

The Last Leaf- Extra Questions and Notes

The Last Leaf

Important Questions

CBSE CLASS

NCERT
Easy Notes

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Introduction of the lesson- THE LAST LEAF

'The Last Leaf' is a famous story of O. Henry. It is a sentimental story. Sue and Johnsy were two young artistic friends. They lived together. Once Johnsy fell ill. There was an ivy creeper outside the window. Its leaves were falling. Johnsy had a fancy that she would die when the last leaf on the ivy fell. She was worried. An old painter named Behrman lived downstairs. He considered the girls like his daughters. Sue told of Johnsy's fancy to Behrman. He promised to help her. That night it was snowing. The last leaf also fell. But Behrman worked all night and painted a leaf on the wall. Next morning Johnsy was surprised to see that there was still a leaf on the ivy. Her will to live returned. Soon she recovered. But old Behrman caught pneumonia and died. Thus he sacrificed his own life in order to save Johnsy.

(‘The Last leaf’ O, Henry की एक प्रसिद्ध कहानी है। यह एक भावनात्मक कहानी है। स्यू और जॉन्सी दो युवा चित्रकार सहेलियाँ थीं। वे इकट्ठी रहती थीं। एक बार जॉन्सी बीमार पड़ गई। खिड़की के बाहर एक बेल थी। इसके पत्ते गिर रहे थे। जॉन्सी को एक वहम था कि जब बेल का आखिरी पत्ता गिर जाएगा तो वह भी मर जाएगी। स्यू चिंतित थी। बैहरमैन नामक एक बूढ़ा चित्रकार नीचे की मंजिल में रहता था। वह इन लड़कियों को अपनी बेटियों की तरह मानता था। स्यू ने बैहरमैन को जॉन्सी के वहम के बारे में बताया। उसने उसकी सहायता करने का वायदा किया। उस रात बर्फ पड़ रही थी। आखिरी पत्ता भी गिर गया। लेकिन बैहरमैन ने पूरी रात काम किया और दीवार पर एक पत्ता चित्रित कर दिया। अगली प्रातः जॉन्सी यह देखकर हैरान हो गई कि बेल पर अभी भी एक पत्ता था। उसकी जीने की इच्छा लौट आई। जल्दी ही वह ठीक हो गई। मगर बूढ़े मैहरमैन को निमोनिया हो गया और मर गया। इस प्रकार उसने जॉन्सी का जीवन बचाने के लिए अपना जीवन कुबान कर दिया।)

Theme

The story is based on the theme that life is precious and faith and hope should never be lost. We come across many hindrances in life and they should be overcome by fighting back in high spirits. Depression can lead to disaster even when the situation is not bad. Another theme that runs through the story is that devoted friendship can be succour during times of crisis. A minor theme of the story is the importance of art in human lives. The old painter knowingly sacrifices his life in his urge to create a masterpiece.

Justify the title of THE LAST LEAF

TITLE

The title "The Last Leaf" raises the curiosity of the reader regarding a happening or an event towards some kind of 'end'. The word 'last' reflects the main idea of the story which is the last breath of Johnsy. The last leaf becomes the last hope of survival and keeps the reader hooked until the end. Throughout, the last ivy leaf remains the central point. In the early part of the story it remains associated with Johnsy's ailment and depression while later on, it conveys the message of courage, hope and optimism. The last leaf saves Johnsy's life and fulfils Behrman's lifelong dream to paint a masterpiece. However, it also turns out to be his last masterpiece, too. Hence the title is very apt.

Message

The chief message that this story gives is the spirit of sacrifice we need to have in our life. The old artist, Behrman sacrificed his life so that Johnsy could live. In this process, he also achieved his ambition of painting a masterpiece.

The other message is that we should have a positive attitude in life. Johnsy was under depression and she felt her life was linked to the leaves on the ivy creeper. This prevented her from getting better from her illness. She was also causing harm to her friend, Sue. Had she adopted a positive attitude, Behrman would not have died. Our thinking and attitude affect the lives of other people too.

Justification of the Title

The leaves of the ivy creeper are falling fast. Johnsy, the sick girl, feels that she would die as soon as the last leaf would fall from the ivy creeper. One night, only one leaf remains on the ivy. It would fall the same night. The old artist, Behrman, decides to go out in the rain and paint an artificial leaf as soon as the last leaf fall. So, since Johnsy makes her life depends upon the last leaf, the title is appropriate. The last leaf on the ivy helps one person to survive but results in the death of another person.

Character Sketches

Behrman: Behrman is a 60-years-old painter. He lived on the ground floor of the house where Sue and Johnsy lived. He had a lifelong dream to paint a masterpiece. Sue told him about the condition of Johnsy. Johnsy felt that she would die, once the last leaf fell from the ivy creeper. Behrman thought of a plan

to save Johnsy. He went out in the rainy and stormy night and painted a picture of a leaf on the ivy. Johnsy saw the leaf the next morning and got back her will to live. But Behrman died of pneumonia because he had been out all night in the cold. Thus Behrman made the supreme sacrifice of giving up his life for the sake of another person. He was a great soul. In this process, he achieved his ambition of painting a masterpiece.

Johnsy: Johnsy was a young artist who lived with her friend Sue. She fell ill very seriously and had pneumonia. She had the fancy idea that she would die once the last leaf on the ivy creeper, outside her window, would fall down. The leaves were falling down very fast as the weather was stormy. Only one leaf remained. She felt that the last leaf will fall in the night and she would die. But Behrman went out in the cold night and painted a leaf on the wall. Johnsy saw this leaf the next morning and got back her will to live. But her foolish attitudes lead to the death of Behrman. She was a weak-hearted woman.

Sue: Sue was a young artist who lived with Johnsy. She tried her best to feel Johnsy better and help in to get over her illness. But Johnsy would not listen to her. She was adamant. Sue sought the help of Behrman to solve the issue. Behrman solved the problem by painting a leaf on the wall. So we find that Sue is a true friend of Johnsy.

Vocabulary

Artist—a person who creates art, especially paintings or drawing; Storey—floor; Seriously—badly; Pneumonia—a lung infection causing illness; Worry—concern; Condition—position; Respond—to reply; Whisper—murmur, speak very softly

using one's breath; Anxiously—eagerly; Ivy—a climbing plant; Creeper—a plant that grows up trees or walls or along the ground; Autumn—a season when leaves fall; Finality—determination; Nonsense—ridiculous or not true; Forever—for all time; Curtain—a piece of material to cover a window, etc.; Beg—make an earnest request; Peacefully—calmly; Miner—a person who works in a mine; Masterpiece—best work; Stupid—fool; Complain—speak out against something; Refuse—to deny; Tiptoe—to walk using front parts of the feet without making noise; Heavily—very much; Icy-cold—chilling; Feeble—weak; Reluctantly—unwillingly; Fierce—very fast; Surely—undoubtedly; Energetically—full of excitement; Seem—to appear; Cooperate—to work together; Depressed—very sad; Gloomy—sad; Hug—to embrace; Recover—get well; Janitor—watchman; Shiver—to tremble; Wonder—surprise; Flutter—to move.

MESSAGE

The story gives the message that the power of hope and optimism can help win the most difficult situations. Sue does not lose hope and keeps trying until the end to revive the desire to live in her friend Johnsy. Her optimism finally succeeds in reviving Johnsy's interest in life and helps her recover from pneumonia.

Another message given by the story is that friends are our saviours. Sue keeps telling Johnsy that she has to live for her friend's sake and her own life would be

meaningless without Johnsy. She tends to her by talking about cheerful things, giving her food, calling in a doctor, and even seeking help from neighbours.

A latent message of the story is that sacrifice is a great virtue. Bauman sacrifices his life so that Johnsy gets over her depression. This sacrifice does not go in vain. Not only does Johnsy recover but Behrman also manages to create the masterpiece that he had yearned for all his life.

DETAILED SUMMARY

'The Last Lear is a touching story. It describes the sacrifice made by an old painter named Rebuttal). He sacrificed his life to save a young girl-artist's life.

Greenwich Village was situated in the west of Washington Square. This village became a colony of artists. Here two young girls, Sue and Johnsy also lived. They had set up a joint studio on the top floor of a three-storeyed old building. These girls came from different places. But once they had met and become friends. Now they lived like sisters.

In the month of November, pneumonia attacked the artist's colony. A number of people died. Johnsy also fell ill with pneumonia. Sue tried her best to nurse Johnsy. But her condition worsened. She became very weak. The doctor told Sue that Johnsy's chances of recovery were very few. She had lost the will to live. He advised Sue to make Johnsy take interest in life. Only then she could be saved.

There was an ivy creeper on the back wall of the next house. In the cold stormy, wind, its leaves were falling. Johnsy developed a fancy that she would also die when the last leaf of this creeper fell down. Sue came to know of this fancy of Johnsy. She told Johnsy that there was no link between the last leaf and her life. But Johnsy did not listen to her. She said that there were twelve leaves left on the creeper. These were falling fast and she would die when the last one fell. She said that she expected that all leaves would fall in the night. Then she fell asleep.

After Johnsy had fallen asleep, Sue went downstairs to meet Behrman, an old painter. He was past sixty but was a failure in art. He was always talking about the masterpiece which he was going to paint. But he had never started it. He was a drunkard. He earned a little through his paintings. Sue told Behrman about Johnsy's fancy. Behrman decided to help her.

That night it was raining and snowing heavily. Old Behrman took a ladder and a few colours and went out. He found that all the leaves of the creeper had fallen. But he painted a leaf on the wall.

Next morning, when Johnsy got up, she looked out of the window. She was surprised to find that the last leaf was still there. She knew that fierce winds had blown during the night. Still, the leaf was there. She realised that it was a sin to wish to die. Her will to live returned. She started recovering. The next day, the doctor said that she was out of danger.

That afternoon, they came to know that old Behrman had died. Sue told Johnsy that he had painted the leaf on the wall when the last leaf fell. He had gone out in snow and rain in order to paint the leaf. He had caught pneumonia and died. This leaf was, in fact, his masterpiece.

Extra Questions and Answers

EXTRACTS

She talked about clothes and fashions, but Johnsy did not respond. Johnsy continued to lie still on her bed. She brought her drawing-board into Johnsy's room and started painting.

(a) Why did Sue talk about clothes and fashion?

Ans: Sue talked about clothes and fashion because she was trying to cheer up Johnsy who was depressed due to her illness.

(b) Why did Johnsy continue to lie still on her bed?

Ans: Johnsy was suffering from pneumonia and was weak and depressed. So she continued to lie still in her bed.

(c) Why did Sue bring her drawing-board into Johnsy's room?

Ans: Sue brought her drawing-board into Johnsy's room to give her company and help her not to feel lonely.

(d) Which value of Sue's character is revealed through these lines?

Ans: These lines reveal Sue's value as a true friend. She makes special efforts to divert her friend's mind away from negative thoughts.

(II)

He was a sixty-year-old painter. His lifelong dream was to paint a masterpiece but that had remained a dream. Sue poured out her worries to Behrman.

(a) Who is being talked about here? The person being talked about here is Mr Behrman,

Ans: Sue and Johnsy's neighbour, who lived on the ground floor of the same building where the two girls lived.

(b) What was his lifelong dream? Why had it remained unfulfilled so far?

Ans: His lifelong dream was to paint a masterpiece. It had remained unfulfilled so far because he had not found any opportunity or inspiration to paint the masterpiece.

(c) Why did Sue pour out her worries to Behrman?

Ans: Sue poured out her worries to Behrman because she was alarmed at her friend, Johnsy's deteriorating condition and wanted guidance and support from the elderly well-wisher.

(d) Why do you think Behrman listened to Sue?

Ans: Mr Behrman, the old painter, listened to Sue because he was a compassionate person and a good neighbour.

(III)

Sue hugged Johnsy. Then she gave her lots of hot soup and a mirror. Johnsy combed her hair and smiled brightly.

(a)When did Sue hug Johnsy? Why?

Ans: Sue hugged Johnsy because she was happy to get a positive response from her for the first time after her illness. This raised hope about Johnsy's recovery.

Why did Sue give her soup?

Ans: Sue gave her soup to replenish her energy since a depressed Johnsy had not been eating properly since her illness.

(b)Why did Sue give her a mirror too?

Ans: Sue gave Johnsy a mirror too so that Johnsy could comb her hair and make her appearance brighter and better.

(c)What made Johnsy smile brightly?

Ans: The kindled hope of her recovery and survival made Johnsy smile brightly.

(IV)

Then they found a ladder and a lantern still lighted lying near his bed. There were also some brushes and green and yellow paints on the floor near the ladder.

(a) Who is 'his' in these lines?

Ans: 'His' in these lines is Behrman, the sixty-year-old painter and neighbour of the young artists, Sue and Johnsy.

(b) Why was the lantern still lighted?

Ans: The lantern was still lighted because Behrman had been painting the leaf outside throughout the stormy night. He was completely wet and did not have the stamina to switch it off.

(c) Why were the paints green and yellow?

Ans: The paints were green and yellow because Behrman had painted a pale yet live leaf using these colours.

(d) Why had a ladder been used?

Ans: The ladder had been used to paint the masterpiece leaf at the same high spot of the ivy creeper where the actual last leaf fluttered in the strong icy winds.

CHARACTERS

Sue

Sue is a young artist who has a kind heart. She dearly loves her friend Johnsy. As a responsible girl, she takes good care of Johnsy by giving her soup and calls in the doctor before things go out of control. She is supportive and tries to cheer up her friend by talking to her about clothes and fashion. She brings her drawing-board into Johnsy's room so that she does not feel lonely. She even whistles while painting just to pep up Johnsy.

Sue is an optimist and never stops trying. Every time Johnsy talks depressingly, Sue comforts her by assuring that everything would be fine. When Johnsy fails in responding positively to all her attempts, Sue seeks help from Mr Behrman, their elderly neighbour.

Sue tries desperately to make her friend believe that all would be well. She even tells Johnsy that she wants her to live for her sake. She represents strong human bonds that provide unflinching support and boost morale when one struggles through depression.

As a true artist, Sue figures out that the last leaf was actually Mr Behrman's masterpiece, for it did not flutter. Sue this is a symbol of undying hope and selfless friendship.

Johnsy

Johnsy is a young artist who lives with her friend Sue. Her physical ailment makes her an emotional wreck and she becomes depressed. In this state, she begins to nurse a silly idea that she will die as soon as the last leaf on the old ivy creeper falls. She understands that her friend Sue loves her a lot but her own depressed frame of mind hinders her recovery. Finally, Johnsy realizes her folly. She admits that she had not been good to Sue and had been uncooperative and wicked. She also admits that she had been depressed and realised that it was a sin to want to die. Thus Johnsy is a simple and honest girl who realises her mistake and admits it without any tantrums. Her character puts across the message that medical treatment works only when the patient has faith and hope.

Behrman

Behrman, an elderly painter, lived on the ground floor of the building in which Sue and Johnsy lived. He was sixty-year-old and had a dream to paint a masterpiece some day He was very compassionate and helpful. When Sue approaches him for help, Behrman immediately goes with her to see Johnsy. He is a large-hearted person because he listens to Sue's problem and does not reveal his plan to help. He sacrifices his life in order to convince Johnsy that the last leaf would never fall. He is gritty and is not deterred by his age when he voluntarily undertakes the arduous task of painting the leaf on a stormy night. His finesse as an accomplished artist is revealed when he paints his masterpiece – a nearly 'real' leaf. Thus,

Behrman emerges as a true artist who lives through his immortal creation – a life-like and living ‘last leaf’.

Very Short Answer Type Important Questions

1. Who were Sue and Johnsy?

Ans. Sue and Johnsy were two artists.

2. What happened to Johnsy?

Ans. Johnsy fell very seriously ill in November.

3. What fear did Johnsy have in her mind?

Ans. She feared that she would die on the day when the last leaf on the creeper fell.

4. Why was the doctor confused about Johnsy’s illness?

Ans. The doctor was confused because no medicine was proving effective on Johnsy.

5. What was happening to the leaves on the creeper outside Johnsy's window?

Ans. The leaves were falling because of the extreme cold and strong wind.

6. Who was Behrman?

Ans. Behrman was an old painter.

7. What did Behrman do?

Ans. He painted a picture of creeper with a leaf on the wall.

8. What happened to Behrman?

Ans. Behrman died of pneumonia.

9. What was Behrman's dream?

Ans. Behrman's dream was to paint a masterpiece.

10. What was Behrman's masterpiece?

Ans. The painting of a creeper with a leaf on it was Behrman's masterpiece.

11. Was Johnsy's life saved?

Ans. Yes, Johnsy's life was saved.

12. Who saved Johnsy's life?

Ans. The old painter Behrman saved Johnsy's life.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS.

(to be answered in about 30 – 40 words each)

Q1. Who were Sue and Johnsy? Where did they live?

Ans: Sue and Johnsy were young artist friends who were struggling to establish themselves in the world of art. Both lived in a small flat which was on the third floor of an old house. They shared this place.

Q2. Why did Sue become worried when Johnsy fell ill?

Ans: Sue became worried because Johnsy would lie in her bed without moving, just gazing out of the window. Johnsy had pneumonia and it seemed curable but her condition indicated otherwise.

Q3. Why was Johnsy's condition worrisome according to the doctor?

Ans: According to the doctor, Johnsy's condition was worrisome because she did not show any signs of improvement despite good treatment. He thought that perhaps she had lost her will to live and no medicine could help her in this negative state of mind.

Q4. How did Johnsy associate herself with the falling leaves?

Ans: It was autumn and the ivy creeper leaves were falling gradually. This depressed an already ill Johnsy and strangely enough she associated her falling health with the leaves. She believed that she would die when the last leaf fell. Q5. How could Johnsy's life be saved? Johnsy's life could be saved by reviving her interest in things around her. She was in a state of depression and had to be convinced that she could recover fully if she had the will to live.

Q5. How did Sue try to revive Johnsy's interest in things around her?

Ans: Sue talked about clothes and fashions to draw Johnsy's interest in things around her. She also moved her drawing-board to Johnsy's room and whistled as she painted, to keep Johnsy's mind off her illness.

Q6. How did Sue help Johnsy during her illness?

Ans: Sue helped Johnsy by looking after all her needs. She would give her hot soup from time to time and sit by her side and talk to her. She called the doctor and even sought help from their neighbour Behrman.

Q7. Why was Johnsy counting backwards while looking out of the window?

Ans: Johnsy kept looking out of the window and counted backwards to note the number of leaves left on the ivy-creeper. She believed that she would die when the last leaf fell whereas the leaves were falling in a normal process of nature during the autumn season.

Q8. What did Sue see when she heard Johnsy counting backwards?

Ans: When Sue heard Johnsy counting backwards, she looked out of the window and saw an old ivy creeper climbing half way up the brick wall opposite their window. The creeper was shedding leaves due to the strong autumn wind.

Q9. How did Sue try to convince Johnsy that her belief about dying with the last leaf was nonsense?

Ans: Sue immediately rubbished Johnsy's belief as nonsense. She tried to convince her by telling that old ivy leaves had nothing to do with her illness. The doctor too was confident that she would get better.

Q10. Why did Sue seek the promise from Johnsy not to look out of the window while she completed her painting?

Ans: Sue sought this promise because she did not want Johnsy to go deeper into the depression on seeing the ivy leaves fall. Moreover, she could not even pull the

curtains to stop Johnsy from looking out as she needed the incoming light to complete her painting and get money for the two of them by selling it.

Q11. Who was Behrman? Why did Sue share her worry with him?

Ans: Behrman was a sixty-year-old painter who lived on the ground floor of the same building as Sue and Johnsy. Sue shared her worry with him because Behrman was an elderly person and his vast experience of life could be of great help.

Q12. Behrman has a dream. What is it? Does it come true? (Textual)

Or

What was Behrman's dream? How did it come true?

Ans: Behrman dreamt of painting a masterpiece some day. His dream did come true when he painted a leaf that was a near replica of a real leaf. This masterpiece saved a young life and fulfilled Behrman's ambition too. Unfortunately, it cost him his life.

Q13. 'I'm tired of waiting.' Why did Johnsy say so to Sue?

Ans: Johnsy wanted Sue to finish her painting quickly so that she could see the last leaf fall. She believed that she would die with it but this was taking too long. She became tired of waiting for the last leaf to fall.

Q14. What did Sue and Behrman see from the window of the room next to Johnsy's?

Ans: Sue and Behrman saw that only one leaf was left on the ivy creeper that was fluttering in the icy-cold wind accompanied by heavy rain. Under such conditions, it was bound to fall anytime soon.

Q15. Why was Sue nervous and reluctant while drawing the curtains on the morning after the storm?

Ans: Sue was nervous because she was certain that the last leaf had fallen at night. This could make Johnsy quit all hope of survival as she had associated her death with the falling leaves of the ivy creeper.

Q16. What made Sue exclaim on looking out of the window on the morning after the storm?

Or

What did Sue point out to Johnsy when she looked out of the window in the morning after the storm?

Ans: Sue exclaimed in amazement and delight because the last leaf was still there on the ivy creeper. She pointed out to Johnsy that the leaf looked quite green and healthy. It had not fallen in spite of the fierce winds and rain. This meant that Johnsy too could recover.

Q17. How did Sue try to encourage Johnsy?

Ans: Sue tried to encourage Johnsy by telling her that she won't die and that she had to live for the sake of her friends. She further pleaded with Johnsy to spare a thought for her as she could not live without Johnsy.

Q18. What did Johnsy admit to Sue when the last leaf did not fall?

Or

When did Johnsy realise her mistake?

Ans: When Johnsy saw the last leaf intact, she admitted that Sue had looked after her so lovingly and she, in turn, had been a bad, wicked, gloomy, and non-cooperative girl. She had now realised that it was a sin to want to die.

Q19. When and why was the doctor's report encouraging about Johnsy's condition?

Ans: The doctor gave an encouraging report about Johnsy's condition after examining her in the afternoon a day after the storm. He believed that the report was encouraging because now Johnsy had regained her will to live.

Q20. What news about Behrman did the doctor convey to Sue when he came to examine Johnsy?

Ans: When the doctor came to examine Johnsy, he told Sue that Behrman too was suffering from pneumonia. He said that he was confident of Johnsy's recovery but feared that there was no hope for Behrman.

Q21. What led to Behrman's unfortunate death?

Or

Why did Behrman spend a night out in the storm and rain?

Ans: Behrman died because he had spent the entire stormy night painting a replica of the last leaf on the ivy creeper and had caught pneumonia as a result. He did this to save Johnsy's life. He did not want her to see the creeper without its last leaf and lose the will to live

Q22. Which items were found near Behrman when he died? What did this signify?

Ans: A ladder and a lighted lantern were found near Behrman's bed when he died. There were also some brushes and green and yellow AT paints on the floor near the ladder. This signified that the last green and fresh leaf had been painted by Behrman all through the stormy night.

Q23. What is Behrman's masterpiece? What makes Sue say so? (Textual)

Ans: Behrman's masterpiece was the leaf that he painted on the wall opposite Johnsy's window. He had braved icy winds and rains at night while painting the leaf. Sue called it a masterpiece as it was green and healthy like a real leaf. Besides, it had saved Johnsy's life by reviving her will to live. Thus, Behrman's painting was a masterpiece in the sense that it had saved a precious life and was able to fox an artist.

Q24. What saved Johnsy's life? The last leaf painted by Behrman on the wall opposite Johnsy's

Ans: window saved her life. The leaf was a true replica of the last leaf hanging on the ivy creeper. Johnsy mistook it to be a real leaf and felt that she had been wicked and it was a sin to want to die.

Q25. 'It looks quite green and healthy'. What were the cause of the leaf's colour and freshness?

Ans: The last leaf on the ivy creeper looked quite green and healthy because it was not a real leaf, but a painted one. Behrman had painted it overnight to help save Johnsy's life.

Q.26. Why did Johnsy keep looking out of the window?

Ans. There was a creeper on the wall facing Johnsy's window. She had a fancy that she would die when the last leaf of the creeper fell. The leaves were falling because it was an autumn season. So Johnsy kept looking out of the window.

Q27. How did Sue try to keep Johnsy cheerful?

Ans. The doctor had said that Johnsy's chances of recovery were only one out of ten. Sue became sad and cried bitterly. But she wanted to cheer up Johnsy. So she entered her room, whistling a cheerful tune.

Q.28. How did Behrman react to Johnsy's fancy?

Ans. Johnsy had a fancy that she would die when the last leaf fell. Brennan did not like this fancy of Johnsy. He called her fancy mere nonsense. He said that she should not have such absurd ideas.

Q.29. What did Johnsy believe about the falling leaves? Did Sue believe the same?

Ans. Johnsy got a fancy that she would die with the fall of the last leaf. But, Sue considered it a foolish idea. She said that there could be no relationship between the last leaf and somebody's life.

30. How did old Behrman die?

Ans. Behrman knew about Johnsy's fancy about the falling leaves. He went out in the cold and snow and painted a leaf on the wall. He caught pneumonia and died.

31 How did Johnsy realise her mistake?

Ans. Johnsy was suffering from pneumonia. There was a creeper on the wall facing her window. Johnsy had a fancy that she would die when the last leaf fell. One night, there was only one leaf left. She thought that she would also die with the falling of the leaf. But that night, Behanan painted a leaf in its place. So it did not fall. It made her realise that it was a sin to wish to die.

Q.32. What kind of a friend was Sue to Johnsy?

Ans. Sue and Johnsy were close friends. Both were painters. Apart from that their tastes and views were similar. They lived in the same small flat. When Johnsy suffered from pneumonia, Sue looked after her with love and care. It was largely because of her care that Johnsy's life was saved.

Q.33. Describe in your own words the colony where the artists lived.

Ans. The artists' colony grew in the old village named Greenwich. It was to the west of Washington Square., Its streets were winding. These streets had strange angles and curves.

Q34. What is Johnsy's illness? What can cure her, the medicine or the willingness to live?

Ans. Johnsy, a young artist, was ill. She was suffering from pneumonia. But later on, she suffered from a misconception that she would die as soon as the last leaf on the creeper would fall down. The medicine had no effect on her. Her willingness to live could only cure her.

Q35. Do you think the feeling of depression Johnsy has is common among teenagers? (NCERT)

Ans. Life has two aspects i.e. positive and negative. It depends upon us how we take it. Nowadays, it is very common that teenagers are getting depressed because of cut-throat competition. On the other hand, a majority of teenagers who take life positively and face difficulties boldly never lose hope and proceed further.

Q36. What is Behrman's masterpiece? What makes Sue say so? (NCERT)

Ans. Behrman was a 60-year old artist who had a dream to paint a masterpiece. His painting of an ivy leaf was his masterpiece which saved the life of Johnsy. It was such a painting and it was not easy to make out whether the leaf was real or a painted leaf. When Behrman died because of creating this life-saving painting in the cold weather, Sue called it a masterpiece.

Q37. Who were Sue and Johnsy and how were they living?

Ans. Sue and Johnsy were two young artists. Their economic condition was not good. They were strugglers. They lived in the artist's colony. They shared a small flat.

Q38. How did Behrman react to Johnsy's fancy?

Ans. When Behrman came to know about Johnsy's belief regarding the fall of leaves, he saw the creeper and realised that the last leaf was sure to fall. He said nothing. He decided to do something to save her life.

Q39. What saved Johnsy's life?

Ans. Johnsy had lost charm in life due to pneumonia. She thought that when the last leaf fell, she would die. Behrman finally painted the masterpiece. The leaf painted by him saved Johnsy's life. As the last (painted) leaf did not fall, Johnsy got back her will to live.

Q40. Behrman has a dream. What is it? Does it come true?

Ans. Behrman was a sixty years old painter. He lived on the ground floor of the building. His only dream in life was to paint a masterpiece. His dream was fulfilled when he painted the last leaf of the ivy creeper.

Q41. What made the doctor come to the flat of Sue and Johnsy?

Ans. Johnsy was severely ill. She was attacked by pneumonia. Her weak body was helpless to bear the severity of the attack. She lay miserable in her bed. But her condition was deteriorating day by day. As her condition had alarmed Sue, he requested the doctor to come and examine her friend Johnsy.

Q42. How did Sue respond to the doctor's advice?

Ans. The doctor declared that there were fewer chances for her friend's survival. It was a grim warning for her. She thought that she must do something so that her friend Johnsy could get back her will to live and may recover soon. She was a pragmatic and tenacious person. Besides, she was determined to take her friend out of despair. Therefore, she began to think about the ways positively.

Q43. Why did Behrman die?

Ans. Behrman was an old artist of sixty years. He worked whole night in the stormy and rainy weather to paint the leaf on the wall. He was completely drenched. His clothes and shoes were wet and he was completely shivering. He fell to pneumonia and died. But before his death, he was successful in fulfilling his dream of making a masterpiece.

Q44. Why did Johnsy link her death with the last leaf?

Ans. Johnsy was emotionally disturbed. She developed a belief that she would die with the fall of the last leaf on the creeper. She started counting the leaves. In fact, she had an attack of depression too.

Q45. How did Sue pour out her worries to Behrman? What was his reaction?

Ans. Behrman was a sixty-year-old painter living on the ground floor. Sue poured out her worries about Johnsy to the old painter. She told that Johnsy was convinced that she would die when the last leaf fell. Behrman called Johnsy 'stupid and foolish' as her mind was obsessed with superstition. He didn't say a word and went back to his room. He didn't even tell Sue how he was going to help Johnsy and in what way.

Q46. What revived Johnsy's will to live?

Ans. Johnsy had developed a superstition that she would die with the fall of the last leaf. Actually, a severe attack of pneumonia had left her mind morbid. When she saw the last leaf surviving after the windy wet night, her will to live revived. It made her realise that it was really a sin to want to die.

Q47. What quality of friendship do you find in Sue as a friend?

Ans. Sue was a loving and caring friend of Johnsy. She was the best friend of her as Sue always provided her mental support. When her friend was obsessed with the thought dying with the fall of the last leaf on the ivy creeper, she tried to look at the positive side of things. She always convinced her friend to think positively and never think about death. Obviously, she represents true friendships and sacrifice in the story.

Q48. How was Johnsy life saved?

Ans. Behrman was an Old artist. His last desire was to paint a masterpiece in his life. The masterpiece painted by him saved Johnsy's life. The leaf painted by him survived through the storm of night. But he was attacked by pneumonia and fell seriously ill. Johnsy got the willpower to live because the last leaf did not fall off the ivy creeper. Thus, Behrman's masterpiece saved Johnsy's life.

Important Long

ESSAY TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. What is Johnsy's illness? What can cure her – the medicine or her willingness to live? (Textual)

Or

What was the reason for Johnsy's deteriorating health?

Ans: Johnsy suffered an attack of pneumonia in the cold winter month of November. Her illness made her so weak that she went into depression. She would lie still on her bed and keep gazing out of the window. The autumn added to her gloom when she saw the trees shedding leaves. She began to associate her death with the falling leaves and this negative thought deteriorated her health. When she gave up all hope on life, she refused to eat anything and medicines lost their effect. According to the doctor, her recovery depended on her willingness to live. In the absence of determination to get well soon even the medicines failed to affect positively.

Q2. Sue is a true and faithful friend. Comment.

Or

What values of friendship are prominent in Sue's character?

Ans: Sue displays the virtues of a true and faithful friend. She and Johnsy were young artist friends who shared a small flat. When Johnsy fell ill, Sue did not spare any effort to nurse her back to health. She exhibited the values of sincerity and commitment to her friend by calling the doctor who would visit them daily to review Johnsy's condition. She tried to lift Johnsy's spirits by talking cheerfully to her and thus exemplifying the value of unwavering support to a depressed friend.

She would sit beside Johnsy's bed and paint so that she could earn for herself and Johnsy. She comforted Johnsy and dealt with her cranky behaviour very patiently. With her cheerful disposition and her optimism, she tried her best to reassure Johnsy that the old ivy leaves had nothing to do with her illness. Sensing the seriousness of Johnsy's health and her state of mind, she at once sought Behrman's help. Thus, Sue proves to be a compassionate human being and a true friend.

Q3. Do you think the feeling of depression Johnsy has is common among teenagers? (Textual)

Ans: Yes, the feeling of depression Johnsy has is common among teenagers. It is so because, like Johnsy, they too lack emotional maturity. They fail to understand that sorrows are as much a part of our lives as joys are. Certain situations in life are unpredictable as well as unavoidable. Teenagers become nervous while encountering such situations. They begin to gather negative thoughts and have a fear of failures. It becomes a vicious cycle and their weak health aggravates emotional instability. Pessimism begins to destroy their will-power.

Another problem is that like Johnsy, teenagers take a lot of time to get convinced. They are difficult to counsel and try their loved one's patience a lot. The absence of a healthy lifestyle pushes them further into negativity and depression becomes deep-rooted. Therefore, teenagers should inculcate positive values like optimism, strong will-power, and faith through meditation and regular exercise in order to enjoy the blessings of a sound mind in a robust body.

Q4. How did Behrman save Johnsy's life?

Ans: Behrman saved Johnsy's life by sacrificing himself at the altar of art. "The Last Leaf" is about his extreme sacrifice that infuses life in a young depressed woman. Johnsy's illness was serious but could be cured if she had the will to live. Her falling health was more due to her state of depression than pneumonia. The sixty-year-old painter Behrman took upon himself the difficult responsibility of saving Johnsy. He made a single-handed effort to brave the icy winds and rain to reach the window by climbing a ladder and finally paint a fresh and green leaf that looked natural and real. The readiness with which he gave up his life shows art unparalleled commitment to talent. He painted the leaf with such passion that it revived the sinking breath of Johnsy. He thus saved Johnsy's life by sacrificing his own.

Q5. Imagine Behrman survives the attack of pneumonia. His family takes him back to his native countryside in order to serve the old man and nurse him back to health. As Johnsy, write a letter to Behrman expressing your gratitude.

Ans:-

(Date)

12-111 Floor Ivy Apartments

London

Dear Mr Behrman

Trust your health is improving with each day. Sue and I think of you all the time and miss you a lot. We have always looked up to you as a friendly neighbour and a kind gentleman artist. Words fail me when I express gratitude for the extraordinary help extended by you during our moments of crisis. Shivers run down my spine when I recall the time you risked your life to save a silly girl like me. You are a very brave person and a true artist. Your masterpiece reflects your passion and dedication and it has made me realise that my whims were utterly senseless.

Your life is an inspiration for young people like me. I have learnt from you that the worthiest thing is being alive. I promise that I shall never let pessimism overshadow me again. Sue and I wish you a speedy recovery and hope to see you soon. We expect to have you back here and wish that you may paint many more masterpieces.

With warm regards

Johnsy

Q.6. Describe briefly how Behrman saved Johnsy's life.

Or

'The Last Leaf' is a story of supreme sacrifice by a wretched drunken artist.
Comment

Or

Who was Behrman? What was his masterpiece and why did he paint it?

Ans. Sue and Johnsy were two young girl-artists. They lived together in the artists' colony. Once Johnsy caught pneumonia. She developed a fancy that she would die when the last leaf on the Ivy creeper fell. The doctor said that she should take interest in life and wish to live. Only then she could be saved. Behrman was an old painter. He lived on the ground floor beneath them. He was a failure in art. For forty years he had been trying to paint a masterpiece, but he had not yet started. He came to know of Johnsy's fancy. The night the last leaf fell, he painted a leaf on the wall; He worked all night in the air and snow and painted the leaf. The next morning, Johnsy saw the leaf on the wall: Her will to live returned. Her life was saved. But Behrman caught pneumonia and died. Thus he sacrificed his life and saved Johnsy's life. The last leaf painted on the wall was his masterpiece.

7. In "The Last Leaf" why did Sue cry bitterly when the doctor had gone? Later she walked into Johnsy's room whistling a cheerful tune. Why?

Or

What was Johnsy's real ailment? What were the chances of her recovery?

Ans. Sue and Johnsy were two young girls. They were painters. They lived like sisters. The studio in an artists' colony. One day, Johnsy had an attack of pneumonia. Her condition worsened. She thought she would not live. One day, the doctor told Sue that Johnsy's disease was psychological also. She did not want to live. In such a condition, no medicine could work. If she did not get back the will to live, her chances of recovery were only one out of ten. When Sue heard this she felt very sad. She cried bitterly as soon as the doctor had gone. But the next moment she entered Johnsy's room, whistling. Sue did so because she wanted to cheer up Johnsy.

8. What did Johnsy believe about the falling leaves? Did Sue believe the same thing?

Ans. Sue and Johnsy were two young artist girls. They had a joint studio. They loved each other like sisters. One day, Johnsy caught pneumonia. There was an ivy creeper on the back wall of the next house. Johnsy could see it through her window. The leaves of this creeper were falling fast in the cold winds. Johnsy developed a fancy that she would also die when the last leaf of the creeper fell. She lost the will to live. Sue came to know of Johnsy's fancy. She tried her best to cheer up Johnsy. She told her that there was no link between the falling of leaves and her death. She nursed Johnsy with love and care. She told Behrman about Johnsy's fancy. Behrman was a painter. He painted a leaf on the wall when the last leaf fell. This saved Johnsy's life. Thus Sue played an important role in saving Johnsy's life.

9. Write a brief character sketch of old Behrman.

Or

Write a few sentences on the looks and personality of old Behrman.

Ans. Old Behrman was a painter. He was past sixty. But he was a failure in art. He earned very little through his paintings. He always said that he was going to paint

a masterpiece. But for the last forty years, he had not even begun it. Behrman was a drunkard. His beard was long and curling. It gave him the look of an imp. He was a tough fellow. He hated weakness in a man. He lived on the ground floor beneath Sue and Johnsy. He considered himself their guardian. He was very kind and helpful at heart. When he came to know of Johnsy's fancy, he decided to help her. He went out in rain and snow and painted a leaf on the wall. It saved Johnsy's life. But he caught pneumonia and died. Thus Behrman plays a very important role in the story. He sacrificed his life and saved Johnsy's life.

10. Justify the title of the story 'The Last Leaf'.

Or

Show why the story is entitled 'The Last Leaf'?

Ans. This is a psychological story. The whole story is based on the last leaf. Johnsy was a young artist girl. She and her friend Sue lived together. One day Johnny caught pneumonia. There was an ivy creeper on the back wall of the next house. From her window, Johnsy watched that creeper. Its leaves were falling fast in the cold winds. Johnsy got a fancy that she would also die when the last leaf of the creeper fell. She lost the will to live. Her condition became worse. Barman, an old painter came to know of this fancy of Johnsy. The next night, the last leaf fell. But

the same night Hellman painted a leaf on the wall. It looked a real leaf. When Johnsy saw that leaf, her will to live returned. That painted leaf saved Johnsy's life. Thus the leaf plays an important role in the story. So the title of the story 'The Last Leaf' is justified.

11. Draw a brief character-sketch of Sue.

Ans. She is an important character in the story 'The Last Leaf'. She is an artist girl. She and Johnsy have a joint studio in the artists' colony. She is kind and noble at heart. She has the qualities of a true friend. Johnsy gets an attack of pneumonia. Sue nurses her with love and care. She works day and night to earn enough money. With this money, she buys medicines and good diet for her friend. She feels shocked when the doctor says that Johnsy doesn't have many chances of recovery. Johnsy has a fancy that she will die when the last leaf of the creeper falls. She tries her best to cheer her up. She says that her fancy is foolish and baseless. She tells of Johnsy's fancy of old Behrman. He paints the last leaf on the wall and saves Johnsy. Thus, Sue is a kind and noble girl. She is a true friend.

Q12. Behrman's masterpiece helped Johnsy to survive. Explain how the last leaf influenced Johnsy?

Ans. The story reveals Behrman's sacrifice. He was a poor old artist. He had a dream to paint a masterpiece. Once Johnsy fell ill and established a bond of her life with the ivy leaves. One day, Sue found her whispering this. Sue looked after Johnsy and she informed Behrman about her condition. It was a stormy night and there was a single leaf on the creeper. Behrman thought that the leaf would fall

that stormy night. So he decided to paint the leaf on the wall. He painted the leaf so beautifully that it looked natural. But he got pneumonia that night and died two days after his painting. Hence, this story becomes the story of supreme sacrifice.

Q13. Johnsy felt her survival is related to the falling ivy leaves. Explain how blind beliefs can cause harm to us?

Ans. Johnsy was seriously ill with pneumonia. She was highly depressed and lay in bed looking vacantly out of the window. She would keep watching for hours the creeper up the opposite wall shedding its leaves. She would count the number of leaves left on the creeper. She was obsessed with a foolish superstition. She would die with the fall of the last leaf. The doctor said that she would not recover unless she had a wish to live. It seemed to the doctor that Johnsy had no willingness to live in the state of depression. In such a state, no medicine could save her life. So, the doctor advised Sue to try her best to take her friend out of that state.

Q14. Sue played a very important role in saving her friend Johnsy. Explain how she played the role of a trusted friend?

Ans. Sue and Johnsy were good friends. Both of them were artists. They loved each other and shared the same room. One day, Johnsy fell ill. She was suffering from pneumonia. She believed that she would die with the falling of the last leaf on the ivy creeper. Sue looked after her like a mother. She tried to instil in her a desire to live a happy life. She kept whistling in order to make her happy and break her calmness. When her condition started deteriorating she became anxious and informed Behrman about her condition. Behrman took it seriously. He painted the leaf on the wall to save her life. So, Sue succeeds in saving her life.

Q15. "A friend in need is a friend indeed". Do you think the story "The Last Leaf" supports this statement?

Ans. A friend plays a very important role in one's life. A true friend supports one in every step. A friend is a person who stands with you in happiness or crises. In the story,

"The Last Leaf" when Johnsy was suffering from Pneumonia she was not getting well because she was the victim of negative feeling. She attached her life to the falling of leaves from a creeper outside the window. She had thought she would die the moment when the last leaf of the creeper falls. Sue tried her best to cheer her up when she learnt Johnsy's foolish belief. She shared her concern with Behrman. Behrman went out on a rainy night and painted a leaf on the ivy, which looked like a real leaf. Sue helped Johnsy to recover. She gave her a lot of courage. In reality, she was a kind girl and a friend indeed.

Q16. "You have to live for your friends." How far do you agree with this advice given by Sue to her friend Johnsy?

Ans. The doctor said that she would not recover unless she had a wish to live. It seemed to the doctor that Johnsy had no willingness to live in the state of depression. In such a state, no medicine could save her life. So, the doctor advised Sue to try her best to take her friend out of that state. Behrman had a dream to paint a masterpiece in his life. He kept waiting for the opportunity to give it a practical shape. Yes, he could materialize his dream when he painted the last leaf of the ivy creeper.

Q17. What is the need to maintain a positive attitude in life? Comment with reference to Johnsy's attitude to life?

Ans. Johnsy was a young girl and lived with one of her friends. They were artists. She was suffering from pneumonia. Her friend Sue looked after her. She loved her very much. The doctor kept visiting Johnsy and had a regular check-up. But there was no improvement in her condition. Her condition went from bad to worse. Both the doctor and Sue were worried. Later on, it was found that she was depressed. In that state of mind, she lost her interest in everything. She kept lying calm gazing through the window. She did not like to live and suffered from the misconception that she would die with the last leaf of the creeper. They tried to convince her, but in vain. She had lost her will to live. In this mental condition, only God could save her.

Q18. The story 'The Last Leaf' is a story of supreme sacrifice by an old artist. Do you agree?

Ans. Firm determination and strong will power are the tools of success in life. A person who has a firm determination and strong will power can never feel depressed on small losses in life and God blesses such a person with success. In the story, 'The Last Leaf', it is the determination and strong will power that helps a patient Johnsy to recover fast. Johnsy who felt dejected and depressed had lost the will to live. Medicine was ineffective. She thought that she would die with the fall of the last leaf on the ivy. But Behrman and Sue brought her out of this fanciful idea and convinced her that there was no relationship between her life and the falling of a leaf. Gradually, with the efforts of Sue and Behrman she regained will power and thus her willingness to live saved her.

QUICK REVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

1. Who fell seriously ill?

(A) Sue

(B) Johnsy

(C) both (A) and (B)

(D) none of the above

Ans. (B) Johnsy

2. Johnsy was suffering from _____.

(A) pneumonia

(B) malaria

(C) a headache

(D) stomach pain

Ans. (A) pneumonia

3. According to the doctor, about what had Johnsy made up her mind?

(A) she will recover soon

(B) she will recover late

(C) she is not going to get well

(D) all of the above

Ans. (C) she is not going to get well

4. What was Johnsy looking at out of the window?

(A) an ivy creeper

(B) a mango tree

(C) a rose plant

(D) a banana tree

Ans. (A) an ivy creeper

5. What was Johnsy country?

(A) leaves on the ivy creeper
creeper

(B) bunches of fruit on the ivy

(C) both (A) and (B)

(D) none of the above

Ans. (A) leaves on the ivy creeper

6. What will happen when the last leaf will fall?

(A) she will die

(B) Johns will die

(C) Behrman will die

(D) all of the above

Ans. (B) Johnsy will die

7. What was she doing in Johnsy's room??

(A) reading a book

(B) stitching a shirt

(C) singing a song

(D) making a painting

Ans. (D) making a painting

8. Why was she making a painting?

(A) to present it to Johnsy

(B) to present it to Behrman

(C) to earn some money

(D) to put it in her room

Ans. (C) to can some money

9. Who was Behrman?

(A) a painter

(B) a musician

(C) a doctor

(D) a teacher

Ans. (A) a painter

10. Who painted the leaf on the wall?

(A) Sue

(B) Johnsy

(C) Behrman

(D) all of the above

Ans. (C) Behrman

11. What will happen when the last leaf will fall?

(A) Johnsy will recover

(B) Johnsy will die

(C) nothing extraordinary won't happen

(D) not clear in the topic

Ans. (B) Johnsy will die

12. Who has looked after Johnsy so well?

(A) Sue

(B) Behrman

(C) Johnsy's mother

(D) Johnsy's father

Ans. (A) Sue

13. What can make a man recover soon?

(A) the will to die

(B) will live

(C) eating healthy food

(D) all of the above

Ans. (B) will live

14. What did Behrman die of?

(A) fever

(B) heart attack

(C) cholera

(D) pneumonia

Ans. (D) pneumonia

15. Of the following who met to death?

(A) Sue

(B) Johnsy

(C) Behrman

(D) none of the above

Ans. (C) Behrman

16. What was Behrman's masterpiece?

(A) painting a picture of sue

(B) painting a picture of Johnsy

(C) painting a picture of a leaf

(D) all of the above

Ans. (C) painting a picture of a leaf