



THE VILLAGE
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
"We Nurture Dreams"

The Necklace Summary

The Necklace was written by Guy de Maupassant. He was a famous 19th-century author popularly remembered for his short stories based on real-life situations. This fictional short story is about a pretty lady, Matilda Loisel, who lives in a small yet cosy flat with her husband. He worked as a clerk in the office of the Board of Education and loved his wife very much. They were not so well-off to be able to have a luxurious lifestyle. They led a simple life. Matilda was unhappy about her condition and always desired to be rich. She often felt disappointed and brooded about her financial condition for not having a huge mansion to live in and riches to splurge on. She always desired to wear beautiful dresses with matching jewellery, but she had none of it.

One fine day, Mme Loisel's husband brought her an invitation to a grand ball party at the Minister's residence. He expected his wife to be excited upon seeing the invitation letter. On the contrary, when his wife saw the invite, she expressed her resentment over it and threw the letter aside and started sobbing over her condition. When asked, she complained about not having a pretty dress to wear on such a grand occasion. She wanted to look beautiful and well-groomed at the party such that everyone should admire her. Feeling pity for Matilda, her loving husband gave her all his savings of four hundred francs to buy a beautiful dress. He had saved that amount to buy a rifle for himself but gave the money to his wife to buy her dress.

Soon, the week of the grand party approached. Matilda seemed to be anxious again. This time she felt that she didn't have any matching jewellery to pair with her lovely dress. To this, her husband suggested she request her friend, Mme Jeanne Forestier, for a neckpiece. Matilda went to Jeanne's house immediately and borrowed a sparkling diamond necklace.

Mme Loisel went to the ball party with her husband and was happy about her appearance. She was elated that she was successful in garnering the attention of

the attendees at the reception. They enjoyed a gala time at the party. Soon, they were ready to head back home in the wee hours of the morning. When they reached home, Matilda realised that the necklace was missing around her neck. She and her husband were panic-stricken that it might have fallen in the cab which they had boarded while returning from the party. Her husband immediately went to search the streets just in case it might have fallen there but to no avail.

Soon after, he approached the police and put up an advertisement in the newspapers offering a reward, but all went in vain. With no option left, Matilda's husband asked her to write a letter to Mme Forestier and mention that the clasp had broken and she would return it once repaired. In the meantime, they had successfully found a replica of the necklace and decided to replace it with the old one. However, the new necklace was very expensive and cost thirty-six thousand francs. Matilda's father-in-law had left eighteen thousand francs for his son. They decided to borrow the rest of the money to buy the expensive necklace. They bought the necklace with all the money they had and borrowed funds.

In the next few years, their condition worsened as their lives took a drastic turn due to the huge loan. They moved to a smaller place to live in, and Matilda did all the household chores by herself. Her husband worked odd hours in multiple jobs to repay the loan. Ten years passed, and with that, their appearances also changed due to the extreme workload. One day, Matilda met Mme Jeanne Forestier, who couldn't identify her as she looked weary and aged. Mme Loisel revealed the truth to her friend about how she and her husband were left in ruins to repay the loan of the expensive necklace. Hearing this, Mme Forestier was stunned and told her that the necklace that she gave her for the ball party was a fake necklace that was worth not more than five hundred francs.

The Necklace focuses that one should be content and satisfied with their belongings and not crave expensive items that are not within their economic capabilities. Extreme desire for lavish items leads to unhappiness and loss of peace of mind.

The Necklace - Important Questions

Short Answer Type Questions

Question 1. What would Matilda often dream of?

Answer: Matilda would often dream of all the delicacies, luxuries, elegant dinners, marvellous dishes, rich silver, beautiful dresses, jewels, adoration and a life of glory. She would escape into her dreams from the dullness of her very humble existence.

Question 2. Why did Matilda throw the invitation spitefully?

Answer: Matilda was simply displeased when her husband showed the invitation. She felt humiliated and threw the invitation spitefully as she had nothing beautiful enough to wear to such a grand gathering.

Question 3. Describe Mme Loisel's success at the ball.

Or

Do you think M Loisel had an enjoyable evening at the ball? Give reasons for your answer. **[CBSE 2014]**

Answer: Mme Loisel was the centre of attention at the ball. Her beauty, her grace, her joy and the gorgeous smile captivated all. Men sought to be presented to her. She danced happily at her conquest of all.

Question 4. What excuse did Loiseles put up to explain the delay in returning the necklace?

Answer: Loiseles had lost the necklace and needed time to find an identical one. Thus, Loiseles wrote a letter to Mme Forestier with an excuse that the clasp of the necklace was broken and they needed time to get it repaired.

Question 5. How did Loiseles manage to pay for the necklace?

Answer: The necklace cost Loiseles thirty six thousand francs. Loisel had to chip in his entire inheritance of eighteen thousand francs and the rest he had to borrow from the usurers.

Question 6. How did Mme Loisel now know the life of necessity? **[CBSE 2016]**

Answer: To pay the debt of eighteen thousand francs, Loiseles let go of their decent living. They lived in impoverished neighbourhood. Matilda had to cook, clean, wash, mend, bring water and bargain with the butcher and grocer. Her husband worked day and night to save every sou.

Question 8. What do you think of M Loisel as a husband? Cite instances from the text to support your answer.

Answer: M Loisel was a caring and supportive husband. He sacrificed his wishes and the money he inherited from his father for his wife.

Question 9. Why was Matilda's friend astonished to see her at the end of the story? **[CBSE 2012]**

Answer: Jeanne, Matilda's friend, could not recognise her as she seemed an old and worn out poor woman. Matilda was no longer her former beautiful and Joyous self.

Question 10. How did the Loiseles react when they realised that the necklace had been lost?

Answer: Matilda Loisel became very sad when they realised that the necklace had been lost. They were sure that the loss of necklace would make their life hell because Mr Loisel was only a petty clerk and it was very difficult for him to replace necklace of diamond.

Question 11. Why did Matilda not like to visit her rich friend?

Answer: Matilda had inferiority complex. Whenever she visited her rich friend she felt dejected and disappointed because of her poverty. She used to compare her lodgings to that of her friend's. She did not have attractive dress and jewellery to adorn herself with. That is why, she did not like to visit her rich friend.

Question 12. Why is Matilda unhappy with her life?

Answer: Matilda is unhappy with her life because she ceaselessly, felt herself born for all delicacies and luxuries. The shabby walls, the worn chairs in her house tortured and angered her.

Question 13. What had Matilda's husband saved the money for? Why did he then part with his savings?

Answer: Matilda's husband had saved a good amount of money to buy a gun for him. But when his wife refused to attend the party without a new dress, he had to give up buying the gun. He used the saved four hundred francs to buy her costume.

Question 14. What was the cause of Matilda's ruin? How could she have avoided it?

Answer: Matilda's aspiration and unrealistic dreams were the cause of her ruin. She paid due importance to materialistic things. She could have easily avoided it if she had remained within her means. She was not a practical lady and had not understood her husband's feelings.

Question 15. What did Mme Forestier tell Matilda about the reality of her Necklace?

Answer: After having lost the borrowed necklace, Matilda replaced it with a diamond necklace bought for thirty-six thousand francs. But Mme Forestier told her that her necklace was false costing about 500 francs.

Question 16. What changes came into the life of Loiseles after the necklace was lost?

Answer: They had to shift to a cheaper room and dismiss the servant. She did all the household works and shopping by herself. She fetched water, washed the floor, utensils and dirty clothes by herself. Matilda's husband worked in the evening and late at night to pay back the debt.

Question 17. Why was Mme Forestier shocked to hear Matilda's story?

Answer: One Sunday, while walking, Matilda happened to see Mme Forestier. Matilda called her, but she could not recognise Matilda because she looked much older than her age. Mme Forestier was shocked to know that Matilda had suffered so much worrying about losing her necklace of real diamonds, whereas it was false.

Question 18. What kind of a person is Mme Loisel? Why is she always unhappy?

Answer: Mme. Loisel is a woman who lives in the world of dreams. She gives much value to her dreams and hence overlooks the realities of life. That is why she is always unhappy as dreams are a virtual reality and can't be true.

Question 19. What, was the cause of Matilda's ruin? How could she have avoided it?

Answer: The cause of Matilda's ruin was her dissatisfaction with whatever life offered her. She was always unhappy. She felt that she was born for all the delicacies and luxuries of life. She disliked being in her current circumstances. She could have avoided this ruin by bringing content with whatever she had.

Long Answer Type Questions

Question 1. Mme Forestier proved to be a true friend. Elucidate.

[CBSE2015]

Answer: Mme Forestier turns out to be an interesting character. She plays a very vital role in the story. As a friend to Matilda, we find her to be really genuine as she helps Matilda in the hour of her need. When Mme Loisel needs to borrow jewels, she turns to Mme Forestier. Mme Forestier does not refuse. Displaying her generosity, she opens up the entire array of her jewels for Matilda to choose from. Also, she is considerate when Loisel's

delay the return of the necklace. Surprisingly, at the end of the story, she concludes the entire narrative.

Without even a moment's hesitation, she reveals to Matilda that her necklace was just a fake. She is not at all worried in the light of the fact that she may have to return the necklace. It shows her honesty. Rather, she, like a true friend, feels bad for Matilda at her unnecessary suffering. We find her sympathising with Mme Loisel. She is indeed a gem of a friend.

Question 2. On inability to accept our circumstances may lead to an unhappy life. Explain with reference to the story "The Necklace".

Answer: We fail to recognise the situation in which we are placed but rather keep on grumbling. We become frustrated and want our life to be different. We should accept the life as it comes to us and should not keep on cribbing about unhappy circumstances. As we read the story 'The Necklace' we find that Matilda is not at all happy with her husband. She had wished her life to be luxurious. It is this frustration of hers which puts her in a fix and spoils rest of her life. She does not work for solution but rather complicates the situation for her.

Question 3. 'Love is blind' is a phrase that was justified by Monsieur Loisel in the lesson 'The Necklace'. Substantiate the answer from the story you have read in about 100 – 120 words.

Answer: Monsieur Loisel's acceptance and contentment differ considerably from Matilda's emotional outbursts and constant dissatisfaction, and though he never fully understands his wife, he does his best to please her. When Monsieur Loisel tries to appease Matilda, he does it so blindly,

wanting only to make her happy. When she declares that she cannot attend the party because she has nothing to wear, he gives her money to purchase a dress. When she complains that she has no proper jewellery, he urges her to visit Madame Forestier to borrow some.

Monsieur Loisel's eagerness and willingness to please Matilda becomes his downfall when she loses the necklace. He is the one who devises a plan for purchasing a replacement necklace and orchestrates the loans and mortgages that help them pay for it. Although the decision costs him ten years of hard work, he does not complain or imagine an alternate fate. It is as if his desires do not even exist or, at the very least, his desires are meaningless if they stand in the way of Matilda's.

Question 5. What changes came in the lifestyle of Matilda after she had lost the necklace?

Answer: To return the borrowed money Mr and Mrs Loisel suffered for ten long years. First, they sent away the maid servant. Then they changed their lodging and rented some rooms. Now Matilda learnt heavy cares of household life, she had to do the difficult chores of her kitchen. She had to wash dishes, greasy pots and stew pans. She had to use her rosy nails to wash the greasy pots and the bottoms of the stew pans.

She had to wash dirty clothes and to hang them on the line to dry. Then each morning she had to take down the refuse to the street. She also had to bring up the water for daily use. She had to stop at each landing to catch her breath. She did not have much money so she haggled with the shopkeepers to get reduction in prices.

Once she was very beautiful and used to wear beautiful dresses. Now she seemed old. Now she looked like a common household woman. She had badly dressed hair and dirty dresses. Her hands were red and she spoke in a loud tone. She washed the floors with large pails of water.

Question 6. Matilda would not have suffered much if she had confessed the loss of necklace. Do you think our mistakes become more serious if we try to cover them?

Answer: Yes, a small mistake makes our life miserable and dark. People who are open-minded and speak the truth stay much happier. A little mistake made by Matilda changed her life completely. If Matilda had confessed that she had lost Madam Forestier's necklace, her life would have been different.

Confession could have brought peace of mind. Matilda would have at once come to know that necklace is not a real but it is an imitation. Hard work which Matilda put into repay the borrowed necklace could have been saved. We all get a very important message that we should not delay in admitting our mistake.

Question 7. Our inability to accept our limitations may lead to an unhappy life. Analyze with reference to the story 'The Necklace'.

Answer: We fail to recognise the situation in which we are placed but rather keep on grumbling. We become frustrated and want our life to be different. We should accept the life as it comes to us and should not keep on cribbing about unhappy circumstances. As we read the story 'The Necklace' we find that Matilda is not at all happy with her husband. She had wished her life to

be luxurious. It is this frustration of hers which puts her in a fix and spoils rest of her life. She does not work for solution but rather complicates the situation for her.

Question 8. The course of the Loisels' life changed due to the necklace. Comment.

Answer: The course of the Loisel's life changed due to the necklace. After replacing the lost necklace with a new one, they had to repay all the money that they had borrowed to buy the new necklace. They sent away the maid and changed their lodgings. They rented some rooms in an attic. Matilda learnt the odd work of the kitchen. She washed the dishes, soiled linen, their clothes and dishcloths.

She even took down the refuse to the street each morning and brought up the water, stopping at each landing to catch her breath. She went to the grocer's, the butcher's, and the fruitier's, with a basket on her arm, shopping, haggling to save her money. Loisel worked in the evenings, putting the books of some merchants in order. At night, he did copy work at five sous a page. This lasted for ten years, and at the end of the said period, they were finally able to repay their lenders.

Question 9. What would have happened to Matilda if she had confessed to her friend that she had lost her necklace?

Answer: If Matilda would have confessed to her friend she had lost her necklace, she might have been in lesser trouble than what she had to face after having replaced the necklace. Her friend would have definitely been angry with her. Most likely, she would also have asked Matilda to replace it

and given her the details from where she had bought the necklace and how much it had cost her. Matilda would have thus known that the jewels in the necklace were actually not real diamonds. It would have cost her a far lesser amount to replace it. Matilda would thus have saved herself and her husband of all the trouble they went through and life would have been much better and easier for them.