**Symbiosis School, Nasik.**

**Std: X Term I (2020-21)**

**Subject: English Language & Literature - Worksheet – 52**

**Chapter 7 – The Necklace By- Guy De Maupassant**

### ****Introduction to the lesson****

The story revolves around a selfish lady named Matilda. She is unsatisfied with her life as she wants a rich husband but because she belongs to a family of clerks and her family is unable to give dowry she is married to a clerk. One day, both the husband and wife are invited to a party at the minister’s house. But Matilda does not have good clothes and jewels to wear at such a party. Her husband suggests her to buy a dress and ask an old friend for jewellery. She then borrows a necklace from her friend and goes to the party. What happens next proves to be a lesson for the unhappy lady.

### ****About the Author****

**Henri René Albert Guy de Maupassant** (5 August 1850 – 6 July 1893) was a French writer, remembered as a master of the short story form, and as a representative of the naturalist school of writers, who depicted human lives and destinies and social forces in disillusioned and often pessimistic terms. He wrote some 300 short stories, six novels, three travel books, and one volume of verse.



### ****Summary****

Mme. Matilda Loisel lived in an apartment with her husband M. Loisel and was very unhappy and unsatisfied with what life had given her. She was unhappy with the apartment’s shabby walls and the worn out furniture. She was also irritated by the way her husband reacted to the home made food while she dreamt of royal dinners being served in exquisite silver dishes. They were neither rich nor poor. She had to marry a clerk in the office of the board of education just because her family couldn't afford to give her dowry. She also hated visiting her old friend Mme. Jeanne Forestier as she was a rich lady and Matilda envied her. Whenever she visited her, she became sad and cried for days together. One day when her husband returned home from work, he got an invitation to a party at the house of minister of public instruction. Contrary to his expectation, Matilda was irritated and angry and threw the card away. She was upset because she didn't have anything to wear at such an extravagant party. Her husband gave her 400 francs to buy a new dress, that he had been saving to buy a gun so that he could go hunting with his friends. After buying the dress she was sad because she did not have jewellery to make herself look more appealing and attractive. Her husband suggested that she could borrow jewellery from her friend Mme. Forestier. When Mme. Loisel went to her friend’s house and described the situation, she showed her the cupboard and asked her to choose whatever she liked. Matilda chose a precious diamond necklace which was kept in a black satin box.

They went to the minister’s party and all the men admired her as she was looking gorgeous in her new dress and jewellery. They returned at 4 in the morning. By that time M. Loisel had already dozed off in one of the rooms with three other men. They decided to leave and couldn't find a carriage. Finally, after walking for a while, they got a carriage which dropped them right outside their door. Matilda realized that she did not have the necklace. M.Loisel went out to search the railway tracks for the necklace. M. Loisel went to the police station, cab offices and also gave an advertisement for reward to the person who returned the necklace. Meanwhile, he told his wife to tell her friend that the clasp of the necklace had broken and had given it for repair. After a week, when the necklace could not be found, they decided to replace it with a similar one. They found a similar necklace priced at 36000 francs. Fortunately M. Loisel had inherited 18000 francs from his father and the rest he borrowed.  
It took them ten years to repay all the loans and in these years their lives changed drastically. They moved to a smaller apartment and removed the maid. Matilda cooked the food and washed the clothes herself. Even M. Loisel worked multiple jobs to repay the borrowed money. In these years, Mme. Loisel started looking much older, her hair badly dressed, her voice became loud and she became a normal person who would carry a basket to the grocery store, the butcher store and the fruit store to buy their daily supplies. One day she met her friend Jeanne with a child and decided to tell her the truth and explained how she was indirectly responsible for her aged looks and her living conditions. She explained how she lost the borrowed necklace and had to take a loan for replacing it. On hearing this, Jeanne told Matilda that the necklace that she had borrowed was a fake one and was not worth more than 500 francs.

**Word Meanings**

Error- a mistake.  
Clerk- a person employed in an office or bank to keep records, accounts, and undertake other routine administrative duties.  
Dowry- an amount of property or money brought by a bride to her husband on their marriage.  
Petty- of little importance; trivial.  
Incessantly- without interruption; constantly.  
Delicacies- fineness or intricacy of texture or structure.  
Shabby- in poor condition through long use or lack of care.  
Tureen- a deep covered dish from which soup is served.  
Pot pie- a savoury pie baked in a deep dish, typically with a top crust only.  
Elegant- graceful and stylish in appearance or manner.  
Exquisite- extremely beautiful and delicate.  
Marvellous- causing great wonder; extraordinary.  
Convent- a school attached to and run by a convent.  
Elated- make (someone) ecstatically happy.

M.- Mr. in french  
Mme.- Mrs. in french  
Delighted- feeling or showing great pleasure.  
Spitefully- showing or caused by malice.  
Murmuring- a low or indistinct continuous sound.  
Stammered- speak with sudden involuntary pauses and a tendency to repeat the initial letters of words.  
Stupefied- make (someone) unable to think or feel properly.  
Dismay- concern and distress caused by something unexpected.  
Weeping- shedding tears.  
Vexation- the state of being annoyed, frustrated, or worried.  
Affair- an event or sequence of events of a specified kind or that has previously been referred to.  
Colleague- a person with whom one works in a profession or business.  
Grieved- feel intense sorrow.  
Francs- the basic monetary unit of France, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg, and several other countries

Embraced- hold (someone) closely in one's arms, especially as a sign of affection.  
Elegant- graceful and stylish in appearance or manner.  
Enthusiasm- intense and eager enjoyment, interest, or approval.  
Admiration- respect and warm approval.  
Salons- a reception room in a large house.  
Furs- the short, fine, soft hair of certain animals.  
Detained- keep (someone) from proceeding by holding them back or making claims on their attention.  
Descended- move or fall downwards.  
Hailing- (of a large number of objects) fall or be hurled forcefully.  
Coachmen- a driver of a horse-drawn carriage.  
Shivering- shaking slightly and uncontrollably as a result of being cold, frightened, or excited.  
Nightfall- the onset of night; dusk.  
Wearily- with extreme tiredness.  
Cloak- a sleeveless outdoor overgarment that hangs loosely from the shoulders.

Cast down- sad or worried  
Gown- a long elegant dress worn on formal occasions.  
Bewilderment- a feeling of being perplexed and confused.  
Frightful- very unpleasant, serious, or shocking.  
Clasp- grasp (something) tightly with one's hand.  
Dictated- state or order authoritatively.  
Chaplet- a garland or circlet for a person's head.  
Ruinous- disastrous or destructive  
Usurers-  a person who lends money at unreasonably high rates of interest.  
Latter - denoting the second or second mentioned of two people or things.  
Frigid- stiff or formal in behaviour or style.

Perceive- become aware or conscious of (something); come to realize or understand.  
Substitution- the action of replacing someone or something with another person or thing.  
Necessity- the state or fact of being required.  
Frightful- very unpleasant, serious, or shocking.  
Lodgings- temporary accommodation.  
Attic- a space or room inside or partly inside the roof of a building.  
Odious- extremely unpleasant; repulsive.  
Haggling- dispute or bargain persistently, especially over the cost of something.  
Sous- small value coin in France  
Crude- in a natural or raw state; not yet processed or refined.  
Awry- out of the normal or correct position  
Pails- a bucket.  
Flattered- lavish praise and compliments on (someone)  
Singular- denoting or referring to just one person or thing.  
Astonished- greatly surprised or impressed; amazed.  
Personage- a person

Recall- bring (a fact, event, or situation) back into one's mind; remember.  
Loaned- lend (a sum of money or item of property).  
Decently- in a way that conforms with generally accepted standards of respectable or moral behaviour.  
Content- in a state of peaceful happiness.

**Character Sketches**

**1) Mathilde Loisel**

Beautiful Mathilde Loisel was born into a family of clerks, and her utter conviction that her station in life is a mistake of destiny leads her to live her life in a constant rebellion against her circumstances. Although she has a comfortable home and loving husband, she is so unsatisfied that she is virtually oblivious of everything but the wealth she does not have. Her desire for wealth is a constant pain and turmoil. She cannot visit her wealthy friend Madame Forestier without being overcome with jealousy, and the idea of going to a party without expensive clothes drives her to tears. Mathilde is a raging, jealous woman who will do anything in her power to reverse the “mistake of destiny” that has plunged her into what she perceives as a wholly inappropriate and inadequate life.

Mathilde is happy at only one point in “The Necklace”: on the night of the party, when her new dress and borrowed jewels give her the appearance of belonging to the wealthy world she aspires to. Fully at ease among the wealthy people at the party, Mathilde feels that this is exactly where she was meant to be—if it hadn’t been for the mistake of destiny. She forgets her old life completely (her husband dozes in an empty room for most of the night) and immerses herself in the illusion of a new one. Her moment of happiness, of course, is fleeting, and she must spend the next ten years paying for the pleasure of this night. However, her joy was so acute—and her satisfaction, for once, so complete—that even the ten arduous years and her compromised beauty do not dull the party’s memory. Just as Mathilde was oblivious to the small pleasures that her life once afforded her, she is oblivious to the fact that her greed and deception are what finally sealed her fate.

**2) Monsieur Loisel**

Monsieur Loisel’s acceptance and contentment differ considerably from Mathilde’s emotional outbursts and constant dissatisfaction, and although he never fully understands his wife, he does his best to please her. When he comes home bearing the invitation to the party, he expects Mathilde to be excited and is shocked when she is devastated. He cannot understand why Mathilde will not wear flowers to the party in lieu of expensive jewellery—in his view, that they cannot afford expensive jewellery is simply a fact of their life, not something to be railed against. When Monsieur Loisel tries to appease Mathilde, he does 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. While she complains she has no proper jewellery, he urges her to visit Madame Forestier to borrow some. When she dances all night at the party, he dozes in a coat room and allows her to enjoy herself.

Monsieur Loisel’s eagerness and willingness to please Mathilde becomes his downfall when she loses the necklace. He is the one to venture back into the cold night to search for the necklace in the streets, even though he is already undressed and has to be at work in a few short hours. 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 this decision costs him ten years of hard work, he does not complain or imagine an alternate fate. It is as though his desires do not even exist—or, at the very least, his desires are meaningless if they stand in the way of Mathilde’s. The money he gives her for a dress had been earmarked for a gun, but he sacrifices this desire without a word—just as he mutely sacrifices any hope of happiness after he buys the necklace. Rather than force Mathilde to be accountable for her actions, he protects her, ultimately giving up his life so that she can relish her one moment of well-dressed happiness.

### 3) Madame Forestier

Mathilde’s wealthy friend. Madame Forestier treats Mathilde kindly, but Mathilde is bitterly jealous of Madame Forestier’s wealth, and the kindness pains her. Madame Forestier lends Mathilde the necklace for the party and does not inspect it when Mathilde returns it. She is horrified to realize that Mathilde has wasted her life trying to pay for a replacement necklace, when the original necklace had actually been worth nothing.

**Concept Based Questions**

**Question 1.**

What would Matilda often dream of?

**Question 2.**

Why did Matilda throw the invitation spitefully?

**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.

**Question 4.**

What excuse did Loisels put up to explain the delay in returning the necklace?

**Question 5.**

How did Loisels manage to pay for the necklace?

**Question 6.**

How did Mme Loisel now know the life of necessity?

**Question 7.**

Describe Mme Loisel after ten years.

**Question 8.**

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

**Question 9.**

Why was Matilda’s friend astonished to see her at the end of the story?

or

Why did Jeanne not recognise her friend, Matilda?

**Question 10.**

Comment on the use of irony in the text.

or

How had sacrifice of Mme Loisel’s been in vain?