

Main Points

- The story, A Pair of Mustachios is written by Mulk Raj Anand.
- Indians prefer the various styles of mustachios to mark the differences between the classes.
- Famous lion moustaches symbolise the fearsome, resplendent rajas, maharajas, nawabs and English army generals.
- The descendents of feudal gentry still hold the false pride of greatness who are left with nothing but strange and pointed tiger moustaches.
- There is goat moustaches worn by newly rich men and shopkeeper class.
- Charlie Chaplin moustache is worn by lower middle class, clerks and professional men.
- There are endless styles of mustachios in India and people adhere to it as if Government has patented or sanctioned.
- Seth Ramanand is a grocer and moneylender.
- He is doing good in his business and twists his goat moustache to tiger moustache as the occasion demands.
- Seth's twisting of moustaches was not accepted by Azam Khan who claims himself to be descendants of ancient Afghan family.
- Azam is tall, middle aged, handsome and dignified person who wears a tiger moustache as the resemblance of his class.
- To maintain the false pride and prejudices of his ancient and noble family, Azam sells off all his wealth to the cunning Seth with the promise and deed signed to fix down the tips of the moustaches of Seth.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. **The author of the story of 'A Pair of Mustachios' is-**
 - a. Anton Chekhov
 - b. Mulk Raj Anand
 - c. D.H.Lawrence
 - d. Jhumpa Lahiri
2. **Mulk Raj Anand, belongs to which country?**
 - a. Britain
 - b. Ireland
 - c. America
 - d. India
3. **According to Mulk Raj, what marks the boundaries between the various classes of people in Europe?**
 - a. Clothes
 - b. Cars
 - c. Mustachios
 - d. Bikes
4. **What can be the line of demarcation to mark the differences between the classes in India?**
 - a. Clothes
 - b. Cars
 - c. Mustachios
 - d. Bikes
5. **Rajas, Maharajas, nawabs and English Army Generals bear-**
 - a. Lion Mustachios
 - b. Grey Mustachios
 - c. Tiger Mustachios
 - d. Black Mustachios
6. **Charlie Chaplin Mustachios is worn by-**
 - a. Nouveau Riche
 - b. Lower middle class
 - c. Clerks and Professional men
 - d. Both (b) and (c)
7. **What kind of mustachios do the nouveau riche and shopkeeper class have?**
 - a. Mouse moustache
 - b. Sheep moustache
 - c. Goat moustache
 - d. Lion moustache
8. **Sheep Mustache is of the**
 - a. Peasants
 - b. Coolies
 - c. Feudal gentry
 - d. Rajas
9. **Peasants wear-**
 - a. Sheep Moustache
 - b. Charlie Chaplin Moustache
 - c. Mouse Moustache
 - d. Lion Moustache
10. **Seth Ramanand is a-**

- d. All of these
28. **Who sells off all his wealth just to maintain the false pride and prejudices of his class?**
- Khan Azam Khan
 - Seth Ramanand
 - The landlord of the village
 - Choudhary Chottu Ram
29. **Which of the following is a character of the story 'A pair of Mustachios'?**
- Seth Ramanand
 - Choudhary Chottu Ram
 - Iona
 - Both (a) and (b)
30. **At the end of the story, who becomes a pauper?**
- Seth Ramanand
 - Khan Azam Khan
 - Chaudhary chotu Ram
 - None of these

ANSWER KEY

1-b, 2-d, 3-a, 4-c, 5-a, 6-d, 7-c, 8-b, 9-c, 10-d, 11-b, 12-d, 13-a, 14-b, 15-b, 16-b, 17-b, 18-c, 19-c, 20-a, 21-c, 22-c, 23-a, 24-d, 25-c, 26-b, 27-d, 28-a, 29-d, 30-b

VERY SHORT QUESTIONS

1. **What does the author consider as the line of demarcation to mark the boundaries between the various classes in India?**
- Ans In India we prefer the various styles of mustachios to mark the differences between the classes.
2. **From where does Khan Azam Khan claim his ancestry to be?**
- Ans Khan Azam Khan claims his ancestry to be from an ancient Afghan family who used to work in the court of Moghuls.
3. **What does the lion moustache symbolise?**
- Ans The lion moustache symbolises the fearsome resplendent rajas, maharajas, nawabs and English army generals who were well known for their devotion to the King Emperor.
4. **What do the feudal gentry take pride in?**
- Ans Feudal gentry take pride from their ancestors. Nothing has left with them except few mementoes of the past glory, a few gold trinkets, heirlooms and bits of land.
5. **Who all have Charlie Chaplin moustache?**
- Ans The lower middle class, the clerks and professional

men have Charlie Chaplin moustache.

6. **Who was Seth Ramanand?**
- Ans Seth Ramanand was a grocer and used to lend money.
7. **How was Seth Ramanand doing in his business?**
- Ans Seth Ramanand was doing well in his business. He bought the wheat from the farmers at cheap prices and sold it at higher prices.
8. **What kind of moustache was worn by Seth Ramanand?**
- Ans Goat moustache
9. **Who was Azam Khan?**
- Ans Azam Khan was a tall, middle-aged, handsome and dignified man.
10. **Why did Khan Azam Khan go to the moneylender?**
- Ans Khan Azam Khan went to the shop of the moneylender to pawn his wife's nose-ring.
11. **Why was Azam Khan angry at Seth Ramanand?**
- Ans Azam Khan was angry at Seth Ramanand because of the upturned tips of his moustache which looked like that of tiger moustache.
12. **What condition did the moneylender put to bring down the tips of his moustache?**
- Ans The moneylender asked Azam Khan to sell all his goods and chattels in order to bring down the tips of his moustache.
13. **Who was referred as 'lentil-eaters' in the story?**
- Ans Seth Ramanand was referred as 'lentil-eaters'.
14. **What would the priest do if Seth did not keep his word?**
- Ans The priest would excommunicate Seth from religion if he did not keep his word.
15. **How did Azam Khan become a pauper?**
- Ans Azam Khan became a pauper as he sold off all his wealth to Seth just for the sake of moustache.

SHORT QUESTIONS

1. **What does the author, Mulk Raj Anand say about the tiger moustache?**
- Ans The author says that tiger moustache is very stange, pointed, unbending and unchanging survivals from the ranks of feudal gentry who have nothing left with them except false pride in their

greatness. They are left with a few mementoes of past glory, scrolls of honour granted the the former Kings, a few gold trinkets, heirlooms and bits of land.

2. Discuss about the goat moustache?

Ans The author has illustrated the goat moustache very well in this story. According to him goat moustache is a unsure brand worn by the nouveau riche, the new commercial bourgeoisie and the shopkeeper class. It has thin line of difference from the tiger moustache and can be twisted as the occasion demands. They are turned up to show the power to some coolie or turned down to show humility to a prosperous client.

3. Who was Seth Ramanand? Was he successful in his profession? how?

Ans Seth Ramanand was a grocer and moneylender. He was successful in his profession. He was clever and cunning and knew the tricks to carry his business. When the prices of wheat fell, he bought at a lower prices and sold at higher prices. Moreover, he takes away all the wealth of Azam Khan very cleverly just for putting down the tips of his moustache.

4. Who was Azam Khan? Why was he raged at Seth Ramanand?

Ans Khan Azam Khan was a tall, middle-aged man, a handsome and dignified person who lived in the same village of Seth Ramanand. He wears a tiger moustache and takes honour in the styling of moustache which he claims to be of the descent of an Afghan family whose heads were noblemen and councillors in the court of great Moghuls. He was raged at Seth Ramanand because Seth used to twist the tip of his goat moustache upward just like a tiger moustache which was not tolerable by Azam.

5. What was the deed that was drawn up between Seth and Azam?

Ans Shopkeepers and moneylenders used to have goat moustache. Seth being the grocer and moneylender had a goat moustache but at times used to turn the tips of his moustache upward to look like the tiger moustache. Styling of moustache was considered as the mark of difference between the classes so it was not tolerable for Azam .He asked Seth to put the tips of the moustache down but under the condition of selling all his wealth to Seth. The document stated the transfer of all his household goods and chattels to keep Seth's moustaches fixed in the goat style.

LONG QUESTIONS

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

Ans Seth Ramanand is a grocer and moneylender. He is cool and calm. He never gets angry and considers that the customer is always right. He is very clever, cunning and successful in his business dealings. When the price of the wheat was low, he bought it from the peasants and sold at higher prices. Similarly, he was ready to put back his moustaches to goat moustaches at the cost of the wealth of Azam Khan.

On the other hand, Azam khan, a middle aged man suffers from false pride which he considers to be important. In the story he shows his immaturity and impracticality. He is short-tempered and arrogant and takes pride in the forgone royalty of his ancestors. He sells off all his wealth and property just for styling moustaches. He appears to be a real fool.

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

Ans Undoubtedly Ramanand is a successful businessman and that is only through his business acumen. He bought whole wheat from the farmers when the price lowered and sold it at higher prices making profit. At other time Azam Khan had come to his shop only to pawn his wife's gold nose-ring but with cleverness he made Azam Khan to sell off all his property. He knew Azam did not like his moustache to be turned up like Azam's therefore even at Azam's request he lowers only one side of his moustache. At this, Azam gets angry and is ready to mortgage his household goods and chattels through a deed.

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?

Ans Ramanand the moneylender and Azam the heir of the royal family live in the same society with the belief of categorization of people on the basis of position and styling of moustaches. They both have fixed views about each other and themselves. But at the end of the story Ramanand scores over Azam. Ramanand is now in good position so takes advantage of that and wears his moustaches as the occasion demands. Tiger moustache is worn by Azam and he could never tolerate Seth's moustache to look like his. Seth is ready to lower the tips of his moustaches on the condition of mortgaging the wealth and property of Azam making him a pauper.