

# CLASS NOTES

Class: XII	Topic: <b>The Rattrap</b> Author: <b>Selma Lagerlof</b>
Subject: <b>English Core</b>	Date- : <b>17.11.2021</b>

**Theme:** The trap of material benefit that most human beings are prone to fall into.

**Sub-theme-** Essential goodness in a human being can be awakened through understanding and love.

**Setting:** Mining area of Sweden

**Main Character:** Rattrap Peddler, Ironmaster, Edla, Crofter, Master blacksmith

## **About the author-**

Novelist Selma Lagerlöf, who in 1909 became the first woman and first

Swedish writer to win the prestigious Nobel Prize for Literature, enjoyed telling stories.

Drawing richly from life in her native Värmland and inspired by her beloved Nordic legends,

work was the romantic answer to the dominant Swedish realism of her time. Lagerlof's

internationally best-known book is the story of restless Nils Holgersson, *The Wonderful*

*Adventures of Nils*, a geography book for school children that conquered the hearts of

adventurers of all ages.

## **JUSTIFICATION OF THE TITLE-**

"The Rattrap" is an appropriate title as it is the story of a rattrap peddler. The author

has used the metaphor of a Rattrap highlight the human predicament. Just as a rat is fooled

by bait and gets trapped, most human beings also fall into the trap of material benefits.

The story revolves around the incident of a man getting trapped due to his greed. Hence, the title is apt one.

## **Points to remember-**

1. "The Rattrap" is a story that underlines the belief that essential goodness in human beings

can be aroused through sympathy, understanding and love.

2. Once a man went around selling small rattraps but he took to begging and thievery to keep his body and soul together.
3. One day he was struck with the idea – the whole world is a big rattrap and it offers riches as bait.
4. People let themselves be tempted to touch the bait then it closes in on them bringing an end to everything.
5. One dark evening the rattrap peddler sought shelter in an old crofter's roadside cottage.
6. The old man gave him food, tobacco they enjoyed the card game too.
7. Next morning the peddler stole away his thirty kroners.
8. The rattrap peddler escaped into a big confusing forest and got lost.
9. While resting on the ground he recollected his idea that the world is a rattrap and thought his end was near.



(Image Courtesy: Google)

10. Hearing a thumping sound he reached Ramsjo ironworks for a night shelter.
11. The owner came on his nightly rounds and noticed the ragged wretch near the furnace. He took him as an old acquaintance 'Nils Olof.'
12. He invited him to stay with them for Christmas but the stranger declined the offer.
13. His daughter Edla Willmanson persuaded to go home with him.
14. She requested him to stay for Christmas Eve only.

15. On his way to the Manor House the peddler thought that he had thrown himself into the lion's den.
16. The next day in broad day light the iron master realized the stranger was not captain and threatened to call the sheriff.
17. Edla pleaded for him and asked him to stay back.
18. Christmas Eve at Ramsjo was as usual and the stranger slept and slept.
19. She made him understand that if he wanted rest and peace he would be welcome next Christmas also. This had a miraculous effect on him.
20. Next morning they went for early church service leaving behind the guest who was asleep.
21. There they heard about the theft at crofter's house by a peddler. Edla becomes very upset.
22. They reach home immediately and learn that the peddler had already left but had not taken anything at all with him. Instead, he had left a small packet for Edla as a Christmas present.
23. She opens the packet and finds a rattrap, three wrinkled ten- Kroner notes and also a letter with a request to return the Kroners to the crofter.

### IMPORTANT EXPRESSIONS-

- (1) **Keep body and soul together-** To manage to keep alive; to survive
- (2) **Plods along the road-** Moving along the road slowly but deliberately, to walk with a heavy feet
- (3) **Impenetrable prison-** Impassable confinement
- (4) **Eased his way-** To move slowly and carefully
- (5) **Things have gone downhill-** to decline or grow worse and worse
- (6) **Hunger gleamed in his eyes-** Feeling so hungry that the expression shows on one's face.
- (7) **Unwonted joy-** Unusual pleasure or happiness.
- (8) **Nodded a haughty consent-** Indifferent agreement
- (9) **Fallen into a line of thought-** Agreement with unusual thoughts

### **Think and answer:**

- (1) What do you learn about the crofter's nature from the story, "The Rattrap"?
- (2) How did the peddler prove to be an ungrateful guest?
- (3) What brought a change in the peddler?

**(4) Mention in detail Edla's contribution in awakening the essential goodness in the peddler?**

**(5) Can a person really turn over a new leaf and can old habits really die? Explain in context to the story "The Rattrap".**

**Content prepared absolutely from home.**