



NCERT Solutions for 12th Class English(Flamingo): Chapter 1-The Last Lesson



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Class 12: English (Flamingo) Chapter 1 solutions. Complete Class 12 English (Flamingo) Chapter 1 Notes.

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NCERT 12th English (Flamingo) Chapter 1, class 12 English
(Flamingo) chapter 1 solutions

Page No: 2

1. Notice these expressions in the text. Infer their meanings from the context.

in great dread of: fearful in anticipation of something

counted on: to rely or trust on somebody/something

thumbed at the edges: worn or soiled edges caused by frequent handling

in unison: something happening or being done at the same time

a great bustle: an excited (and often noisy) activity or a rapid, active commotion

reproach ourselves with: to express disapproval, criticism, or disappointment

Page No: 7

Think As you Read (NCERT 12th Class English Chapter 1)

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

Answer

Franz was expected to be prepared with participles that day as Mr. Hamel had told the class that he would be taking a test on the topic that day.

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

Usually when the school began there would be a lot of commotion. But that day everything was quiet and it appeared to be like a Sunday, but the students were at their places and Mr. Hamel was walking up and down with his terrible iron ruler under his arm.

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

Answer

The bulletin-board notified the general public about an order from Berlin. It stated that only German was to be taught to students in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine.

Page No: 8

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

Answer

The order from Berlin brought all the routine hustle-bustle of the school life to a stand-still. The teacher, M. Hamel, became more sympathetic to his students and taught his lessons with more patience. The students became more attentive in their classes. The villagers, who were sitting at the usually empty back benches and had come to show their respect and gratitude to M. Hamel, regretted not going to school more than they did. The order also brought about a great change in the feelings of the people towards their country and their native language. There was a general sadness about not being able to utilise the opportunities of learning French when it was easily accessible.

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

Answer

Franz was shocked when M. Hamel told the students about the order from Berlin and that it was their last French lesson. He forgot about his teacher's ruler and crankiness. He developed a fondness for M. Hamel at the troubling idea of being separated from him forever. He <https://www.indcareer.com/schools/ncert-solutions-for-12th-class-english-flamingo-chapter-1-the-last-lesson/>

understood the pain and agony his teacher was undergoing. And, he became more sympathetic towards his teacher.

His school too, now, carried a different meaning. His books and lessons seemed old friends whom he couldn't give up. He realised with pain how much French meant to him and regretted not being attentive in his classes earlier. Suddenly, he felt that the 'difficult concepts' had never actually been difficult.

Page No: 9

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

Answer

M. Hamel told the students and villagers that henceforth only German would be taught in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. Those who called themselves Frenchmen would neither be able to speak nor write it. He praised French as the most beautiful, the clearest and most logical language in the world. He said that for the enslaved people, their language was the key to their prison. Then the people realised how precious their language was to them. This shows people's love for their own culture, traditions and country. Pride in one's language reflects pride in motherland.

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

Answer

Alphonse Daudet’s ‘The Last Lesson’ very prominently raises the question of linguistic and cultural hegemony of the colonial and imperial powers and their lust for controlling the world and influencing their cultures and identities. Prussians acquired the districts of Alsace and Lorraine in Franco-Prussian War , but they were not satisfied with mere political domination ,they desired to enforce their own language on the people of the defeated nation. They released the order that from now German would be taught in schools rather than French. Franz wondered whether they would make even pigeons sing in German. It means that they had grown up using French as their language and now snatching away their language from them would be unfair and unkind. The language was as natural to them as cooing is to the pigeon. So, compulsion to speak another language is like dominating the force of nature and enslaving it. As it is next to impossible to alter the way pigeons sing, in the same way it is difficult for people to accept a language which is forcibly imposed on them. Adopting a new language causes pain and discomfort.

Or

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This sentence could possibly mean that however hard the authorities try to embed German language in the culture of Alsace and Lorraine, the natural status of French, for them, will remain unchanged. French flows in the air and the entire place is imbued with its effect. Even though they train students in German, the basic mode of communication would remain unchanged like the cooing of the pigeons.

Talking about the Text (NCERT 12th Class English Chapter 1)

1. “When a people are enslaved, as long as they hold fast to their language it is as if they had the key to their prison.”

Can you think of examples in history where a conquered people had their language taken away from them or had a language imposed on them?

Answer

Some examples of the native language taken away from its people and/or imposition of the language of the conqueror are:

- (a) Portuguese becoming the lingua franca of Angola.
- (b) English imposed on the various Celtic peoples.

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(c) Spanish imposed on the Basques and the Catalans.

(d) Turkish imposed on the Kurds.

2. What happens to a linguistic minority in a state? How do you think they can keep their language alive? For example:

Punjabis in Bangalore

Tamilians in Mumbai

Kannadigas in Delhi

Gujaratis in Kolkata

Answer

A linguistic minority in a state does not have as much liberty to exercise linguistic skills as the natives of the state. They initially try to learn the jargons in order to cope with the day-to-day life activities and finally begin to understand the native language with regular interaction. At the workplace and educational organisations, English or the link language helps a lot to cope up with the work and learning process. But, when it comes to understanding the basic norms of the society, in order to socialize, one does face a sort of linguistic barrier during communication.

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To keep their language alive, the linguistic minorities can form small communities where they can celebrate their festivals as per their traditions. Moreover, they can continue to speak their native language at their homes in order to make their children learn the language. People must, even, try to visit their native places at regular intervals in order to stay close to their roots.

3. Is it possible to carry pride in one's language too far?

Do you know what 'linguistic chauvinism' means?

Answer

Yes, it is possible to carry pride in one's language too far if one is fond of one's own language at the cost of others. Indifference towards other languages is not healthy for any democracy like India.

When the sense of belonging to one's own language crosses the thin line between 'pride' and 'proud', it becomes linguistic chauvinism. If people feel good about their languages and traditions, they must have tolerance for other languages too. Everybody has the right to follow the religion as well as speak the language as per his/her desire. In fact, it is disparaging to distort the names of communities, for example, Bongs for Bengalis, Gujju for Gujratis, etc.

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1. English is a language that contains words from many other languages. This inclusiveness is one of the reasons it is now a world language, for example:

petite – French

kindergarten – German

capital – Latin

democracy – Greek

bazaar – Hindi

Find out the origin of the following words.

Tycoon, tulip, logo, bandicoot, barbecue, veranda, robot, zero, ski, trek

Answer

tycoon – Japanese

tulip – French

logo – Greek

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bandicoot – Telugu

barbecue – Spanish

veranda – Hindi

robot – Czech

zero – Italian

ski – Norwegian

trek – Dutch

Page No: 10

2. Notice the underlined words in these sentences and tick the option that best explains their meanings.

(a) “What a thunderclap these words were to me!”

The words were _____

(i) loud and clear.

(ii) startling and unexpected.

(iii) pleasant and welcome.

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(b) “When a people are enslaved, as long as they hold fast to their language it is as if they had the key to their prison.”

It is as if they have the key to the prison as long as they

(i) do not lose their language.

(ii) are attached to their language.

(iii) quickly learn the conqueror’s language.

(c) Don’t go so fast, you will get to your school in plenty of time.

You will get to your school _____

(i) very late.

(ii) too early.

(iii) early enough.

(d) I never saw him look so tall.

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M. Hamel _____

(a) had grown physically taller.

(b) seemed very confident.

(c) stood on the chair.

Answer

(a) (ii) startling and unexpected.

(b) (ii) are attached to their language.

(c) (iii) early enough.

(d) (b) seemed very confident.

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(Flamingo) chapter 1 solutions

Noticing Form

1. Read this sentence.

M. Hamel had said that he would question us on participles.

In the sentence above, the verb form “had said” in the first part is used to indicate an “earlier past.” The whole story is

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narrated in the past. M. Hamel’s “saying” happened earlier than the events in this story. This form of the verb is called the past perfect.

Pick out five sentences from the story with this form of verb and say why this form has been used.

Answer

In the following sentences, two activities of past, occurring at two different points of time in the past, are indicated. The one that happens earlier takes the “had” + past form of verb (V3), while the one that follows it takes the simple past form of verb (V2).

Sentences in past perfect form	Reason/ Explanation
I had counted on the commotion to get to my desk without being seen; but, of course, that day everything had to be as quiet as Sunday morning.	The protagonist decided to depend on the commotion to sneak into the classroom before he encountered the quietness at the school.

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Not till then, when I **had got** a little over my fright, did I see that our teacher had on his beautiful green coat ... prize days.

...Hauser **had brought** an old primer, thumbed at the edge, and he held it open on his knees with his great spectacles lying across the pages.

It was because they were sorry, too, that they had not gone to school more.

My books, that **had seemed** such a nuisance ... were old friends now that I couldn't give up.

Getting over the fright happened before he noticed his teacher's green coat.

Of the two actions, Hauser's bringing of the old primer happened before he held it open on his knees.

The feeling of regret comes after they realise they did not go to school more than what they did.

The books were a nuisance earlier. It is only later that the protagonist talked about them in a different light.

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(Flamingo) chapter 1 solutions



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Chapterwise NCERT Solutions for Class 12 English (Flamingo):

- Chapter 1 - The Last Lesson
- Chapter 2 - Lost Spring
- Chapter 3 - Deep Water
- Chapter 4 - The Rattrap
- Chapter 5 - Indigo
- Chapter 6 - Poets And Pancakes
- Chapter 7 - The Interview
- Chapter 8 - Going Places

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Organise pre-service and in-service training of teachers; develop and disseminate innovative educational techniques and practices; collaborate and network with state educational departments, universities, NGOs and other educational institutions; act as a clearing house for ideas and information in matters related to school education; and act as a nodal agency for achieving the goals of Universalisation of Elementary Education.

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