a waste of energy.
11. Terror held him deeper and deeper.
12. During the third trial he sucked in water instead of air. So he ceased all efforts and he became unconscious.
13. When revived he found himself vomiting beside the pool.
14. He was in the grip of fear of water and it deprived him of the joys of canoeing, boating swimming and fishing.
15. He took help of a swimming instructor to learn swimming.
16. The instructor taught him swimming piece by piece.
17. He went to different lakes to swim and found tiny vestiges of fear still gripped him.
18. Swimming up and down the warm lake he finally overcame his fear of water.
19. He realized that in death there is peace and there is terror only in fear of death.
20. Will to live is stronger than fear of death.

Short Answer Type Questions

Q1. What had happened when Douglas was three or four years old?

Ans. When Douglas was three or four years old he was on the California beach with his father. There the sea waves knocked him down and swept over him. He felt breathless buried in the water and was frightened; but his father laughed at him.

Q2. What was the misadventure of Douglas?

Ans. One day, an eighteen year old big bruiser picked him up and tossed him into the nine feet deep end of the swimming pool. He hit the water surface in a sitting position. He swallowed water and went at once to the bottom. He nearly died in this misadventure but was somehow miraculously saved from the mouth of death.

Q3. What were the series of emotions and fears that Douglas experienced when he was thrown into the pool? What plans did he make to come to the surface?

Ans. The narrator was frightened but was still able to think. He decided that as his feet hit the bottom of the pool, he would make a big jump and come to the surface. However, when he could not manage to come to the surface, he was gripped with panic and this paralyzed his limbs.

Q4. How did Douglas finally overcome his fear of water?

Ans. Douglas overcame his fear of water by challenging the fear itself and going for several round of swimming in the pool; but finally the residual fear he overcame when he went up to Tieton to Conrad meadows and swam across the other shore and back of the warm lake as Doug Corpron used to do.

Q5. What thought of Roosevelt deeply impacted Douglas? How did he apply the thought to his life?

Ans. The thought of Roosevelt that there is terror in the fear of death, had deep impact on Douglas. He had experienced both the sensation of dying and the terror of the fear of death. But later he brushed aside his fear by challenging it by the strong will power and firm determination. He applied it and finally succeeded to overcome the fear.

Q6. How did this experience affect him?

Ans. This experience left him fearful of water for a long time. He did not want to go near the pool. He could not enjoy any water-related sport and it robbed him of the joy of canoeing, boating and swimming.

Q7. Why was Douglas determined to get over his fear of water?

Ans. Douglas was determined to get rid of this fear as he could not enjoy any of the sports that he had enjoyed earlier. His fear of water not only kept him away from the pool, but also from activities like canoeing, boating and fishing.

Q8. How was the instructor successful in making Douglas a perfect swimmer?

Ans. The instructor made Douglas a perfect swimmer by removing his fear of being drowned and teaching him swimming piece by piece in a period of three months. During the training he let Douglas swim back and forth of the pool tying him with a pulley. He taught him to put his face under the water to exhale and raise above it to inhale.

Q9. How did Douglas make sure that he conquered the old terror?

Ans. Douglas swam extensively in all the lakes that he knew, making a concerted effort to rid himself of his fear of water. He would swim long lengths, put his head under water, till all the residual fear was gone. It was at Warm Lake that he was at last able to get rid of the fear of water that had haunted him for so long.

Long Answer Type Questions

Q1. Give an account of the fears and emotions of Douglas as he made efforts to save himself from being drowned in the YMCA swimming pool.

Ans. When the author was flung into the deep end of the pool, he was overcome with fear. He was able to think rationally and planned that he would jump up as soon as he hit the bottom of the pool. He hoped that in this way he would be able to rise to the surface of the water. When this action did not produce the desired result, he tried it again but in vain. Panic seized him when he realized that he was engulfed in water that was suffocating him and abject fear immobilized him making his limbs unresponsive and heavy. His flailing arms failed to find anything to hold on to and he found himself being pulled down to the bottom. His lungs ached and his silent screams went unheard. The mass of yellow water that held him captive in its grip produced stark terror over which he had no control. When three attempts to rise to the surface failed, he fainted. He had experienced the terror that fear of death can produce.

Q2. How did Douglas overcome his fear of water?

Ans. The fear of water haunted Douglas for many years till he decided to hire the services of an instructor and started practising five days a week. The instructor devised a method by which Douglas could learn swimming without fear. Douglas was to wear a belt around his waist and attached to this was a rope that went through a pulley that ran on an overhead cable. After three months, he had begun to relax. The instructor also put him through the exercise of moving his legs in water by the side of the pool and though at first Douglas felt paralyzed and quite unable to move, with sustained effort, he soon overcame it. The instructor then felt that his job was done and that he had made a swimmer out of Douglas. He swam in different lakes and rivers and it was after he had swum in Warm Lake that he knew that he had at last conquered the fear of water.

Q3. Why does Douglas as an adult recount a childhood experience of terror and his conquering of it? What larger meaning does he draw from this experience?

Ans. Douglas, as an adult, recounts this experience as to him it was larger than just overcoming fear of water. The childhood experience of almost drowning in the pool had been a brush with death and this had produced in him a greater desire to live. The terror that he had experienced was so real to him that only he could understand the full implication of it. It had aroused in him the passion to destroy the fear that had the ability to incapacitate him to the extent that it numbed his senses and paralyzed his limbs. This fear continued to haunt him for years and strengthened his resolve to destroy it for he knew that the only way he could ever live with himself was when he had attained freedom from it. It was a personal battle that he had to win. The rigorous routine that he put himself through to overcome his fear bears testimony to his willpower, courage and determination.

Q4. People say that failures are the stepping stones. They are the best teachers. Discuss in about 125 words.

Ans. It is rightly said that failure plays an important role in a man's life. Failure in one field becomes the cause of exploring success in other fields. Failures make us familiar with our weaknesses and flaws. They become the stepping stones and inspire us to fight against odd circumstances. Man should learn from his mistakes and strive hard to reach at his destination. Most of the successful peoples failed at any step but could get their target because failures guided them and encouraged them to try harder. One should never give up one's target. It is certain that failure inspires us to work with more strength and vigour. One should never get depressed and dejected. All leaders, fighters, businessmen, bureaucrats firmly say that failures are the pillars to success.

Q5. Strong will power and firm determination ensure success in your life. Douglas wanted to learn swimming but he was afraid of water. He did not give up and finally mastered swimming. He proved that where there is a will, there is a way. Write your views in about 125 words.

Ans. Strong will power plays a vital role in our life. Firm determination and consistent hard work are the hallmarks of success. A person who has passionate desire to do something achieves his goals within the stipulated time. Will power of a human being gives him strength, energy, vigour and enthusiasm. It determines the fate of a human being. Absolute determination has the ability to face and overcome obstacles. No hindrance can defeat the will power. It is invincible and insurmountable. There is no problem in this world which has no solution. It has been proved by great personalities that all obstacles can be overcome by sheer determination. Man has the knack to achieve anything. Nothing is impossible in this world. He must not be fatalist. He should not

believe in destiny, but on *karma*. Man can accomplish every assignment if he desires. Strong desire is the prerequisite to success. There is no scope for disappointment in the life of a person who has iron will and dogged determination.

RATTRAP

Summary in detail

A rattrap peddler went around selling small ratttraps. His clothes were in rags. His cheeks were hollow. He had the look of a starved man. He made wire traps. He begged the material from stores and big farms. Sometimes he resorted to begging and a little stealing to survive. The world had never been kind to him. He had no home, no shelter.

The peddler led a lonely life. One day while he was thinking about his ratttraps, an idea struck him. He thought that the world itself was a rattrap. As soon as anybody touched it, the trap closed on them. He was amused to think of some people who were already trapped, and some others who were trying to reach the bait in the trap.

It was a cold evening in December. He reached a cottage on the roadside. He knocked at the door and asked for a night's shelter. The owner of the cottage was a lonely old crofter. He wanted someone to talk to. He welcomed the peddler. He gave the peddler hot porridge to eat, and tobacco to smoke. Then they played cards. The crofter was generous as well as trustful. He told the peddler that he had a cow and sold her milk to a creamery. He also told him that he received thirty kronors as payment the previous month. Then he took down a pouch and showed him the money. Then he put the money back in the pouch and hung it on a nail in the window frame. Next morning the peddler left. The crofter locked his cottage, and went away.

The peddler came back to the cottage. He had been tempted to steal the money that hung like a bait in the window frame. He smashed the pane and stole the money. Now he thought it was not safe to walk along the public highway. So he went into the woods. There he walked and walked but could not get out. He moved in circles. He was tired. He looked upon the forest as a rattrap in which he was caught. He thought his end was near. He lay down to die.

After a while he heard regular thumping of a hammer's strokes. He knew the sound was coming from Ramsjo Ironworks. He stood up and walked in the direction of the sound. He opened the gate of the ironworks and went into the

forge. The owner came on his nightly rounds and noticed the ragged wretch near the furnace. The ironmaster looked intently at the peddler's face. He felt sure that the peddler was one of his old regimental comrades, Captain von Stable who had fallen on evil days. He invited the peddler to go home with him for Christmas. But the peddler was alarmed. He thought it was risky for him to accept the offer. He firmly declined it. The ironmaster went home.

The ironmaster sent his daughter Edla to persuade the peddler to come home. She spoke gently to him. The peddler felt confidence in her and agreed to go with her. On the way he was sorry to have stolen the crofter's money that had put him in a trap.

The ironmaster was happy to have his old regimental comrade under his roof. He planned to feed him well and give him some respectable work. The servant cut the peddler's hair, shaved him and bathed him. The peddler appeared wearing one of the ironmaster's fine suits. But when the ironmaster looked at him in daylight, he felt that he had made a mistake. The peddler was not captain von Stable. He thought that the man had deceived him. He even thought of handing him to the sheriff.

The peddler said that he had not pretended to be what he was not. He had not been willing to go to the ironmaster's house. Even then he was willing to put on his rags and leave. He also told the ironmaster that the world was a rattrap, and he himself might one day be tempted by a big bait and get caught in the trap. The ironmaster told him to leave at once.

Edla did not like her father's asking the poor peddler to leave. She thought it was unfair to turn away the man whom they had invited. She wanted to have the joy of entertaining a homeless wanderer on Christmas Eve. She stopped the peddler and her father agreed to it.

Edla served food to the peddler. He was given Christmas presents which he thankfully received. Edla told him that her father's suit that the peddler was wearing was also a Christmas present. She assured him that he would be welcomed again if he liked to spend the next Christmas Eve with them.

Next morning the ironmaster and his daughter went to church. There they learned that the peddler was a thief. He had robbed the crofter. The ironmaster was sure that the peddler must have made away with their silver. Edla was dejected. But when they reached home they learned that the peddler had left. But he had taken away nothing. On the other hand he had left a Christmas present for Edla.

Edla opened the present. It was a tiny rattrap. Edla was happy to see that the peddler had left the crofter's money behind. There was a letter also. It was addressed to Edla. He thanked her for her kindness. He wanted to repay her kindness. So he had left the crofter's money and had requested her to return it to the crofter. He said he had been raised to captain. That was why he could come out of the rattrap in which he had been caught. He signed the letter Captain von Stable.

Main points

1. 'The Rattrap' is a story that underlies a belief that essential goodness in human beings can be aroused through sympathy, understanding and love.
2. Once a man went around selling small rattraps but he took to begging and thievery to keep his body and soul together.
3. One day he was struck with the idea – the whole world is a big rattrap and it offers riches as bait.
4. People let themselves be tempted to touch the bait then it closes in on them bringing an end to everything.
5. One dark evening the rattrap peddler sought shelter in an old crofter's roadside cottage.
6. The old man gave him food, tobacco they enjoyed the card game too.
7. Next morning the peddler stole away his thirty kroners.
8. The rattrap peddler escaped into a big confusing forest and got lost.
9. While resting on the ground he recollected his idea that the world is a rattrap and thought his end was near.
10. Hearing a thumping sound he reached Ramsjo ironworks for a night shelter.
11. The owner came on his nightly rounds and noticed the ragged wretch near the furnace.
12. He took him as an old acquaintance 'Nils Olof.'
13. He invited him to stay with them for Christmas but the stranger declined the offer.
14. His daughter Edla Willmansson persuaded to go home with him.
15. She requested him to stay for Christmas Eve only.
16. On his way to the Manor House the peddler thought that he had thrown himself into the lion's den.
17. The next day in broad day light the iron master realized the stranger was not captain and threatened to call the sheriff.
18. Edla pleaded for him and asked him to stay back.
19. Christmas Eve at Ramsjo was as usual and the stranger slept and slept.
20. She made him understand that if he wanted rest and peace he would be welcome next Christmas also. This had a miraculous effect on him.
21. Next morning they went for early church service leaving behind the guest who was asleep.

22. They learnt at church that a rattrap peddler had robbed an old crofter.
23. Edla becomes very upset.
24. They reach home immediately and learn that the peddler had already left but had not taken anything at all with him. Instead, he had left a small packet for the young girl as a Christmas present.
25. She opens the packet and finds a rattrap, three wrinkled ten-Kronor notes and also a letter with a request to return the Kroners to the crofter.

Short Answer Type Questions

Q1. From where did the peddler get the idea of the world being a rattrap?

Ans. The peddler went around selling rattraps that he had made himself from wire he had begged or stolen. One day the thought occurred to him that the world was very much like a rattrap which offered men shelter, food, clothing and other comforts for entrapping them.

Q2. What was the peddler's philosophy about rattrap? Why did it amuse him?

Ans. The peddler's philosophy was that the whole world is a rattrap with several baits in it. As one is tempted to bait and touches it, the door is closed and everything comes to an end like in a rattrap. The thought amused him because he has so far been selling rattrap; but not fallen in this world's rattrap.

Q3. What kind of host was the old crofter?

Ans. The old crofter was an affectionate and generous host. He warmly welcomed the peddler as he got someone to talk to in his loneliness. He served him porridge for his supper and offered a pipe with tobacco roll to smoke and finally played with him Mjolis till bedtime.

Q4. The reader's sympathy is with the peddler right from the beginning? Is it justified? Give reasons.

Ans. The rattrap peddler draws reader's sympathy because of his poverty. The author's description of his clothes and appearance like –“his clothes are in rags, his cheeks are sunken and hunger gleams his eyes” and his resorting to begging and petty thievery to keep his body and soul together evoke reader's sympathy.

Q5. Who do you think was at fault-the ironmaster or the peddler? Give two reasons.

Ans. I think the ironmaster was at fault because it was he who invited the tramp to his house for the Christmas thinking him to be his old acquaintance; but on knowing he was not his acquaintance, he could not oppose his daughter's decision to offer him Christmas cheer.

Q6. Why was the peddler grateful to the ironmaster and his daughter?

Ans. The peddler was grateful to the ironmaster and his daughter as they empowered him to release himself from the world's rattrap through their selfless hospitality, love, sympathy, compassion, and understanding.

Q7. Did the peddler expect the kind of hospitality that he received from the crofter?

Ans. The peddler was surprised that the crofter not only invited him into his cottage but also shared his porridge with him. He also talked to him, played cards with him and shared confidences with him.

Q8. Why was the crofter so talkative and friendly with the peddler?

Ans. The crofter was alone, and had no wife or child and was perhaps lonely. Therefore he became happy to get someone to talk to in his loneliness.

Q9. Why did he show the thirty kroner to the peddler?

Ans. The crofter told the peddler that he was comfortable and had earned a reasonable sum of money from his extraordinary cow that gave a lot of milk and he had earned thirty kroner last month. The peddler expressed disbelief and thus the crofter showed him the money.

Q10. Did the peddler respect the confidence reposed in him by the crofter?

Ans. The peddler abused the trust reposed in him by the crofter because as soon as he could, he came back, opened the window of the cottage and stole the crofter's hard-earned money.

Q11. What made the peddler think that he had indeed fallen into a rattrap?

Ans. Having stolen the crofter's money, the peddler was forced to stay off the road and walk in the forest. When night fell, he could not see where he was headed to and seemed to be walking round and round the same spot. He was tired and in his frustration felt that he was caught in the trap.

Q12. Why did the ironmaster speak kindly to the peddler and invite him home?

Ans. The ironmaster mistook the peddler to be an old acquaintance, Nils Olof, a comrade from the regiment. It appeared to the ironmaster that the man had fallen on bad days and so he invited him to his home, especially as it was Christmas time.

Q13. Why did the peddler decline the invitation?

Ans. The peddler declined his invitation, as he was afraid of being detected as the thief. He felt that by accepting the invitation to go to the ironmaster's house, he was voluntarily walking into the lion's den.

Q14. What made the peddler accept Edla Willmansson's invitation?

Ans. Edla Willmansson came to invite the peddler. She requested him to come home with such an apparent and genuine kindness that the peddler could not refuse. She instilled a certain confidence in him.

Q15. What doubts did Edla have about the peddler?

Ans. Edla noticed that the peddler was afraid and she at once concluded that he was either a thief or had escaped from jail. She told her father that it was strange that his regimental comrade had fallen on such bad days and also that he had nothing about him to show that he had once been an educated man.

Q16. When did the ironmaster realise his mistake?

Ans. The ironmaster had first seen the tramp in the dim glow of the furnace. He had taken him to be his old regimental comrade, but when the tramp had come down cleanly shaven and dressed in a borrowed suit of the master, the ironmaster at once realized that it had been a case of mistaken identity. He had taken the tramp to be his old regimental comrade.

Q17. What did the peddler say in his defence when it was clear that he was not the person the ironmaster had thought he was?

Ans. The peddler pleaded that it was not his fault. He had never pretended to be anything but only a poor trader. He only begged that he should be allowed to stay for the night near the forge. Since he had done them no harm, so he was ready to put on his old rags again and would leave at once.

Q18. Why did Edla still entertain the peddler even after she knew the truth about him?

Ans. Edla was a kind woman at heart and understood how difficult the peddler's life had been. She realized how hard it must have been for him to be homeless and to have had to wander from place to place. She empathised with him and was thus kind to him even though she knew who he was.

Q19. Why was Edla happy to see the gift left by the peddler?

Ans. The ironmaster and Edla had expected that the peddler would have made away with all their silver and were indeed pleasantly surprised to find that he had not stolen anything but had left the thirty stolen kroners in a rattrap along with a letter. He requested that the stolen money be returned to its rightful owner and stated in his letter that having been treated with such dignity and having had his status elevated to that of a captain, he felt that he could not embarrass them.

Q20. Why did the peddler sign himself as Captain von Stahle?

Ans. The peddler was touched by the kind treatment Edla gave him. Edla, despite knowing his real identity, treated him like a captain. Now it was his turn to show her that the guest she had honoured was as honourable as the captain and not merely a petty thief. Latent goodness of his heart awakened, he behaved in a dignified manner. Signed himself as Captain von Stahle.

Long Answer Type Questions

Q1. How does the peddler interpret the acts of kindness and hospitality shown by the crofter, the ironmaster and his daughter?

Ans. The peddler feels absolutely no compunction about accepting the hospitality of the crofter and then robbing him of his hard-earned kroner. He enjoys playing cards with his host all evening and then makes away with his money the next morning. When the ironmaster having mistaken him for a regimental comrade invites him to his house to share his Christmas lunch, he feels a sense of entrapment, having the stolen money on his person, and thus declines the invitation. He feels that to accept the hospitality of the ironmaster would be like voluntarily throwing himself into the lion's den. However, he does not at the outset disclose his true identity because he hopes to profit from the mistake thinking perhaps a few kroner would come his way but now he only wants to rest near the forge at night and quietly slip away in the morning. The kindness of the ironmaster's daughter touches the tramp's heart making him feel

more worthy. She makes him feel comfortable and raises his self-esteem. Even after his true identity has been discovered, she feels sympathetic towards him and convinces her father to let him stay and share Christmas cheer with them. She does not for a moment doubt his integrity and the tramp repays this faith and kindness by leaving behind the stolen kroner to be returned to the rightful owner along with one of his rattraps as a present and a letter addressed to the daughter thanking her for elevating his status to that of a captain and for the chance to redeem his mistake.

Q2. What are the instances in the story that show that the character of the ironmaster is different from that of his daughter in many ways?

Ans. The ironmaster is a man of power whose ambition was to ensure that good iron was shipped out. He believed in closely supervising the work at the ironworks to make sure that all was in order. When he saw the tramp, he was not overcome with sympathy. His arrogance came to the fore and he commenced to give him a piece of his mind regarding his unwise decision of not resigning at the appropriate time. His invitation to the tramp to come to his house stemmed more from a sense of superiority rather than true philanthropy. He was most indignant to discover that the tramp had deceived him regarding his true identity. The ironmaster's daughter sensed something amiss on her very first meeting with the tramp. She was not convinced that he had ever been in the army and when she was proved right, her reaction was not one of indignation but one of sympathy, understanding and kindness. She realised how he must always have to contend with being turned away and not being made welcome anywhere and decided that she would give him that opportunity of feeling secure and welcome in their home. She had more faith in him than did her father and when the tramp did nothing but eat and sleep, she was able to appreciate the fact that he had probably never felt so secure in his life. She even convinced her father to gift him the suit that was loaned to the tramp as a Christmas gift.

Q3. The story has many instances of unexpected reactions from the characters to others' behaviour. Pick out instances of these surprises.

Ans. The peddler, walking along on a winters evening, is able to avail the unconditional warmth and hospitality of the owner of the cottage. The host shares his food, his home and his confidences, showing the stranger the money that he had made. The tramp, the next day, feels no remorse for stealing the money and walking away. When he is seeking shelter from the cold and has the opportunity to spend the night at the ironmaster's house, he declines as he has the stolen money with him and feels that he will be walking into the lion's den. However, when the same invitation is extended by the ironmaster through his daughter, the tramp accepts as her kindness filters through. Left alone in the

ironmaster's house, the tramp has every opportunity to make away with the valuables. On the contrary, the tramp goes away leaving behind the stolen money to be returned to the rightful owner along with a rattrap as a present for the ironmaster's daughter.

Q4. What made the peddler finally change his ways?

Ans. The peddler had lived a life of privation and constant rejection. It had made him cynical and embittered. Self-preservation had become his sole objective and he could not sense the difference between right and wrong. He had lost his sense of self-worth, having lived in penury with no home to call his own and not even a name to answer to. He had to resort to begging and petty thieving to survive and life offered no pleasure at all. The sadness and monotony of his life had convinced him of the fact that life was like a huge rattrap and just as the cheese and pork in the traps that he made were the bait, so also the riches, joys, shelter and the food that life offered were the bait. As soon as anyone let himself be tempted, it closed in around him and all came to an end. He took pleasure in thinking of all the acquaintances who had been caught in this trap. However, the meeting with the ironmaster's daughter was the turning point in his life. The kindness, the concern and the understanding that she showed him touched the core of his heart and transformed his way of thinking.

Q5. How does the metaphor of the rattrap serve to highlight the human predicament?

Ans. The tramp during his wanderings hit upon the thought that just as the cheese and the pork are the bait in the rattaps that he makes so also the joys, the warmth, the shelter and the comforts that life offers are the bait to trap humans in the huge rattrap of the world. It gave him immense pleasure to ruminate about all his acquaintances who had fallen into the trap. Though these were the thoughts of an embittered man who envied those whose lot was better than his, yet the metaphor of the trap holds some truth when one thinks about life. The more one has, the more one wants and sometimes the reasons for wanting those things become secondary to the wants themselves. Jealousy and rivalry are the corollary of material acquisitions and the only motivation to possess things is to outdo another. The rattrap of the world entraps us and we are so occupied with chasing the state of fulfilment that ever evades us that we are again engulfed in despair and discontentment.

Q6. The peddler comes out as a person with a subtle sense of humour. How does this serve in lightening the seriousness of the theme of the story and also endear him to us?

Ans. The peddler, with his subtle sense of humour was able to make an equation between the rattraps that he made and the world, which he likened to a huge rattrap, offering bait and then closing in, round those who fell for them. This was his way of consoling himself that no matter what his lot, he was better off than those who fell for the worldly bait of joy, warmth, shelter and other such comforts. This makes the sad, the weary and melancholy tramp very human and real. He manages to arouse the sympathy of the reader despite his thieving ways and his dead conscience for he makes the reader examine the merits of self-preservation. His preoccupation with remaining undetected as the thief who has made away with the thirty hard-earned kroner of the crofter makes him refuse the luxury of spending Christmas at the fine house of the ironmaster. The kindness with which the ironmaster's daughter treats him touches the core of his hitherto hardened heart. The restoration of his dignity results in his transformation into a responsible human being, sensitive, courteous, grateful and gracious.

Q7. The reader's sympathy is with the peddler right from the beginning of the story. Why is this so? Is the sympathy justified?

Ans. The peddler earns the sympathy of the reader because on every occasion when his woes seem to be ending, he is assailed by fresh problems, as if caught in a rattrap with no escape. After receiving hospitality from a crofter, he is assailed by feelings of guilt as he stoops to temptation and steals the crofter's earnings. Paradoxically, he loses his way in a forest even though he is a vagabond who has always found his way through the woods. At the smithy when he is mistaken for an acquaintance of the iron master he plays along, only to be discovered subsequently and being threatened with imprisonment. When Edla offers him unconditional love and hospitality, he does truly reform. He rids himself of the stolen wealth and presents the girl with the kroner in a symbolic rattrap, and becomes a carefree and satisfied individual.

Q8. The story also focuses on human loneliness and the need to bond with others.

(a) Festivities are not complete without bonding with other human beings. Thus the ironmaster takes home the peddler mistaking him for his former acquaintance Captain von Stahle because he cannot bear to leave an acquaintance stranded on Christmas Eve.

(b) The daughter and father welcome the stranger as they like to have company to share their joys on Christmas.

(c) Even after finding out that the stranger is not the former acquaintance, the daughter insists on his staying with them because of the need for human company.

(d) The story illustrates that lonely people are willing to take in any human beings because of the innate need for human company. Thus the crofter welcomed the vagabond under his roof.

(e) The confession of the man to stealing or acquiescing to a false identity did not alter the generosity of his hosts as they were hungry for company at all costs.

Q9. The story is both entertaining and philosophical.

Ans. (a) The story is entertaining because of the many sudden twists in the storyline that is maintained throughout the content. Each time, the stranger seemed to have overcome his troubles, he met with fresh hurdles.

(b) It is entertaining because of the differences in the locales where the various incidents occur, and the dialogue of the characters. The scene of mistaken identities reveals this point.

(c) The story maintains an air of suspense right through and even the concluding part of the story is a startling one.

(d) The story is philosophical because it poses an open-ended query as to whether our lives are conditioned by our fate or are a direct follow-through of our own follies, caught as we are in a giant rattrap.

(e) It also brings to the fore that human love, in the form of hospitality when given unconditionally, brings about real change as was revealed through the character of the ironmaster's daughter towards the peddler.

INDIGO

Summary

This story describes Gandhi's struggle for the poor peasants of Champaran. In those days most of arable land in the Champaran district was divided into large estate owned by Englishmen and worked by Indian tenants. The chief commercial crop was Indigo. The landlords compelled all tenants to plant 15% of their Indigo and surrender the entire Indigo harvest as rent. This was done by long term contract. The British didn't need the Indigo crop any more when Germany had developed synthetic Indigo. Just to release the peasants from the 15% agreement they demanded compensation. Some illiterate peasants agreed but the others refused.

One of the sharecroppers named Raj Kumar Shukla met Gandhi in this regard and compelled him to visit Champaran because of the long term injustice of landlords. Then the two of them boarded a train for the city of Patna in Bihar. From there Shukla led him to the house of a lawyer named Rajendra Prasad. Mahatma Gandhi's humble and simple attire made the servants mistook him as another poor peasant. He surveyed before taking any vital step in order to get those peasants justice. It was the time when British government punished those who in any condition gave shelter to national leaders or protesters.

Gandhi's arrival and the nature of his mission spread like a wildfire. Many lawyers and peasant groups came in large numbers to support him. The lawyers accepted the fact that their charges were high and for a poor peasant it will be irksome. Gandhi rebuked them for collecting big fee from the sharecroppers. He stressed on counseling as this would give the peasants enough confidence to fight their fear. He managed to get justice after a yearlong battle for the peasants. He also made arrangements for the education, health, and hygiene for the families of the poor peasants. He gave them the lesson of self-reliance.

Main points

1. Raj Kumar Shukla, a poor sharecropper wished to meet Gandhi to complain about the injustice of the landlord system in Champaran.
2. Shukla followed Gandhi everywhere and begged him to fix a date to come to his district.
3. Gandhi was much impressed and fixed a schedule.
4. Gandhi and Shukla reached Patna to meet Dr. Rajendra Prasad but he was out of town.
5. Then decided to go to Muzzafarpur first to get detailed information about Champaran sharecroppers.
6. Sent telegram to J B Kriplani and stayed in Prof.Malkani's home – a government servant.
7. Indians afraid to show sympathy to the supporters of home rule.
8. The news of Gandhi's arrival spread- sharecroppers gathered in large number to meet their champion.
9. Gandhi chided the Muzzafarpur lawyers for taking high fee from poor sharecroppers.
10. Champaran district was divided into estate owned by English people, Indians were only tenant farmers.
11. Landlords compelled tenants to plant 15% of their land with indigo and surrender their entire harvest as rent.
12. In the meantime Germany had developed synthetic indigo –British landlords freed the Indian farmers from the 15% arrangement but asked them to pay compensation.

13. Many signed, some resisted, engaged lawyers, landlords hired thugs.
14. Gandhi reached Champaran- visited the secretary of the British landlord association to get the facts but denied as he was an outsider.
15. Gandhi went to the British Official Commissioner who asked him to leave Trihut. Gandhi disobeyed, went to Motihari the capital of Champaran where a vast multitude greeted him, continued his investigations.
16. Visited maltreated villagers – stopped by the police superintendent but disobeyed the order.
17. Motihari black with peasants – spontaneous demonstrations – Gandhi released without bail – Civil Disobedience triumphed.
18. Gandhi agreed to 25% refund by the landowners, it symbolized the surrender of the prestige.
19. Gandhi worked hard towards social economic reforms.
20. Gandhi taught a lesson of self-reliance.

Short Answer Type Questions

Q1. Why was Gandhiji impressed with Rajkumar Shukla's tenacity and determination?

Ans. Raj Kumar Shukla, a poor Sharecropper from Champaran requested Gandhi in Congress Session in Lucknow to fix a date to visit Champaran where the sharecroppers were subjected to injustice. Till Gandhi fixed a date, he did not leave him rather he accompanied him wherever he went. Gandhi was impressed by his tenacity and determination and finally agreed to go there from Calcutta.

Q2. Why did Gandhi chide the lawyers who represented the interests of group of sharecroppers of Champaran?

Ans. Gandhi chided the lawyers for collecting big fees from the sharecroppers to fight their case in law courts. He felt taking their case to law courts would do little good when they were so crushed and fear stricken. So his first priority was to free them from fear.

Q3. What were the conditions of sharecroppers of Champaran?

Ans. The peasants of Champaran were tenants of British landlords. Under long term sharecropping arrangement, they were growing Indigo on 15 percent of their holding and surrendering the harvest as rent to the British landlord. But when Indigo price fell due to synthetic Indigo developed in Germany, the landlords obtained agreement from the peasants to pay them compensation which some of the peasants resisted and fought their case in court.

Q4. What made the British realize that the Indians could challenge their might hither to unquestioned?

Ans. The spontaneous demonstration around the court house by the peasants of Motihari on knowing that Gandhi was in trouble was the beginning of their liberation from fear of the British which made the British realize that now the Indians can challenge their might.

Q5. How did Gandhi make the peasants fearless and self-reliant?

Ans. Gandhi made the peasants fearless by letting them know about their rights, fighting their case and by obtaining the refund of compensation made to the British landlords who were behaving as lords above the law.

Q6. Why is Raj Kumar Shukla described as being 'resolute'?

Ans. Raj Kumar Shukla was a poor, illiterate sharecropper from Champaran who having heard of Gandhi came to Lucknow to seek his assistance. He was illiterate but resolute. He wished to bring the plight of the sharecroppers of Champaran to the notice of Gandhi and followed him everywhere till he finally agreed to go to Champaran.

Q7. Why do you think the servants thought Gandhi to be another peasant?

Ans. Gandhi was committed to accompany Raj Kumar Shukla to Champaran to address the tribulations of the sharecroppers of that area. En route to Champaran from Calcutta, Raj Kumar Shukla made Gandhi stop in Patna to meet a lawyer called Rajendra Prasad who later on became the first President of India. The servants thought that Gandhi was another peasant as he had come with an illiterate peasant.

Q8. Why did Gandhi agree to a settlement of 25 per cent refund to the farmers?

Ans. Gandhi agreed to a settlement of 25 per cent refund to the farmers just to break the deadlock. Gandhi felt that the amount was less important than the fact that the landlords had been obliged to surrender a part of the money and along with it a part of their pride.

Q9. How was Gandhi able to influence the lawyers? Give instances.

Ans. Gandhi's sincerity of purpose, convincing argumentation and a logical approach deeply influenced the lawyers. Chiding them for over-charging the

peasants, he encouraged them to court arrest for the poor peasants' cause, if he himself got imprisoned.

Q10. What was the attitude of the average Indian in smaller localities towards advocates of 'home rule'?

Ans. In the smaller localities, Indians were afraid to show sympathy with advocates of 'Home Rule'. Thus it was surprising for Gandhi that he received support from Professor J.B. Kripalani of the Arts College of Muzzafarpur. He met him at the station with a large group of students and also housed him for a couple of days.

Q11. How do we know that ordinary people too contributed to the freedom movement?

Ans. Freedom movement is the story of the contribution and sacrifices of countless unknown and unsung heroes like Raj Kumar Shukla and other Champaran sharecroppers. But for their active support and show of solidarity, the first victory of Civil Disobedience in India would not have been possible.

Long Answer Type Questions

Q1. Why was the share-cropping arrangement irksome? What was its fate?

Ans. Most of the cultivating land of Champaran district was divided into large estates owned by the Englishmen. It was worked by Indian tenant peasants, for which they paid rent. Indigo was the chief commercial crop. The English planters compelled all peasants to grow indigo in three-twentieths or 15 per cent of their land holdings. The entire indigo harvest was to be surrendered as rent to the British landowners. The landlords came to know that Germany had developed synthetic indigo. Thereupon they obtained agreement, from the share-croppers to pay them the compensation. This share-cropping arrangement was irksome to the peasants. Some signed it willingly and those who opposed engaged lawyers. The landowners hired thugs who forcefully collected the compensation amount.

It was at this point Gandhi reached Champaran. Gandhi's civil disobedience and peasants' spontaneous demonstration compelled the Lieutenant Governor to appoint a commission of inquiry into the share-croppers situation. The official inquiry concluded that the landlords had to refund the part of the money to the peasants. After a few years they abandoned their estates. The indigo share-cropping disappeared completely.

Q2. How did Gandhiji win the battle of Champaran?

Ans. After his arrival at Motihari, Gandhiji used a house as the headquarter so that he can have complete investigation for the sharecroppers. At that time there came a report about mal-treating a peasant. Next morning Gandhiji went to see him but he was overtaken by the police superintendent's messenger with an order to come back. When he reached home, Gandhiji was asked to quit Champaran at once. Gandhiji signed the order but wrote to disobey the order. Next day Gandhi appeared in the court. That night Gandhiji telegraphed Rajendra Prasad to come with the influential friends. When the peasants knew that Gandhiji was in trouble with the authorities, the court ground of Motihari became black with peasants. The officials felt powerless and they had to seek his help. The trial was postponed but Gandhiji protested the delay. In between he was left at liberty. Now Gandhiji asked the prominent lawyers what they would do in case he was sent to jail. They told that they would follow Gandhiji and give the court arrest. Gandhiji exclaimed: "The battle of Champaran is won".

Q3. How did a visit to Champaran become a turning point in Gandhi's life? How does this show Gandhi's love and concern for the common people of India?

Ans. After having clues from Raj Kumar Shukla, Gandhi reached Champaran to understand the appalling conditions of sharecroppers. He found that the large estates were owned by the Englishmen where Indians worked there as their tenant farmers and they paid 15% of their land yield. After great tussel, Gandhi and the lawyers made the Britishers agree to refund 25 percent of the money. Thus farmers became bold and got their rights. Within few years, the landlords left chains over the estates and the farmers became the owners. On finding backwardness of the people there, he appointed volunteers to teach the villagers. Kasturba taught the ashram rules and personal hygiene and community sanitation. A doctor helped the villagers in their health problems. The people realized the value of self-reliance. The countrymen embarked on the task of national freedom movement. It was a turning point in Gandhi's life. All his activities were expressing his love and concern for the Indians.

Q4. What were the steps taken by Gandhiji to solve the problems of social and cultural backwardness in the villages of Champaran?

Ans. Gandhiji saw the cultural and social backwardness in the Champaran villages. In order to educate them he made an appeal for teachers. His two new young pupils Mahadev Desai, Narhari Parikh and their wives offered to work. Several more teachers came from Bombay (Mumbai), Poona and other distant parts of India. His youngest son Devdas and Mrs. Gandhi (Kasturba) also arrived from the Ashram. Primary schools were also opened in six villages to

teach children. Kasturba taught the ashram rules on personal cleanliness and community sanitation. In order to improve the miserable health conditions, Gandhiji got a doctor. He volunteered his services for six months. Kasturba talked to the women to get rid of their filthy state of clothes. During his long stay at Champaran, Gandhiji taught people self-reliance and freedom from the fear of the British. Thus he paved the path for the freedom of India.

**Q5. “Freedom from fear is more important than legal justice for the poor.”
Do you think that the poor of India are free from fear after Independence?**

For the motion

I think that in the present day, the poor in India have been relatively free of fear for the following reasons:

- (a) Ours is a democratic country encouraging the values of individual freedom.
- (b) The Constitution of India guarantees freedom to every citizen in India and this makes a man fearless in his attitude compared to the situation that had prevailed in this country under British domination.
- (c) The legal system in the country is impartial and sympathetic towards people's rightful privileges and demands. This gives the poor in India a voice and a sense of fearlessness.
- (d) The Press in India is ever vigilant and makes it a point to report instances of the abuse of freedom. It is a widely watched medium among both the urban and rural poor and gives them the moral courage to resist curbs on their freedom.
- (e) A sound system of administration ensures that the poor in India are given legal and personal protection.

Against the motion

- (a) Despite being the world's biggest democracy, the poor in India live in denial of fundamental freedoms because they are afraid to raise their voices against injustices committed against them.
- (b) Economic suppression and the lack of social security measures make the poor live in abject fear of falling a prey to disease and death or of being a victim of state and police atrocities.
- (c) Women are in constant fear of their personal safety in both cities and villages irrespective of their age, their education and other empowering tools.
- (d) Corrupt practices and male dominance make their lives oppressive and fearful, for they are denied their basic right to existence if they raise their voices against acts that are committed by their superiors.
- (e) The poor are soft targets for vote bank politics and they dare not oppose the local mafia for fear of the fallout and flack that will come upon him, his villages and his family members.

Q6. Exploitation is a universal phenomenon. The poor indigo farmers were exploited by the British landlords to which Gandhiji objected. Even after our independence we find exploitation of unorganized labour. What values do we learn from Gandhi's campaign to counter the present day problems of exploitation?

Ans. Exploitation is a universal phenomenon. It exists since the origin of the society. The mighty rules the poor. It makes a strata of society slaves and the other one rule them. Since the British rule, this phenomenon is on. They exploited Indians in each and every possible way. Most noticeable was the exploitation of the poor Indigo farmers. They had been getting nothing for their hard work. Gandhiji taught them to speak against it using the power of truth, education, peace and non-violence. The condition is even same in today's scenario. Labourers are still being exploited in unorganized sectors. They Work for long hours but do not get paid according to labour laws. They need to remain united, come ahead and fight for their rights. Legal paths should be followed to get what they deserve. No one should be ready to work in unhygienic and improper working conditions. Togetherness, strength and self-determination will definitely bring fruitful results to the labourers in every field.

GOING PLACES

Summary

Sophie, a teenager is filled with fantasies and desires. She comes from a poor financial background. She dreams of owning a boutique one day or being an actress or fashion designer but her friend Jansie believes that they are from a poor financial background and have to work in a biscuit factory. Jansie, who is more realistic, tries to pull Sophie to reality, but in vain. Sophie lives in a small house with her parents and brothers, Geoff and little Derek. Though she voices her feelings and desires, her parents don't believe her because they, unlike her, are more mature and know the harsh realities of life.

Sophie finds a sort of fascination for her elder brother Geoff, who is tall, strong, handsome and reserved. She envies his silence and often wonders about his thoughts and areas of his life that she doesn't know about.

Sophie fantasizes about Danny Casey, an Irish football player whom she had seen playing in innumerable matches. She makes up a story about how she met

him in the streets and tells this to Geoff. Geoff, who is more sensible than Sophie, does not really believe her, even if she wants to. It seems an unlikely incident for Sophie to meet the prodigy in their street, but when Sophie describes the meeting in all her details, he begins to hope that it could be true. She tells him that Danny has promised to meet her somewhere again.

Sophie gets so pulled into the story she made that she herself begins to believe that it's true. She waits for the Irish player, but obviously, he never arrives. Then, she makes her way home, wondering how her brother would be disappointed on knowing that Danny Casey never showed up. However, Sophie still fantasizes about her hero, Danny Casey and believes he would definitely come to meet her.

Main points

1. The lesson explores the theme of adolescent fantasies and hero worship.
2. Sophie, a young girl always dreams of big and beautiful things.
3. Her ambitions have no relation with the harsh realities of life.
4. Jansie, Sophie's friend is a realistic and practical girl.
5. Both Sophie and Jansie belong to the lower middle class families.
6. Sophie adores an Irish Footballer Danny Casey and makes imaginary flights to meet him.

Short Answer Type Questions

Q1. What does Sophie dream of doing after she passes out of school? Why do you call it a 'dream' and not a 'plan'?

Ans. Sophie dreams to have a boutique of her own. It will be the most amazing shop the city has ever seen. She says that she will buy a boutique if ever she comes into money. She does not mind becoming an actress to run a boutique as a side business. Since she has no money or experience, it is called a 'dream' and not a 'plan'.

Q2. What are the other dreams of Sophie in addition to having a boutique?

Ans. The greatest dream of Sophie is to have a boutique. She wants to be a bit sophisticated and rise above her lower-middle class status. Her other dream is of being an actress as "there's real money in that". Moreover, actresses don't work full time. She can look after her first love i.e. boutique as a side business. She has another option. She can be a fashion designer, and do something sophisticated.

Q3. Why does Jansie say: “Soaf you really should be sensible”?

Ans. Jansie knows Sophie’s family background and financial position. She knows that both of them are earmarked for that biscuit factory. Sophie dreams of big and beautiful things like having a boutique or becoming an actress or a fashion designer. All these things need a lot of money and experience. Sophie has neither of them. So Jansie advises her to be sensible and stop having wild dreams.

Q4. Compare and contrast Sophie and Jansie?

Ans. Sophie and Jansie are classmates and friends but they are poles apart in thinking and temperament. Sophie is an incurable dreamer and escapist. She dreams of big and beautiful things, which are beyond her reach. On the other hand, Jansie is realistic and practical. She knows that they are poor and have to work in the biscuit factory after leaving school. She is well aware that big things require big money and experience, which they don’t have.

Q5. What job is Geoff engaged in? How does he differ from his sister, Sophie?

Ans. Geoff is grown up boy. He left school three years ago. Now he is an apprentice mechanic. He has to travel to his work each day to the far side of the city. He speaks little but listens to his sister’s ‘wild stories’. But he is not a day dreamer like her. He knows the financial limitations of the family. He cautions Sophie against entertaining dreams for a celebrity like Danny Casey.

Q6. Why was Sophie jealous of Geoff’s silence?

Ans. Geoff was almost grown up now. He spoke little. Sophie was jealous of his silence. She knew that when he was not speaking, he was away somewhere. He was out in the surrounding country—in those places she had never been. She wanted to share her brother’s affection.

Q7. What does Sophie tell Geoff about her meeting with Danny Casey? How does Geoff react to it?

Ans. Sophie tells Geoff that she met Danny Casey. Geoff is surprised. He looks round abruptly and asks ‘where?’ Sophie replies that she met him in the arcade. Geoff can’t believe her. He says, “It’s never true.” He asks her, “What does he look like?” She replies that he has green eyes and is not very tall. Geoff is still not convinced.

Q8. How does Sophie's father react when Geoff tells him about her meeting with Danny Casey?

Ans. Geoff informs his father that Sophie had a meeting with Danny Casey. He turns his head on his thick neck to look at her in disbelief. His expression is one of disdain. He ignores the news and goes on to talk about Tom Finney. He hopes that Danny will be like Tom Finney one day. When Sophie says that Casey is going to buy a shop, he reacts sharply. "This is another of your wild stories."

Q9. Who was Danny Casey? How did the members of Sophie's family react towards him?

Ans. Danny Casey was a young Irish football player. He played for the United. The Irish prodigy could easily dodge the defenders and score goals. Sophie's father was a football fan. He admired old heroes like Tom Finney and young wonder boy Casey. Geoff had a large poster of United first team squad on his bed room wall. There were three coloured photographs of Casey in the row below it. Every Saturday they went to watch United.

Q10. Where did Sophie meet Casey and what transpired between them?

Ans. Sophie met Danny Casey in the arcade. It was she who spoke first and asked if he was Casey. He looked surprised. He was certainly Danny Casey as he had the Irish accent. She had already heard him on television. She asked him for an autograph for little Derek. But neither of them had any paper or pen. Before going he promised to give his autograph if she cared to meet him next week.

Q11. How did Jansie react at Sophie's story of her meeting with Danny Casey?

Ans. Jansie was a classmate and friend of Sophie. She lived in the same neighbourhood. She knew Sophie quite well. She was also aware of Sophie's habit of dreaming. On learning of her meeting with Danny Casey, her first reaction was of disbelief. "You never did", exclaimed Jansie. But when Sophie told her about her request for autograph, Jansie softened a little and said, "Jesus, I wish I'd have been there."

Q12. Why did Sophie choose to walk by the canal? 'What did she do there?'

Ans. Sophie walked by the canal along a sheltered path. It was far away from the noise and crowd of the city. It was a place where she had often played when

she was a child. There was a wooden bench beneath a solitary elm tree. Lovers sometimes came there. That was the most suitable place where she could dream of her hero Danny Casey

Q13. What did Sophie feel while sitting for hours and waiting for Danny Casey by the canal?

Ans. At first Sophie was optimistic. She imagined him coming out of the shadows. When time had elapsed, pangs of doubt stirred inside her. She became sad and despondent. Danny would not come there at all. She feared that people would laugh at the story of her meeting with Casey.

Q14. “Sophie’s dreams and disappointments are all in her mind.” Do you agree? Give reasons in support of your answer.

Ans. I fully agree with the observation. Sophie’s dreams and disappointments are all in her mind, she is a hero-worshipper. The Irish prodigy is her hero. She imagines her meeting with him. Her day-dreaming makes her sad and despondent. The idea that Casey will not come at all is quite painful to her. Thus her dreams and disappointments are products of her mind only. They have nothing to do with reality.

Long Answer Type Questions

Q1. What impression do you form of Sophie on reading the story ‘Going Places’?

Ans. Sophie is a young school girl. She dreams of big and beautiful things. Some of these are beyond her reach. Her ambitions have no relation with the harsh realities of life. She thinks of having a boutique. She wants to have the most amazing shop this city has ever seen. Then she entertains the idea of being an actress ‘There’s real money in that.’ Actresses do now work full time. So she would run the boutique as a side business. If need be, she can be a fashion designer. She doesn’t realize that her family is not rich enough and her dreams can’t be fulfilled.

Sophie develops a romantic fascination for Danny Casey. He is a young Irish football player and the hero of her dreams. She indulges in hero worship. She tells a story that she met Casey. Her father calls it another of her “wild stories”. Even Geoff does not believe her. She has seen Casey only once, but all the time she thinks of him. She sits alone and waits for his arrival. She becomes sad and despondent when Casey does not come. She suffers because of her dreams. These dreams and disappointments are all the creations of her mind.

Q2. Compare and contrast Sophie and Jansie highlighting their temperament and aspirations.

Ans. Sophie and Jansie are classmates and friends. They belong to lower middle class families. Both of them are earmarked for biscuit factory. Jansie is down to earth. She is practical and realist. But Sophie is totally blind to the harsh realities of life. She dreams of big and beautiful things. She wants to have a boutique. She thinks of becoming an actress as there is lot of money in this profession. If need be, she can also be a fashion designer. In short, she loves to be grand and sophisticated. All her dreams are beyond her reach and resources. Jansie advises her to be sensible, but she remains a romantic dreamer.

Sophie and Jansie differ in thinking and temperament. Sophie is lost in her dream world, she shares her secret with only one person. It is her elder brother Geoff. Jansie is 'nosey'. She takes interests in learning new things about others. She can spread the story in the whole neighbourhood. So Sophie doesn't want to share secrets with her.

Q3. Describe the bond between Geoff and Sophie in spite of differences in their temperament and thinking.

Ans. Geoff was Sophie's elder brother. He was three years out of school. He was an apprentice mechanic. He travelled to his work each day to the far side of the city. He was almost grown up now. He spoke very little. Sophie was jealous of Geoff's silence. He was quiet and didn't make new friends easily. He thought that Sophie was too young and immature. Geoff was mature enough to understand his limitations and those of his family. He never dreamt of big and beautiful things.

In spite of difference in their temperaments, there was a close bond between the two. Geoff was always the first to share Sophie's secrets. He knew that Sophie's story of meeting with Danny Casey was not true. Still he listened to her. Sophie confided in him. Her secret was something special just between them. It was not meant for nose Jansie who would spread it in the whole neighbourhood. Geoff tried to persuade Sophie. He warned her that Danny Casey was a celebrity. He must have many girls like her running after him. Sophie told him that Casey would give her an autograph if she cared to meet him next week. Geoff did not believe "he'd ever show up." Thus he acted like an elder brother.

Q4. Who was Danny Casey? How was he adored by the family of Sophie, and especially by Sophie and her father?

Ans. Danny Casey was an Irish Prodigy. He was a wonder boy of football. He had won the hearts of his countless fans. He played for United. Sophie's family

was obsessed with the Irish genius. Sophie's father compared young Danny Casey to another great football player Tom Finney. He wished that Casey might be that good someday. Geoff remarked that he was with the best team in the country. He hoped that Casey would prove even a better player than Tom Finney. Geoff considered him the best. His father thought that he was too young for the first team. The fact was that with his exceptional ability he was playing for the first eleven.

On Saturday, Sophie's family made their weekly pilgrimage to the stadium to watch United play their match. They watched their hero Danny Casey in action.

Sophie adored Danny Casey. She had a romantic fascination for the Irish prodigy. Her young heart throbbed for her hero. She imagined Casey coming to her. She would sit under an elm tree, waiting for Casey and dreaming of him. She realized that he would not come. This made her sad and dejected. Sophie became a victim of her own dreams and disappointments.