The Last Lesson by Alphonse Daudet

Pre-reading

Think & discuss with your friends over the phone, WhatsApp or another medium

1. What do you think will be the impact of politics on life at school in general?
2. What attitude students generally have towards their studies?

While -reading

1. What was Franz expected to be prepared for the school that day?
2. What did Franz notice that was unusual about the school that day?
3. What had been put up on the bulletin-board?
4. What changes did the order from Berlin cause in school that day?
5. How did Franz’s feelings about M. Hamel and school change?
6. Why were older villagers presented in the class that day?
7. How did Mr. M Hamel describe the French language?
8. How did M. Hamel teach his last lesson in the class?
9. How did M. Hamel end the class that day?
10. What does ‘Vive la France’ mean, and why did Mr. M’ Hamel write it on the board?

Post-reading

1. The people in this story suddenly realise how precious their language is to them. What shows you this? Why does this happen?
2. Franz thinks, “Will they make them sing in German, even the pigeons?” What could this mean?
3. “When a people are enslaved, as long as they hold fast to their language, it is as if they had the key to their prison.” Comment with reference to the lesson ‘The Last Lesson’.
4. Explain the term ‘linguistic chauvinism’ with reference to the extract ‘The Last Lesson.’