

Page No. 17

### Understanding The Text

**1. What do you understand of the natures of Ramanand and Azam Khan from the episode described?**

**Answer:**

Ramanand, who is a money lender and a grocer, is cunning and has a servile nature which is apt for his money-lending and groceries selling business. He does not get angry but prevails over some customers like Azam Khan with his intelligence and by hurting their pride. Here it is obvious that Ramanand considers his customers as correct in principle. He gives his business the first priority, and his pride is secondary.

Azam Khan is a victim of pride. He is lost in the glory of his ancestors. He is short-sighted, arrogant and full of anger. He is prepared to sell all his property in order to keep Ramanand's moustaches down, as it is suitable for his class. Azam Khan is living in the past. He is short-tempered, impractical and does not know what is good for him.

**2. Identify instances in the story that show the business acumen of Ramanand.**

**Answer:**

In this story, Ramanand is considered a dedicated businessman. His perception of business is obvious from the reality that he concurs to lower his moustache at the request of Azam Khan. However, he lowers only one tip of his moustache to provoke Azam Khan in order to bring all his property under mortgage. He does not get angry and retains his business principles on top of his priorities.

**3. Both Ramanand and Azam Khan seem to have very fixed views. How does Ramanand score over Azam Khan towards the end of the story?**

**Answer:**

Both Ramanand and Azam Khan seem to have very fixed views about each other and themselves. They are involved in the social milieu, which believes in the differentiation of people based on their moustaches. Khan Sahib was included in the tiger class moustache, while Ramanand was included in the goat class moustache. Both of them are in harmony with the fact that they should not cross each other's limits. In the end, Ramanand scores over Khan Sahib by turning up the end of his goat moustache, which makes it look like a tiger moustache. Azam Khan gets raged by this action and is tricked into selling all of his property to Ramanand.

### Talking About The Text

**Discuss the following in groups of three or four**

**1. The episode has been narrated in a light vein. What social mores does the author seem to ridicule?**

**Answer:**

The author, through the episode, ridicules society and the people living in false pride of their lineage or community. It is about a fool who does not know much of the practical matters and, in order to feed their image, goes ahead with auctioning their properties. Smarter people like Ramanand, who bend but do not break, fool such people. Based on the situation, they change their values but do not compromise their pride completely. They are very cunning and take advantage of the fools filled with social status, which is worn out and cover up their presence to protect their past. People who weave their fall due to the lack of awareness are mocked here by the author.

**2. What do you think are the reasons for the references made to the English people and the British monarchy?**

**Answer:**

Indian society takes pride in the culture and language of their rulers and not in their vibrant and rich history. Babus and Nabobs, who were present during the British Raj, are still respected and looked up to, even though these people ensured the authority of the English Queen on our land. The reference in Mulk Raj Anand's story makes it understandable. He gives an example of how the generals and nabobs in the English army wore the prestigious lion moustaches, which were worn by maharajas and rajas of our land.

**3. What do you think is the message that the author seems to convey through the story?**

**Compare your group's views with that of the other groups.**

**Answer:**

The author has made it clear how people who live by impractical values, which are age-old, cause their own downfall and create disturbance to society. As time changes, one should also evolve, which makes society grow. Holding on to false pride will not bring any prosperity. So staying cautious will ensure that no one takes advantage of their virtues.

### **Appreciation**

**1. Comment on the way in which the theme of the story has been introduced.**

**Answer:**

'Mustachios', the theme of the story, is introduced here in a scientific manner. At the beginning of the story, it might look like an easy essay about how Indians take pride in the style of moustaches. Only at the end will the reader understand the importance of the introduction. The reader is served with a clear description of the concept around which the entire story will revolve – the rise and fall of men by sticking and altering to their status symbols like mustachios.

**2. How does the insertion of dialogue in the story contribute to its interest?**

**Answer:**

In the story, the insertion of dialogue enables the writer to convey things from their actual perspective. Several words and expressions can be included in the story, which a writer would not be able to write on his own. For instance, when Azam Khan gets angry, he says this to Ramanand: "You know what I mean, the seed of a donkey!" and "I tell you, turn that tip down, or I shall wring your neck".

### **Language Work**

**1. *Nouveau riche* and *bourgeoise* are French words. Collect from newspapers, magazines and other sources some more French words or expressions that are commonly used in English.**

**Answer:**

Enclave, entrepreneur, and envelope are some of the French words or expressions that are commonly used in English.

**2. Locate expressions in the text which reflect the Indian idiom, for example, the pride of the generations of his ancestors.**

**Answer:**

The expressions in the text which reflect the Indian idiom are –

To become a mere worm

Seed of a donkey

Oily lentil-eaters

**3. We 'draw up a deed'. Complete the following phrases with appropriate words**

**a. .... one's word**

**b. .... one's will**

**c. .... ends meet**

**d. .... a loan**

**e. .... a deaf ear to**

**Answer:**

a. To give one's word

b. Carry out one's will

c. To make ends meet

d. To take out a loan

e. Turn a deaf ear to

