The Necklace

Read and Find Out (Page 39)

Question 1:

What kind of a person is Mme Loisel — why is she always unhappy?

Answer:

Mme Loisel was a young and pretty woman who led a simple yet unhappy life. She came from a poor family but always dreamt of the riches and luxuries of life. She was always unhappy as she knew her dreams could never be fulfilled. She was aware that her meagre resources weren't enough to satisfy her expensive desires and all this made her unhappy and angry about her condition.

Question 2:

What kind of a person is her husband?

Answer:

Matilda's husband Monsieur Loisel was an ordinary and simple-hearted young man. He was a small clerk in the office of the Board of Education, but he was contented with his job. With great excitement, he brought a dinner invitation to a grand party for his wife. However poor he might be, he was a caring husband as he gave four hundred francs to his dear wife to buy a pretty dress for the party.

Read and Find Out (Page 41)

Question 1:

What fresh problem now disturbs Mme Loisel?

Answer:

After spending four hundred francs to buy a beautiful dress, Mme Loisel was bothered by yet another fresh problem. She brooded over the fact that she did not have a beautiful jewel to pair with her pretty dress. Hearing this, her husband suggested she wear some natural flowers as jewellery, but she refused, stating that there was nothing more humiliating than to be dressed shabbily in the midst of rich women.

Question 2:

How is the problem solved?

Answer:

Mme Loisel's husband, Monsieur Loisel, initially suggested that she wear some natural flowers as jewellery, but she refused to do it. Then, he advised her to request and borrow some jewels from her rich friend, Mme Forestier. Matilda uttered a cry of joy as she liked this wonderful idea. The next day she went to her friend's house and picked a superb necklace of diamonds that matched her beautiful attire. Hence, her husband's timely suggestion solved her problem.
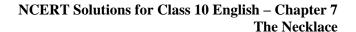
Read and Find Out (Page 42)

Question 1:

What do M. and Mme Loisel do next?

Answer:

When the Loisels realised that the necklace had gone missing, they left no stone unturned and tried their best to locate the lost jewel, but they couldn't find it. Monsieur Loisel even went back to the streets through

which they returned home in case it had accidentally fallen on the road. When he couldn't find anything, he went to the police and cab offices and also put up an advertisement in the newspapers offering a reward to anyone who found the necklace. Soon after, he asked his wife to write a letter to her friend, Mme Forestier stating that the clasp of the necklace had broken and would return it once repaired. This would give them some more time to find the necklace. However, all their efforts went in vain. Eventually, they bought a new diamond necklace to replace the lost one.

Question 2:

How do they replace the necklace?

Answer:

After all their efforts went in vain, M. and Mme Loisel decided to buy a new necklace to replace the lost necklace. M. Loisel possessed eighteen thousand francs of his inheritance and borrowed the rest of the money from usurers and lenders by making ruinous promises. When they borrowed enough money, the couple went to the merchant and bought a new necklace for thirty-six thousand francs and returned it to the rightful 0wner, Mme Forestier.

Think about it (Page 46)

Question 1:

The course of the Loisels' life changed due to the necklace. Comment.

Answer:

The Loisels' life took a major turn due to the necklace. It took them ten years to repay the loan that they had borrowed to buy the necklace. Their life turned upside down and everything changed for them. To repay the debt, they changed their lodgings, sent away the maid and rented some rooms in an attic. Matilda did all the tedious work of the kitchen, washed the dirty linen, and bargained with the grocer and butcher to save every single sou for mere survival. Her husband worked until late evenings and took up odd jobs to repay their debt. The couple led a miserable life to sustain themselves and repay the frightful debt incurred for buying the jewel.

Question 2:

What was the cause of Matilda's ruin? How could she have avoided it?

Answer:

Matilda's materialistic aspirations and dissatisfaction were the ultimate cause of her ruin. She was always unhappy about her financial status and wished to be born in the midst of riches and luxuries of life. She could have easily avoided her ruin by accepting her current situation and being content with her simple life with her loving husband.

Question 3:

What would have happened to Matilda if she had confessed to her friend that she had lost her necklace?

Answer:

If Matilda had courageously confessed to her friend, Mme Forestier, about the loss of the necklace, she could have saved herself from her doom. Her friend would have certainly got angry about the loss, but at least she would have come to know that it was a fake necklace that cost five hundred francs only. Had she known the real value of the necklace before, she would not have spent her husband's entire inheritance and borrowed eighteen thousand francs to buy a replacement for the lost necklace. Besides, she could have saved herself and her husband from ten long years of suffering, misery, crushing poverty and all the trouble that they had to face to repay the frightful debt.

Question 4:

If you were caught in a situation like this, how would you have dealt with it?

Answer:

If I had been caught in a similar situation, I would have tried my best not to become a victim of greed and unrealistic aspirations. Had I lost a friend's necklace, I would have revealed the truth about the loss and been ready to face the consequences. I would have been honest about it, and that would have definitely paved the way out for me.

Talk about it (Page 46)

Question 1:

The characters in this story speak in English. Do you think this is their language? What clues are there in the story about the language its characters must be speaking in?

Answer:

Although the characters in the story speak English, it was probably not their language. Guy De Maupassant, the writer, wrote the story in French, and it was later translated into English. There are ample pointers in the text that indicate the French origin of the characters, such as the salutations used before the surnames of characters such 'Monsieur and Mme Loisel', 'Mme Forestier' and 'George Ramponneau', the minister's name. Besides, there are the words used to denote currency, such as 'Franc' and 'Sou'. The location of the shop was at 'Palais Royal' and 'Champs Elysees', which again point to the French origin of the characters in the story.

Question 2:

Honesty is the best policy.

Answer:

Honesty is indeed the best policy. We all know that hypocrisy and pride seem very rewarding and attractive initially. But, a person who follows the path of falsehood is likely to lead a life of misery, suffering and utter gloom. On the contrary, an honest person might face difficulties in life at the beginning, but it ultimately gives him/her all the happiness that he/she rightfully deserves. Therefore, honesty is the ultimate choice to lead a life of contentment, harmony and eternal happiness.

Question 3:

We should be content with what life gives us.

Answer:

Yes, we should be at peace and content with what life gives us. Every person in this world is born in different conditions, and their entire life is a great mystery. Some people are born with all riches, luxury, name and fame. On the other hand, some are born in suffering and crushing poverty which make it difficult for them to survive. Hence, there is a famous adage which says, "Cut your coat according to your cloth". This means that one must learn to live within one's capacity and be content with what one has. People can try to improve their financial position through honest means and eventually be happy with how they manage their life peacefully.