

DRAMA

VILLA FOR SALE

1

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Summary

Juliette wishes to sell her villa but is really disappointed that no prospective customers walked that way. The sign 'For Sale' has been there since a month but the villa appeared not to interest anyone. Juliette confesses to her maid that she was so fed up that she would do anything to get the wretched place off her hands. She starts doubting whether it was sensible to ask for two hundred thousand francs. The villa was located near French Hollywood and was in reasonable condition but no one seemed interested to buy it. Meanwhile the maid requests Juliette to give her an off since she had been offered the role of a maid in a movie. Juliette is surprised to discover that the maid was going to earn a hundred francs just for a day's work. The maid surprises Juliette by suggesting that even she could act as a cook and earn quite a bit of money. Juliette is amazed to know that the entire locality was busy taking up one role or the other in movies.

As Juliette retires for relaxation, two customers, Jeanne and Gaston are ushered in by the maid. They are a young couple. From their conversation, it is evident that the wife Jeanne is more eager to buy the villa. She wants to buy it for her parents and her sister's family. Gaston is very business-minded, very shrewd and he is least interested in making any investment for his wife's family. Meanwhile Juliette makes an appearance. She pretends to be very proud of her villa and single-handedly announces that the villa perfectly suited the personality of the customers. She flatters the young couple, calls them 'exceptional' that the villa was according to their taste. Juliette hikes up the price and then brings it down to two hundred thousand francs and pretends to do a favour to the couple. Gaston is totally irritated by now and makes it very clear that he has no intention of purchasing the villa. As they are leaving, Jeanne expresses a desire to see the upper floor. Both Juliette and Jeanne go upstairs.

Gaston is busy cribbing when the maid ushers in another customer, Mrs Al Smith. Mrs Al Smith mistakes Gaston to be the owner of the villa and expresses her desire to buy the villa. Initially Gaston just wiles away the conversation but his business-instincts are aroused when he discovers that Mrs Al Smith is really interested

in buying the villa. Mrs Al Smith was an actress. She wanted to buy this villa to make a new house near Hollywood. She has loads of money but has no time to inspect the house or go in details. Gaston quotes three hundred thousand and to his utmost surprise the lady hands him the cheque and makes a quick departure. In the meantime Jeanne and Juliette come back. Jeanne is astounded to discover that within a short while Gaston has changed his mind. He gives a cheque of two hundred thousand to Juliette and walks out, smiling to himself, with his wife. The transaction had been quite worthwhile, chuckled Gaston to himself.

सारांश

जूलियट अपना विला (शहर के बाहर बड़ा मकान) बेचना चाहती है पर कोई भी ग्राहक उस ओर नहीं आता है। पूरे एक महीने से घर के सामने "घर बिकाऊ है" का बोर्ड लगा हुआ है पर किसी को उसमें दिलचस्पी नहीं है। जूलियट अपनी सेविका से कहती है कि वह इतनी तंग आ चुकी है कि घर बेचने के लिए कुछ भी कर सकती है। उसके मन में संदेह उत्पन्न होता है कि दो सौ हजार फ्रेंक्स माँगना बुद्धिमानी है कि नहीं। उसका घर फ्रेंच हॉलीवुड के पास था, और ठीक हालत में था, पर किसी को उसे खरीदने में रुचि नहीं थी। जूलियट की सेविका उससे एक दिन की छुट्टी माँगती है क्योंकि उसे एक फिल्म में एक सेविका की भूमिका मिली है। जूलियट यह सुनकर हैरान रह जाती है जब उसकी नौकरानी उसे सलाह देती है कि वह भी फिल्म में एक रसोइये की भूमिका करके कुछ कमा ले। जूलियट यह जानकर आश्चर्यचकित रह जाती है कि उसका सारा मुहल्ला फिल्म में कोई न कोई भूमिका निभाने में व्यस्त है।

जूलियट विश्राम करने के लिए ऊपर अपने कमरे में जाती है। उसी समय दो ग्राहक, गैस्टन और जीन को सेविका अन्दर लेकर आती है। दोनों युवा पति-पत्नी हैं और उनकी बातचीत से स्पष्ट होता है कि विला खरीदने के लिए जीन अधिक इच्छुक है। जीन वह विला अपने माता-पिता और बहन के परिवार के लिए खरीदना चाहती है। गैस्टन एक अत्यन्त चतुर और अनुभवी व्यापारी है और वह जीन के परिवार के लिए घर नहीं खरीदना चाहता है। अभी दोनों बहस कर रहे हैं कि जूलियट नीचे आती है।

जूलियट उनको देखकर अपने विला पर बहुत गर्व के भाव प्रकट करती है और साथ में यह भी कहती है कि उसका विला गैस्टन और जीन के व्यक्तित्व से मेल खाता है। वह दोनों की प्रशंसा करती है

और यह भी कहती है कि उसका विला केवल उनके ही लिए बना है। वह पहले विला का दाम बढ़ाकर बताती है और फिर उसको दो सौ हजार फ्रैंक्स पर ले आती है, यह जताने के लिए कि वह उन दोनों के ही लिए यह कर रही है। गैस्टन जूलियट के नाटक से बिल्कुल प्रभावित नहीं होता और साफ कह देता है कि वह यह विला नहीं खरीदेगा। जैसे ही वह दोनों जाने लगते हैं, जीन घर की ऊपरी मंजिल देखने की इच्छा प्रकट करती है। जीन और जूलियट ऊपर चले जाते हैं।

गैस्टन नीचे खड़े हुए बुड़बुड़ाता है तभी सेविका एक नये ग्राहक को अन्दर लाती है। श्रीमती एल स्मिथ एक अमरीकी महिला हैं जो गैस्टन को विला का मालिक समझ लेती हैं और विला खरीदने की इच्छा प्रकट करती हैं। पहले तो गैस्टन समय काटने के लिये उनसे बात करता है। पर उसकी व्यापारिक बुद्धि एक दम सतर्क हो जाती है जब उसे पता चलता है कि श्रीमति स्मिथ वास्तव में विला खरीदना चाहती हैं। श्रीमति स्मिथ एक अभिनेत्री हैं और वह एक नया घर हॉलीवुड के पास बनाना चाहती हैं। उनके पास आपार धन है पर मोल-तोल करने का समय नहीं है। गैस्टन उनसे तीन सौ हजार फ्रैंक्स

माँगता है। और अभिनेत्री उन्हें चैक देकर, स्तंभित छोड़कर चली जाती हैं। जूलियट और जीन नीचे आते हैं और हैरान रह जाते हैं गैस्टन में परिवर्तन देख कर। इतने थोड़े समय में उसने विला खरीदने का मन बना लिया था। वह जूलियट को दो सौ हजार फ्रैंक्स का चैक देकर, मुस्कराता हुआ अपनी पत्नी के साथ चला जाता है।

“एक सौ हजार का सौदा काफी लाभकर है” गैस्टन सोच कर मन ही मन हँसता है।

Word-Meaning

- **Salon** – a sitting room in a large house
- **Discovered** – are on the stage when the curtain is raised
- **Wretched** – unpleasant
- **Slicked** – hair made flat by applying the oil
- **Comical** – causing laughter
- **Aggravating** – annoying
- **Fortune** – (here) wealth
- **Exceptional** – peculiar
- **Fixtures** – something attached or fixed
- **Queer** – strange
- **Fumbling** – groping about
- **Transaction** – the process of carrying out a business
- **Delighted** – highly pleased

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

1. Complete the following paragraph about the theme of the play using the clues given in the box below. Remember that there are more clues than required.

sell,	buying,	house,
enthusiastic,	comes,	
200 thousand francs,	taking,	favour,
get,	sleeps,	money,
300 thousand francs,	unhappy,	his in-laws,
walks in;	strikes,	keep

Juliette, the owner of a villa wants to _____ it as she is in need of _____. Moreover, she is not in _____ of the house. Jeanne and Gaston, a couple visit her with the aim of _____ the villa. While Jeanne is _____ about buying, Gaston detests the idea as he does not want his _____ in that house. Also, he finds the asking price of _____ to be expensive. When Jeanne and Juliette go around the house, another customer _____ and starts talking to Gaston _____ him to be Juliette's husband. Gaston _____ a deal with the customer by which he is able to give _____ to the owner and _____ one thousand francs for himself.

Ans : sell, money, favour, buying, enthusiastic, in-laws, house, walks in, taking, strikes, 200 thousand francs, keep

2. Answer the following questions.

(a) Why does Jeanne want to buy a villa?

Ans : Jeanne wants to buy the villa so that her parents can stay in it. Moreover, her sister along with her

children could also visit and stay there.

(b) Why is Gaston not interested in buying the villa in the beginning?

Ans : Gaston is not fond of his wife's family. He believes that her parents would occupy the villa for quite some time and her sister would also visit there. He believes that buying the villa is a bad investment and has no desire to buy it.

(c) Mrs Al Smith makes many statements about the French. Pick out any two and explain them.

Ans : (i) “You French have a very cute way of doing business”.

(ii) “Frenchmen usually have to consult about ten people before they get a move on”.

Mrs Al Smith believes that French are not very business-minded and they don't go into any details. Moreover she also believes that the French are fickle-minded and they cannot make their own decisions.

(d) Juliette says, “..... want to get this wretched place off my hands. I would sacrifice it at any price”. Does she stick to her words. Why / Why not?

Ans : Juliette changes her stand totally when Jeanne and Gaston arrive. At first she quotes three hundred and fifty thousand francs and when Gaston shows disinterest, she settles down for two hundred thousand. She is no way ready to reduce the cost of the villa any more.

3. Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow by choosing the correct options.

A. 'But the sign has been hanging on the gate for over a month now and I am beginning to be afraid that the day I bought it was when I was the real fool.'

(a) Why is Juliette disappointed?

- (i) She is unable to get a role of cook in the films.
- (ii) Her maid is leaving as she has got a role in the films.
- (iii) She is unable to find a suitable buyer for her villa.
- (iv) Gaston is offering a very low price for the villa.

Ans : (iii)

(b) Why does she call herself a fool?

- (i) She has decided to sell her villa.
- (ii) There are no buyers for the villa.
- (iii) She had bought the villa for more than it was worth.
- (iv) The villa was too close to the film studios.

Ans : (iii)

B. 'But your parents would take possession of it, every year from the beginning of spring until the end of September. What's more they would bring the whole tribe of your sister's children with them.'

What does Gaston mean by 'take possession'?

- (i) Her parents would stay with them for a long time.

(ii) Juliette's sister has many children.

(iii) Gaston does not like children.

(iv) Juliette's sister's children are badly behaved.

Ans : (i)

C. 'While you were upstairs, I have been thinking a lot about your Papa and Mamma.'

(a) What is the discrepancy between what Gaston said earlier and what he says now?

(i) Earlier he did not want Juliette's parents to stay with them but now he is showing concern for them.

(ii) Earlier he wanted Juliette's parents to stay with them but now he does not want them to come over.

(iii) Earlier he wanted to buy a house for them but now he wants them to come and stay in their villa.

(iv) Earlier he stayed in Juliette's parents' villa but now he wants them to stay with him and Juliette.

Ans : (i)

(b) What does the above statement reveal about Gaston's character?

(i) He is selfish. (ii) He is an opportunist.

(iii) He is a caring person.

(iv) He is a hypocrite.

Ans : (ii)

4. Select words from the box to describe the characters in the play as revealed by the following lines.

Lines from the Play	Speaker	Quality revealed
1. One hundred thousand francs if necessary and that's only twice what it cost me.		greedy
2. If you don't want the house, tell me so at once and we'll say no more about it.		
3. No! I am very fond of your family, but not quite so fond as that.	Gaston	
4. Quite so. I have, but you haven't.		
5. I have never cared such a damned little about anybody's opinion.		
6. On the principle of people who like children and haven't any can always go and live near a school.		
7. The garden is not very large, but you see, it is surrounded by other gardens.	Juliette	
8. I will be philanthropic and let you have it for two hundred thousand.		
9. I have been thinking a lot about your Papa and Mamma. You see, I am really unselfish.		clever

cunning, clever, witty, smart, innocent, humorous, haughty, overbearing, critical, domineering, disapproving, materialistic, dishonest, practical, greedy, cruel, boastful

Ans :

1. Speaker : Juliette
Quality revealed : greedy
2. Speaker : Jeanne
Quality revealed : innocent/practical, helpless
3. Speaker : Gaston
Quality revealed : overbearing, critical

4. Speaker : Gaston
Quality revealed : cunning, haughty
5. Speaker : Gaston
Quality revealed : disapproving, domineering
6. Speaker : Gaston
Quality revealed : witty, humorous
7. Speaker : Juliette
Quality revealed : tactful, boastful
8. Speaker : Juliette
Quality revealed : materialistic, smart
9. Speaker : Gaston.
Quality revealed : clever, hypocrite, cunning

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Read the following extracts and write down the most appropriate option.

1. *“You folk are queer. You think about the past all the time. We always think about the future.”*

- (a) *The speaker of this line is :*
 (i) Mrs. Al Smith (ii) Juliette
 (iii) Maid (iv) Jeanne
- (b) *‘You’ here refers to the*
 (i) German (ii) French
 (iii) British (iv) American
- (c) *Who is ‘we’ referred to?*
 (i) Gaston and Jeanne
 (ii) Jeanne and maid
 (iii) Americans
 (iv) Europeans

Ans : (a) (i) (b) (ii) (c) (iii)

2. *“Then stop being bored and buy one. That will finish it. We won’t talk about it any more.”*

- (a) *Who is speaking here and to whom :*
 (i) Gaston to Mrs. Al Smith
 (ii) Juliette to Gaston
 (iii) Jeanne to Gaston
 (iv) Gaston to Jeanne
- (b) *“.....and buy one” refers to :*
 (i) buying of a villa
 (ii) buying a set of books
 (iii) buying of a shop
 (iv) buying a car
- (c) *The relationship between the person spoken to and the speaker is :*
 (i) Mistress – maid
 (ii) Husband – wife
 (iii) Shopkeeper – customer

(iv) Mother – son

Ans : (a) (iii) (b) (i) (c) (ii)

3. *“Your dowry. My poor child, we have spent that long ago.”*

- (a) **The speaker is _____ and he is speaking to _____.**
 (i) Jeanne’s parents to Jeanne
 (ii) Jeanne’s sister to Jeanne
 (iii) Gaston to Jeanne
 (iv) Jeanne to her sister’s children
- (b) **He needed the money _____.**
 (i) To go on a holiday
 (ii) To buy a villa
 (iii) To buy a car
 (iv) To go on a cruise

(c) **The above statement shows that the speaker was _____.**

- (i) Selfish (ii) Opportunist
 (iii) Domineering (iv) Hypocrite

Ans. (a) (iii) (b) (ii) (c) (i)

4. *You go and tell your boss that if he doesn’t come right away, I’m going. I haven’t any time to waste.*

[CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

(a) **Who is the speaker?**

- (i) Gaston (ii) Juliette
 (iii) Jeanne (iv) Mrs. Al Smith

(b) **‘The Boss’ referred to here is :**

- (i) Juliette (ii) Mrs. Al Smith
 (iii) Gaston (iv) Jeanne

(c) **The speaker feels that if there is a hold-up that would :**

- (i) make him / her angry
- (ii) be very bad
- (iii) make him / her sick
- (iv) turn him / her to madness

Ans. (a) (iv) (b) (i) (c) (i)

5. Copies are not always good. We would only imitate you and imitations are no better than parodies. We are so different. Think of it..... [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

(a) The speaker of these lines is :

- (i) Mrs. Al Smith (ii) Gaston
- (iii) Juliette (iv) Jeanne

(b) 'We are so different' means :

- (i) Europeans go to America to earn money and Americans come to Europe to spend it
- (ii) the speaker is European and the other Russian
- (iii) both of them are different in their outlook
- (iv) both of them are contrast to each other

(c) The speaker outwits the other in :

- (i) selling the Villa for two thousand francs
- (ii) selling the Villa which does not belong to him
- (iii) buying the Villa for two thousand francs only
- (iv) taking the little picture as a souvenir.

Ans. (a) (ii) (b) (i) (c) (iv)

6. Don't be aggravating, please! If you don't want the house, tell me so at once and we'll say no more about it.

[CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

(a) The above dialogue is spoken by _____.

- (i) Mrs. Al Smith (ii) The maid
- (iii) Jeanne (iv) Juliette

(b) The speaker is talking to _____.

- (i) Mrs. Al Smith (iii) Jeanne
- (iii) Juliette (iv) Gaston

(c) When the speaker says don't be aggravating, she expects the listener not to _____.

- (i) be suspicious (ii) make fun
- (iii) be outrageous (iv) criticise

Ans. (a) (iii) (b) (iv) (c) (iii)

7. Gaston : Just trying to please you, darling.

[CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

(a) Gaston is trying to please :

- (i) Juliette (ii) Jeanne
- (iii) Mrs. Al Smith (iv) The Maid

(b) Gaston has _____ to please the addressee :

- (i) Bought a car (ii) Finalized the deal
- (iii) Kept the picture (iv) Paid in cash

(c) Gaston is _____ while speaking the line :

- (i) joking (ii) serious
- (iii) laughing (iv) making fun

Ans. (a) (ii) (b) (ii) (c) (iv)

8. Every little helps, Madame. Especially, Madame, as you have such a funny face.

[CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

(a) The phrase 'little helps' refers to _____.

- (i) the help provided by neighbours
- (ii) the monetary help that she will get after doing the role
- (iii) the help of 100 francs
- (iv) the help of the maid servant

(b) The speaker of this extract is _____.

- (i) Jeanne (ii) Juliette
- (iii) Mrs. Al Smith (iv) Juliette's maid

(c) The funny face of the listener would help her to _____.

- (i) scare people away
- (ii) take a break
- (iii) bag the role of a cook
- (iv) entertain people

Ans. (a) (ii) (b) (iv) (c) (iii)

NON-MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Read the following extracts and answer the questions.

1. "That was a month ago and now I have only one thought, that is to get the wretched place off my hands."

(a) Who is speaking this line and to whom?

Ans. This line has been spoken by Juliette who desperately wants to sell her villa. She is talking to her

maid.

(b) What is the thought dominating the speaker's mind?

Ans. The thought of selling the villa at any cost, is dominating her mind.

(c) Why does the speaker call her house a 'wretched place'?

Ans. She called it so because even after a month of putting up 'for Sale' sign, she could not get any prospective buyer.

2. "A maid, Madam. They prefer the real article. They say maids are born, maids are not maids. They are giving me a hundred francs a morning for doing it".

(a) **Who is the speaker here?**

Ans. The speaker here is Juliette's maid.

(b) **Who is 'they' referred to?**

Ans. 'They' here is referred to the people from film industry.

(c) **What is meant by 'real article'?**

Ans. Here, it is meant 'a real life actor'.

3. "I tell you what I will do. I will be philanthropic and let you have it for two hundred thousand."

(a) **Who is the speaker here?**

Ans. The speaker here is Juliette.

(b) **What is meant by 'philanthropic'?**

Ans. It means a person who freely gives money or other help to people who need it.

(c) **What is the speaker telling about selling?**

Ans. The speaker is telling him that she is selling the villa for a paltry amount.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. **Why is Juliette fed up of the house? What was the reaction of the people when the villa was put up for sale?**

Ans. When Juliette put up the 'Villa for Sale' sign, she had thought that the next day the entire world would be fighting to purchase it. But it so happened that nobody turned up to buy it. It has already been one month since she put up the sign for sale. In the past two weeks, there were four people who wanted to buy it but did not. Juliette was also fed up because after putting up the sign, she felt as if the villa did not belong to her. The neighbours looked at her in such a strange way that she began to think that they were mocking at her and that the whole thing was going to lead to a great disappointment.

2. **"They say maids are born; maids not made maids." Explain the context of the above statement.**

Ans. This line is spoken by Juliette's maid. She has got a role to play in a film at the Joinville Studio. She has got the role of a maid. While telling Juliette about her role, she tells her that the film-makers prefer people from the same profession as the role assigned to them. She says that maids are born as they are; nobody can pretend to be one. She implies that only a maid will be able to most successfully play the role of a maid in a film, so she is most suitable for it.

3. **How was the French Hollywood proving to be a great attraction for the people?**

Ans. Everybody around the French Hollywood was vying for a role in the films because of the huge financial benefit. Everybody looked up to getting just any role they could manage. People gave up their jobs temporarily to act in the films. Whether it was the butcher who didn't open his shop, or the policemen who were missing from their duty, shooting a fight scene — all were doing some or the other role; nobody thought about anything else round there

the manager was offering a thousand francs for a real beggar who had nothing to eat for two days. The films were paying everybody so well that they were bound to be attracted towards them.

4. **What advantages of the villa are presented by Juliette?**

Ans. Juliette describes the villa as 'a most delightful place.' She says that although it appears modest but it has a charm of its own. She says that the house possesses a great many advantages — electricity, gas, water, telephone, and drainage. She also says that the bathroom is beautifully fitted and the roof was entirely repaired the previous year only. She says that she is ready to sell it with all the furniture and fixtures, except the little picture signed by Corot.

5. **Why does Juliette find both Gaston and Jeanne to be perfectly suited to buy the villa?**

[CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Ans. Juliette had put up a 'Villa for Sale' sign a month ago, and there had not been much response from the customers. She was fed up of waiting for the buyers. Now when Gaston and Jeanne came as customers, and when she saw so much of eagerness on Jeanne's part to buy the villa, she felt that they were perfectly suited to buy it. She could clearly see that Jeanne was highly impressed and so tried to flatter her so that the deal could be finalised.

6. **Why is Gaston not tempted to buy the villa even after Juliette decreases the rate?**

Ans. Gaston was not ready to buy the villa even after Juliette had decreased the rate because he did not come with the intention of buying it. In the conversation between himself and Jeanne, when they were waiting for Juliette in the villa, he had told Jeanne clearly, "I told you before we crossed the road that I didn't want it." The reason he gave for his disinterest in it was that he knew very well that the

villa would be used by Jeanne's parents and her sister's children throughout the year. There was no use investing in it when they (Jeanne and Gaston) would be staying there only for one month..

7. What is the case of mistaken identity between Mrs Al Smith and Gaston? [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Ans. When the maid brings Mrs. Al Smith inside the house, only Gaston is there. After this, the maid goes out. There was no introduction between Gaston and Mrs. Al Smith. She was in such a hurry that she took Gaston as the owner of the house. Since money was not an issue or anything else, she talked with Gaston without a break — all she wanted was to finalise the deal assuming Gaston to be the owner of the house, she gave him a cheque of three hundred thousand francs demanded by him. Gaston had understood Mrs. Smith's 'mistaken identity' and cleverly remained quiet about it and made one hundred thousand francs in the deal with her.

8. Why does Gaston insist on taking the picture as a souvenir? [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Ans. The picture on the wall of the villa was a precious one as it was signed by Corot — a well-known painter, and thus had a lot of value. Gaston has already made a lot of money in the deal he had with Mrs. Smith. Now, he knows that Mrs. Smith was going to get the whole house knocked down which will destroy this painting also. He wanted to be a proud owner of it, and maybe, decided to make a lot of money by selling it as it was an antique painting.

9. In the play "Villa for sale," who do you think is a better businessman and why? [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Ans. In the play, Gaston is a better businessman than Julliette. Julliette has no idea about real estate. She lacks the business acumen to take advantage of the fact that her villa was near French Hollywood. But Gaston was a shrewd businessman. He poses himself to be the owner of the villa to the American actor and makes a deal of thirty thousand francs. He pays Julliette twenty thousand francs for the villa and makes a net profit of one thousand francs.

10. Why is Gaston not interested in buying the villa in the beginning? [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

In the beginning, Gaston was not interested in buying

the villa because he knew very well that the villa would be used by Jeanne's parents and her sister's children throughout the year. He considered it useless in investing in it when he and Jeanne would be staying there for one month only. But in the end when he got a chance to earn one thousand francs, he at once bought the villa.

11. What was the suggestion given by maid to Juliette to end her financial hard up? [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Ans. In order to meet her financial hard up, Juliette wanted to sell her villa but was unable to get any prospective buyer. Her maid was greatly concerned with her crisis. She suggested Juliette that she should take up the role of a cook in the movie that way she would be able to earn one hundred francs a day.

12. Why did Ms. Al Smith want to buy the Villa? [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Ans. Al Smith was a big American actress. Money was not an issue for her in possessing the villa. Neither she was interested in knowing about its features. Even after buying the villa she wanted to knock it down and build a bungalow so that she was near French Hollywood area where she was supposed to shoot for a film.

13. What are Jeanne and Gaston arguing about before Juliette enters the room? [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Ans. There is no uniformity between Jeanne and Gaston in the decision of buying the villa because Gaston is not ready to support Jeanne's idea of buying the villa at any cost. He has come to see it with Jeanne just because she had persuaded him to see it. The reason he gives for not being interested in buying the villa is that Jeanne didn't want it for herself and Gaston, but for her parents. Gaston was not fond of Jeanne's parents and said that her parents would stay in the villa from April to September every year, whereas they themselves would be staying there only for one month. Moreover, he also knew that Jeanne's parents would also bring along the 'whole tribe' of her sister's children to stay there.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Give a character sketch of Juliette.

Ans. Juliette seems to be a fickle-minded person. She gets a strange feeling that since nobody was coming to buy the house, even after one month of advertising it, she was a real fool to have bought it. She is also an opportunist. She was ready to sell it for a sum of hundred thousand

francs but when she got the customers in Gaston and Jeanne, she quoted its price to two hundred thousand fifty francs. She particularly wanted to take advantage of Jeanne's liking of the house. Her fickle-mindedness is also evident from the way she got irritated at Gaston's remarks and said that she didn't want to sell the house, but the next

moment, when she saw that Gaston was ready to get up and go, she began speaking in a pleading manner.

2. Discuss the character traits of Mrs Al Smith. What is her significance in the context of the lesson?

[CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Ans : Mrs. Al Smith is a rich, busy woman who is proud of being an American. She seems to have a superiority complex for the American race as compared to the Europeans. Throughout her very brisk, short conversation that she had with Gaston, number of times, she mentioned about the superior ways of thinking and working of the Americans, so much so that she suggested that Europeans must copy the Americans more often. So, her conversation was a racially inclined one. Secondly, she seems to be very rich as she simply wanted Gaston to quote the price of the house; she had no hesitation in paying anything!

There is a lot of significance of her role in the lesson. The way Gaston made a fortune for himself through her within no time, has given a turning twist to the lesson and has made it extremely interesting. Mrs. Smith's entry into the scene suddenly changed the direction of the story and added wonder and humour in it.

3. What were the attempts made by Juliette to sell the villa?

Ans : To sell the villa, Juliette, first of all, put up a signboard outside her house. She feels quite tensed when she doesn't get any customers. Finally, when Gaston and Jeanne turn up, she tries every possible way to have the deal finalised. She tries all her tactics — flattery, bargain, pressure — and is finally successful in selling the house, without realising even a little bit as to what had happened behind the scene between Gaston and Mrs. Al Smith. She tells Jeanne about all the facilities being provided along with the house, i.e. electricity, gas, water, telephone, drainage as well as all the fixtures. She even tries to psychologically impress Jeanne by saying that even before buying the house, she seems to be already belonging to it.

4. Why is Gaston not interested in buying the villa? How does he convince his wife – first in backing out of the deal and later in sealing the deal?

[CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Ans. Gaston is not interested in buying the villa because he knows that most of the year, the villa would be used by Jeanne's parents and her sister's children, and they themselves would be staying there only for a month. He is not very fond of his wife's family and doesn't wish to make any investments there. He tells his wife that in no way he is interested in buying the house. He argues with his wife that he was never interested in even talking about the house. He even talks in a very dry manner with Juliette to discourage any deal between her and Jeanne.

After Gaston has made his profit of one thousand francs, his stance regarding the villa changes completely. Jeanne is shocked at this, but he convinces her that now he has changed his mind and wants to buy the villa to please her, that he has no problem even if her parents stayed there, and that the villa would be useful for them also in their old age.

5. Who is better in business – Juliette or Gaston? Why?

Ans : For doing business, one has to be business-minded. When it is a game of profits, investments, losses, one has to be hard-core, unscrupulous and manipulative. Qualities like human considerations, honesty go for a toss. What wins the day is foresight, opportunism and the ability to outsmart others. That is where Gaston scores over Juliette. Juliette wishes to sell the villa to cut her losses, whereas it is Gaston who walks away with the chunk of profit with his shrewdness.

Juliette has no idea about real estate. She curses herself for spending so much money to buy it. When she wishes to sell it, hardly any customers turn up. To get her due, Juliette tries her best to bargain, to hard sell the house. She presents the villa in such a positive light and psychologically blackmails the couple into buying the house. She uses all the business tactics – flattery, bargain, pressure etc. Juliette lacks the business acumen to take advantage of the fact that her villa was near French Hollywood.

It is also sheer luck that Gaston is there to reap the harvest, which others have sown. When Mrs Al Smith shows interest, Gaston leads her on, never contradicting, and lets the case of mistaken identity go on. He is quick, decisive, smart and seals the deal with Mrs Al Smith, before the real owner appears. He takes three hundred thousand francs from Mrs Al Smith, gives two hundred thousand to Juliette and walks away with a neat profit of one hundred thousand. He has pleased his wife in the bargain, along with Juliette. The villa that was a losing proposition now becomes most lucrative along with the antique painting, the value of which was not known to anyone.

6. Gaston, being a keen observer, made mental notes about Mrs. Al Smith, her behaviour and her opinions. Describe Mrs. Al Smith and your meeting with her to your business partner in a letter, telling him about the profitable deal that you made.

[CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Dear Tim

I had been thinking of writing to you for a long time, but was just busy with my routine work. There is something very interesting that I want to tell you. You will

be amazed to know that I have made one hundred thousand francs without putting in any efforts or investments at all!

It so happened that I went with my wife to see a villa which was for sale. When my wife went with the owner to see the first floor, I stayed back. Can you guess what happened then? A lady called Al Smith came to buy the house, and mistaking me to be the owner of the house, struck a deal with me. She was in a great hurry and didn't even want to know anything about the house. She is from films and very rich. The owner, Juliette had cited its price to us as two hundred thousand francs. I told Mrs. Smith that I would sell it to her for three hundred thousand francs. She agreed and then and there gave me a cheque. Can you imagine I made a clear profit of one hundred thousand francs in just five minutes as I bought the house from Juliette for two hundred thousand francs. I'm myself amazed at my smartness and my happiness knows no bounds.

See you then. Do reply soon.

Yours

Gaston

7. Juliette's maid is witness to the activities that take place in the Villa that day. She is in dilemma whether to tell Juliette how Gaston sold the Villa before buying it or to keep quiet about it as the money has been paid. She writes a page in her diary expressing her feelings. Write her diary. [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Dear Diary,

I am greatly depressed. I really want to pour out my feelings to someone. I am in a dilemma whether to tell Juliette how Gaston sold the villa before buying it or keep quiet as money has been paid and the deal has been

finalised. Both ways Juliette will be greatly hurt and I do not want that. But at the same time I do not want to keep her in the dark as I love her so much. If she comes to know of the same from somebody else, and that I knew the facts, she would start hating me and I do not want to earn her hatred and mistrust. I am feeling disgusted with Gaston who had befooled Juliette by playing a trick upon her. Had I known his intentions earlier I would never have let him do so. Oh God! please show me the way.

8. Jeanne is unable to understand Gaston's reason for buying the Villa after objecting so much; she comes home and quickly writes a letter to her mother sharing her anxiety, jubilation and relief at the purchase. Write her letter. [CBSE 2010 (Term I)]

Dear mother,

I am so happy today that I am unable to contain my happiness. Now listen with your fingers crossed, Gaston has bought the villa I wanted to buy for you and papa. It was not easy for me to persuade him because he was reluctant to invest his life's savings just to buy a villa where we could live for one month only in a year. But mother when I told him that you, papa and Julia's children will live in the Villa throughout the year since you want a house to live in, he readily agreed. Mummy, guess! how dearly Gaston loves you all. I am also very happy for you people. Now you don't have to spend the fag end of your life in that dilapidated house. You can shift in the Villa as soon as we get the possession and get the renovation done. Tell Papa also that I love him.

Your daughter

Jeanne

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

(A) READING

Suggested Readings

- **Dream House (Novel)** – By Virginia Woolf
- **Dream House** – My Reflection (Short Story) — By Leo Tolstoy

(B) SPEAKING/LISTENING

- Think of a business venture that you have undertaken (putting up a sale, selling eatables etc.)
- Discuss with your neighbour
Focus on the financial gains that you made, which were really unexpected.
Share the experience with the rest of the class.

(C) CLASS DISCUSSION / DEBATE

Conduct a discussion/debate on the topic "One cannot make significant gains in business without sacrificing ethics".

- Agree/Disagree
- Share the outcome with others.

(D) GRAMMAR/WRITING

- Find 5 different words to substitute for 'villa'.
- Write a short composition using modals to describe 'your dream house'.
- Give a bio-sketch of the most successful and clever shopkeeper of your area, who is known for his keen business acumen.