



The Last Lesson

A 1-page guide for parents · 90-second read.

EXPECTED MARKS

6 marks

TIME TO MASTER

Strong hrs

HELPLINE

70330 05444**WHAT THIS CHAPTER IS, IN PLAIN ENGLISH**

This is the first prose lesson in your child's Class 12 English Core textbook. It is a short story by Alphonse Daudet, a French writer, set in the year 1870. A village schoolmaster gives his last French lesson because the region has been conquered and the new rulers have ordered that German be taught instead. The story is about love of one's language and the regret that comes from realising too late how precious it is. Your child is not being asked to memorise events; they are being asked to think about why language matters to a community.

5 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD

- Who is Franz and why is he reluctant to go to school that morning?
- Why does M. Hamel call this the last lesson?
- What does M. Hamel say about the French language?
- Why are the old people of the village sitting in the back of the classroom?
- What does M. Hamel write on the blackboard at the end, and why?

WEAK-SPOT INDICATORS

- If your child cannot tell you the historical setting in one sentence (Alsace, 1870, after the Franco-Prussian War), they have not engaged with the story's premise.
- If they describe M. Hamel only as 'strict', they have read the opening but not the rest.
- If they cannot quote any of M. Hamel's actual words, they will lose marks on every theme question.

WHEN TO WORRY – AND WHAT TO DO

If, after a re-read, your child still summarises the story as 'a war between France and Germany', they are missing the chapter's whole purpose. A 20-minute conversation about why losing one's language feels like losing one's home usually fixes this.

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