

Wit Versus Anger

Warm-up Session

The king was in a bad mood. Nobody dared to ask the reason of his anger. At last, they called the court jester to calm down the King. Could he succeed in his mission? Let's read the story and find out.

Sujan Singh ruled over a small kingdom. He was kind, gentle and generous. He loved his subjects and worked for their welfare. So the people of his kingdom were happy. However, the king was temperamental. Nobody knew when he would be angry and then it was difficult to calm him down.

That day also he was in a bad mood. He was finding faults with almost anything and everything. In his bitter mood, he had even sentenced one of the courtiers into banishment and sent another into prison. Everybody wondered why he was so displeased.

So the courtiers sat together and decided to call Muni Ram, the court jester. He was a clever man and the courtiers were sure that he would find out the reason.

Soon Muni Ram came to the house where the courtiers were sitting in a dejected mood. "What's the matter?" he asked the courtiers. "There is something wrong with the King." One of the courtiers said to him, "Please do something to cheer him up otherwise we all will be thrown into the prison by the evening."

Muni Ram said, "Let me see what I can do. But don't be panicked, I'll do something," he assured them.

Then he left for the royal palace. Straightway, he went to the room where the King was sitting.

"What's the matter, My Lord? What makes you so dejected?" he asked politely. As soon

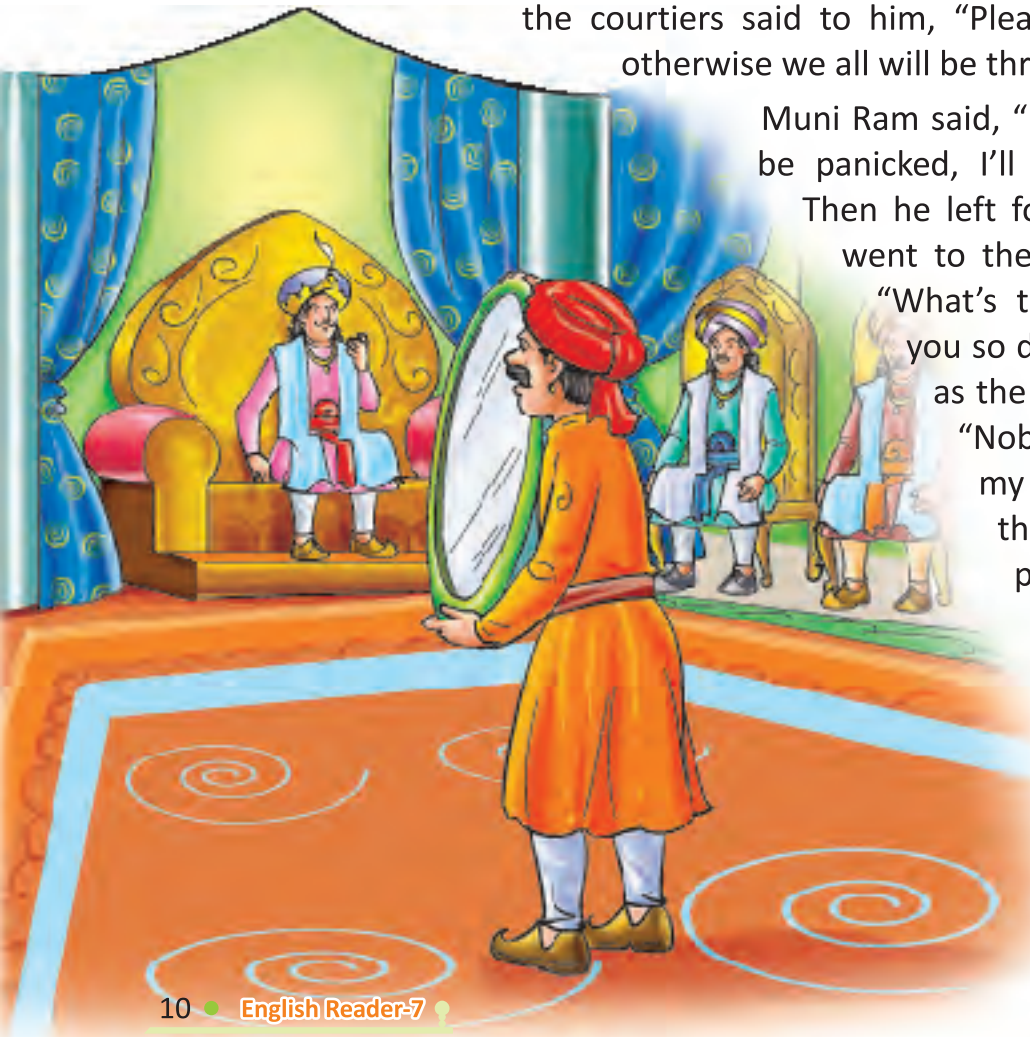
as the King saw the jester he at once said, "Nobody has given the correct answer to

my questions. What is the solution to the problem?" he asked. Muni Ram

paused for a while and then bowing his head said, "I see the only

solution is not to answer any of your questions, My Lord."

"What do you mean? Is there anyone in my kingdom who will remain silent when I ask a question?" asked Sujan Singh in amazement.



“Yes, there is only one person, Your Majesty!” said Muni Ram and immediately vanished from there. He was back in no time with a big mirror in his hand and held it before the King.

Sujan Singh could not understand what Muni Ram was trying to convey. He looked at his reflection in the mirror and asked “What is it?”

“The person whose reflection you see in the mirror is the one who will not answer a single question of yours whether you shout or scold or beg,” said Muni Ram calmly.

The courtiers, who had been watching quietly for so long, burst into peals of laughter. However, the King did not seem to be amused at all.

He looked at Muni Ram angrily and said, “Do you know the difference between an ass and yourself?” Muni Ram quickly measured the distance between the King and him, and said, “Two feet, Your Highness.”

“This is too much.” shouted the King in anger, “You are humiliating me. I cannot tolerate this. You will have to face the consequence.”

Muni Ram’s intention was, of course, not to insult the King. He had only wanted to amuse him. But he had crossed limits to some extent. Though, he tried to explain but the King was not ready to listen to him. At last, he was given the death sentence. All the courtiers were shocked but helpless.

Mani Ram, too, was stunned. He stood silent for some time. However, he was a clever man and soon gathered his courage.



“How will I die? Will I be hanged, beheaded or starved?” He humbly asked the King.

“What difference does it make?” said the King, “You have to die and your death is inevitable.”

“It does make a difference to me, My Lord.’ Muni Ram was as polite as before. “If I am, allowed to know the means by which I am to die, I could die happily,” he added.

The King granted his wish and told him to decide himself as to how he wished to die.

Muni Ram thought for a long time and said at last, "Your Majesty! I wish to die of old age."

"What did you say?" asked the King in surprise.

"I have said what you have heard, My Lord I wish to die of old age," Muni Ram said again.

By now, the King's anger had subdued. He smiled at the intelligence of Muni Ram and said, "You have once again shown how wit surpasses over anger."

Muni Ram smiled and saluted the king while the courtiers heaved a sigh of relief.

Words to know

generous = kind, big-hearted; **subjects** = people of the kingdom; **welfare** = wellbeing, happiness; **temperamental** = moody, unpredictable; **courtiers** = noble men; **banishment** = expulsion; **panicked** = be in terror; **bitter** = harsh, **reflection** = image; **humiliating** = degrading, **tolerate** = bear, stand; **consequence** = outcome, **intention** = aim, purpose; **beheaded** = cut the head off; **inevitable** = unavoidable; **surpasses** = exceeds.

EXERCISE ZONE

Lesson Insight

Test Your Comprehension Skill

A. Answer the following questions briefly:

1. How was the nature of the King?
2. Who was Muni Ram?
3. What did Muni Ram bring before the King?

B. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ'S)

Tick (✓) the correct options:

1. Sujan Singh ruled over a small _____.
(a) state (b) kingdom (c) empire
2. Sujan Singh could not _____ what Muni Ram was trying to convey.
(a) know (b) understand (c) remember
3. Muni Ram's intention was, of course, not to _____ the King.
(a) insult (b) hurt (c) defame
4. Mani Ram was a _____ man and soon gathered his courage.
(a) strong (b) clever (c) bold
5. The courtiers heaved a sigh of _____.
(a) discomfort (b) anger (c) relief

C. Answer the following questions:

1. What did nobody know about Sujan Singh?

- Why were the courtiers panicked?
- Whose help did the courtiers decide to take? Why did they decide so?
- What was Muni Ram's real intention?
- What did Muni Ram ask the King when he sentenced him to death?

D. Write 'T' for true and 'F' for false statements:

- Sujan Singh ruled over a vast empire.
- Muni Ram was the court jester of Sujan Singh.
- The King did not look at his reflection in the mirror.
- The King ordered that Muni Ram should be hanged till death.
- Muni Ram wished to die of old age.

E. Fill in the blanks choosing suitable words from the lesson:

- The king loved his _____ and worked for their welfare.
- The _____ were sure that Muni Ram would find out the reason.
- Mani was back in no time with a big _____ in his hand.
- However, the King did not seem to be _____ at all.
- The King _____ his wish and told him to decide himself as to how he wished to die.

F. Who said the following statements and to whom:

Statement	Said by	said to
1. "Let me see what I can do."	_____	_____
2. "What do you mean?"	_____	_____
3. "You are humiliating me."	_____	_____
4. "You have to die and your death is inevitable."	_____	_____
5. "What did you say?"	_____	_____

G. HOTS Questions (Think and Answer):

- Why did the King pronounce death sentence for Muni Ram? Describe briefly.
- Was Muni Ram really a clever jester? Justify your answer citing an example from the lesson.

Sharpen Your Vocabulary

A. Find one word from the lesson for each of the following expressions. Follow the example:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| the people living in a state or a kingdom: | subjects |
| 1. persons who attend a sovereign's court: | _____ |
| 2. condemn to exile : | _____ |
| 3. building where people, awaiting for trial or punishment, are kept: | _____ |
| 4. cause to laugh or smile: | _____ |
| 5. what is sure to happen: | _____ |

B. Write the opposites for each of the following words:

Column 'A'

1. vanished
2. amused
3. death
4. humbly
5. intelligence

Column 'B'

C. Use the following words and make meaningful sentences of your own:

1. ruled : _____
2. displeased : _____
3. banishment : _____
4. Consequence : _____
5. Humiliating : _____

Improve Your Speaking Skills

❖ Sujan Singh was in a bad mood. When Muni Ram came to know of it, he came to the king and tried to make him happy. But he was not successful in his mission and the angry king sentenced him to death. However, Muni Ram saved himself from sure death by using his presence of mind. Work with your partner and taking hints from the lesson, complete the following imaginary conversation between the King and Muni Ram:

King : Oh! You have crossed _____ for that.

Muni Ram : But, Your Majesty! I _____ you.

King : I don't want _____ You _____.

Muni Ram : It's so sad! But may I know _____ ?

King : What difference _____ ?

Muni Ram : It makes _____ me, My Lord.

King : Okay. You yourself can _____ .

Muni Ram : Your Majesty! I _____ age.

King : You seem to be really _____ . I spare your life.

Muni Ram : Thank you, Your Majesty! .

Listening Skills

❖ Your teacher will read out a small paragraph in the class. Listen to him/her carefully and answer the questions set below:

1. When and where did Maharaja Krishna Chandra rule?
2. Who is called a jester?

3. _____ you lend me your book for a day?
4. _____ his soul rest in peace.
5. _____ I help you?
6. My friend _____ come in the evening.
7. It _____ rain today.
8. The train _____ come late.
9. They _____ wait for us.
10. We _____ win the game.

B. Rewrite the following sentences after changing them as directed against each:

1. The doctor advised him to take complete rest. (Interrogative)

2. They spent their holidays in a village. (Future Indefinite)

3. The teacher will punish the naughty boy. (Interrogative-Negative)

4. This restaurant serves good food. (Negative)

5. My friends could not attend the meeting. (Affirmative)

6. Some naughty children were throwing stones at the frogs. (Present Continuous)

7. He has solved the riddle without anybody's help. (Interrogative)

8. Our teacher teaches a new lesson everyday. (Negative)

9. All the students were present in the assembly. (Future Indefinite)

10. My uncle will buy a new house. (Future Continuous)

Time for Activities

- A. Muni Ram was the court jester. The job of a court jester is to entertain the king. Here also, in spite of being angry, the king had to appreciate Muni Ram for his wisdom. Discuss in the class how he succeeded in his task.
- B. What do you do when your parents/elders get angry with you? Tell about it to your class.