

2. Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE-1

- (i) The narrator thought of running away because his teacher had told his class that he would ask them questions on participles. The narrator did not want to take the test so he wanted to run away.
He wanted to run away to enjoy the warm day outdoors.
- (ii) The narrator is a student. He did not work hard in his studies. But he is worried about his performance in the class. He is a respectful and obedient student.
- (iii) The day was bright and warm. It was something tempting for him to enjoy outdoors. He dreaded being scolded by the teacher for not preparing the test.
- (iv) The Prussian soldiers were doing the drills as the day was warm. They found the atmosphere suitable to do the drill in the open fields.
- (v) The day was warm and bright. The birds were chirping at the woods. The Prussian soldiers were drilling in the open fields. The whole atmosphere was quite tempting. The narrator overcame these temptations as he was going to school.

PASSAGE-2

- (i) M. Hamel was a dedicated and devoted teacher. He taught French.
- (ii) M. Hamel was walking up and down with his iron ruler under his arm. It was not a pleasant sight as he looked upset.
- (iii) He was frightened because of being late for the class and he had seen M Hamel walking in the room in a terrible mood.
- (iv) The teacher did not punish Franz. When he entered the classroom there was complete silence. There was no noise like other days.
- (v) M. Hamel was wearing his beautiful green coat and frilled shirt. He wore black silk cap which was embroidered. This was the dress he wore on inspection and prize days. He was wearing this dress as it was his last day in the school.

Passage 3:

- (i) Franz, a student in the school, is the narrator. He is in side the classroom.
- (ii) M. Hamel was a teacher in the school and taught French. He treated the students as his own children.
- (iii) It was his last lesson as the German authorities had ordered to stop the teaching of French in the schools. The word 'his' refers to M. Hamel, the French teacher.
- (iv) M. Hamel asked the students to be more attentive. He told them that it was their last lesson to learn the French language as the teaching of French was going to be discontinued.
- (v) M. Hamel was in a mood of despair and disappointment. It was because of the order from Berlin which forbade the teaching of French in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine.

PASSAGE-4

- (i) The speaker here is M. Hamel, the teacher who teaches French the narrator Franz's school. He is quite upset over the order that has asked to stop the teaching of French language in the school.
- (ii) He has a great regret in his mind about the French people's attitude towards their own mother tongue. He is pained over the fact that the French neither speak nor write their own language.
- (iii) 'Those fellows' here refers to the Germans who would make fun of the French people. They would criticize the French people for their neglect of their mother tongue.
- (iv) According to the speaker the French people themselves were responsible for the present situation. They had neglected and ignored their own language.
- (v) The speaker later says that French is a great language. It was necessary for them to love their language as it would be a key to their freedom and keep their identity intact.

PASSAGE-5

- (i) M. Hamel a teacher who teaches French in Franz's school is addressing his students. The occasion of this address is his last lesson to the class as French will no longer be taught in the school according to the orders of the German government.
- (ii) The students were put to earn more money by their parents. It shows that the parents were more interested in money and neglected the importance of learning French for their children.

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- (iii) The speaker is pained to see that French language has been ignored and neglected by the French themselves. He blames himself for this neglect as he used to ask his students to do small jobs for him instead of learning their mother tongue.
- (iv) The speaker is a sincere teacher and a patriot. He has great regret for the neglect that the French show towards their own mother tongue.
- (v) According to the speaker the learning of mother tongue is very significant. One's mother tongue is like the key to freedom from slavery and foreign rule.

PASSAGE-6

- (i) The language being referred to here is French. The occasion for this observation is the last lesson to be delivered by the French teacher M. Hamel. He is addressing his students and some villagers about the importance of their mother tongue.
- (ii) The speaker is talking about French language. He thinks that this language will act as a key to people's prison of slavery. They must hold fast to their language.
- (iii) The advice of the speaker here is that the listeners should hold fast to their language. It will prove to be the key to their freedom.
- (iv) The enslaved people should not forget their language as it keeps them bound to their identity and helps in struggling for and achieving freedom.
- (v) According to the speaker, the earlier attitude of the people towards their language had been that of neglect and indifference. They did not respect their mother tongue as much as they should.

PASSAGE-7

- (i) The beetles flew inside the classroom. The students did not pay any attention to them. They ignored the beetles.
- (ii) Some pigeons cooed in while M. Hamel was talking about the importance of French language. He was delivering his last lesson that day.
- (iii) The words of M. Hamel about French language and the way the French people had been ignoring their mother tongue made even the children do their work with full concentration.
- (iv) The word 'I' refers to Franz the narrator. He thought if the Germans would force even the birds like pigeons to speak in German.
- (v) The tone is satirical and the literary device used is personification as the pigeons are being referred to as some persons or human beings.

The students were doing their written work as the teacher had given them some written exercise. (Part of Ans.2)

PASSAGE-8

- (i) The word 'he' here refers to M. Hamel the teacher who teaches French. He was sentimental because it was his last lesson in the class.
- (ii) He could not go on speaking. The reason for his not being able to do so was that he had become emotional. It was his last lesson in the class.
- (iii) He wrote the words 'Vive la France !' He wrote these words to show his love and respect for his country. He wants his nation to be great and free.
- (iv) This person is a patriot and a sincere teacher. He has great love and respect for his mother tongue and the motherland. He realizes his own drawbacks also as he used to ask the students to work for him and skip their class. He is objective in his approach.
- (v) It means long live France. It symbolizes the love and patriotic feelings of the teacher M. Hamel. These words also symbolize the French people's resolve to care for their language and struggle for their freedom.