



WRITING EFFECTIVE ESSAYS IN CSE

- TEAM VISION IAS

Essay writing happens to be of two types. One for academic purpose, which takes time as well as comprehensive research work and other one for assessment in competitive examinations. Greater degree of control could be exercised over the content in former case but in later one, it could well be just a little more than a response elicited out of provided stimulus. Responding under the pressure of scoring rank defining 200 marks within time frame of three hours, little scope is there but to express one's unique style of perceiving the world. It's one of the most potent tool devised by UPSC elimination process to weed out candidates of non-desired profile. Essay writing takes out the real you. Little could be done but to keep oneself prepared beforehand. Just like personality assessment in interview, essay-writing skills need multiple refining stages.

To start with one's basic orientation for essay, few question; can you read and digest a series of articles assigned to you? Next, can you extract the essence out of each article and summarize it in no more than a few sentences? Okay, you can read, you can summarize, but can you pull together the threads that connect each of the articles together and create a new idea? Can you offer thoughts and insights on the ideas in these articles? We want to know.

So, you have been given an essay to write. We design essay questions in order to challenge you in many ways that we believe you will be challenged while you are in the process of IAS preparation and beyond it. But, where do you begin and how do you know when you're done?

Task 1: Review and review again the essay question :

Sometimes you develop the questions yourself – issues of national and international importance. Most of the time, however, you will be handed topics that were designed by experienced professors/professional appointed by UPSC and you will need to respond. Examine the topic. Think about the issue. Brainstorm possible responses and otherwise get into that sparks some creative insights.

Some essay topics are really broad, in a sense, abstract natured. Broad issues can be helpful but sometimes they can make you want to tear your hair out because you are not sure what the professor expects. Try to think of these types of topics as an opportunity because they may signal that the door is wide open and you can pick and choose what you really want to say. Usually what broad essay topics really mean is that the professor is not exactly clear about what s/he wants in terms of an answer. Or, it means that the case can be approached from a number of different angles. Regardless, when UPSC offers you a broad issue, rejoice! You have lots of room to imprint a desired profile, considering this paper a sort of projective test, especially designed for personality assessment. Lots could be written that would reflect your pragmatic approach, critical thinking, informed analysis and accommodating nature that's essential for dealing with this collectivistic national culture.

Some essay questions are very specific. Here the professor knows what s/he wants and s/he wants to know that you know what s/he wants. Here you need to focus your attention on the articles and other resources relating to that specific issue. You need to recall the notes, work to distill the information. Most of all, you need to figure out what is asked and how best to respond so that all questions are addressed.

Once you figure out what type of question you have, I recommend that you focus on a few key elements:

Task 2: After you have reviewed the question ask yourself the following :

- Do you understand the question that is being asked?
- Do you know what issues you need to address?
- Do you find yourself in a position to sketch a rough framework for essay, touching every possible relevant topic, giving it a comprehensive outlook?
- Can you tell from this crafted outline, which ideas are yours and which ideas are the authors' ideas? If yes, try to adopt a balancing ground with a bit of critical approach, yet complementing each other. A sort of collective solution.
- Are you comfortable with the language competency needed to execute planned outlook.

Task 3: Write a first, messy draft :

Depending upon the level of comfort with your writing speed, you may choose to invest at least 10 minutes to maximum 1 hour in framing introduction, successive paragraphs and conclusion.

- Don't try to control your first responses to the question too much, just write what comes to mind while you have the question in your mind.
- What questions do you have for the authors of the various articles you are responding to?
- What inconsistencies do you find in their views/articles? What problems do you see? What holes can you identify?
- What is your main message – what you really want to say about the topic you have been asked? Draw a big circle around this idea.
- What claims or assertions can you make that might support your main message? If you don't have any, you need to check to see if your main message is robust enough.
- What evidence and examples do you find that support your claims? If you don't have any, time to move to the best available other essay topic.

Task 4: Focus on your introduction:

Once you have your first draft written, it is time to edit - to scrutinize what the creator in you thinks is important.

- Does your introduction provide some context or background for the issue and then relate your main message? If not, why not?
- Is your objective clear? Do you need to explain what you are trying to show?
- Does your last sentence draw the reader into the rest of your paragraph?
- Does your introduction relate to the essay question? If you have a specific essay question, your intro must relate directly to the question. If you have a broad essay question, your response must touch on the issues discussed in the question, but usually cannot attend to all the details of the question.

Task 5: Focus on your supporting paragraphs:

- Do you develop your main idea in your subsequent paragraphs using assertions and supporting evidence to make your point? If not, start finding evidence and examples to support your points.
- Do you include lots of “shoulds” in your writing? If so, this type of writing can point to assertions without evidence and examples to back up claims. Try to rewrite most of the “shoulds” out of the response. Try replacing “shoulds” with “coulds” to see what happens. Usually you have to offer more evidence and examples to shore up your ideas.

Task 6: Focus on your conclusion:

- First, do you have a conclusion?
- Does your conclusion restate your first paragraph? If so, delete your conclusion and start again, this is high school writing.
- Does your conclusion synthesize the many ideas discussed in the essay in order to offer your reader more insight on the problem? If not, why not? If not, what does your conclusion need in order to further the main idea that you are discussing? This could be hard, but try to push yourself.
- Did you pull the strings of the analysis together for the reader?
- Did you show how the chunks of analysis work together?

Do's and Don'ts for Essay Paper

- It's better to start essay with Brief introduction preferably with a small relevant anecdote/story/incident, which creates some genuine interest in the examiner's mind.
- Starting essay with definitions of the terms in the essay topic is not very pragmatic, because most of the times we cannot define the terms precisely. Moreover, in recent times essay topics are highly subjective in nature requiring our personal opinions and views. Therefore starting essay with objective definitions of terms will put constraints

on our creative ability of writing and there may be some problem in flow of essay and smooth transition from one idea to other etc.

- Starting with a popular quotation is a nice option. But, one should know numerous quotations for this, because writing relevant quotation is very important. How good may be the quotation, if it's not 100% relevant to the topic, it becomes a liability rather than asset, because we have to substantiate that in our essay in line with given topic. Add quotes of various scholars wherever required, try to link it with recent happenings, events etc. An enriched essay with many examples and quotes has a lot of potential to fetch good marks.
- The best option to start with is writing about most relevant recent news item or a small anecdote, which is 100% relevant to the given topic. For this we need not prepare specially.
- Don't trouble the examiner with lengthy introduction, because they have little patience to go through supposedly irrelevant matter prior to the arrival of actual topic.
- It's better to indicate the salient points of your essay in bulleted form to give the examiner an idea of what u have written in your entire essay without going through it. It will also be helpful in making sure that examiner does not miss any major topic you have covered due to a casual glance at the papers. But, ensure that this will come in second or third page of essay. Somehow, include it in the regular flow of the essay rather than making it appearing like an index.
- Write as many examples and case studies as possible for logically substantiating your arguments.
- Write simple sentences to minimize grammatical errors and interpretation problems.

- Conclusion is also very important. Have a fair idea about how do you want to conclude during the brainstorming session itself. If we have clear introduction and conclusion in our minds, it's easier to streamline the thought between these two objectives.
- While forming your essay structure itself, it's better to write about introduction and conclusion in their full length. At this stage you will have enough time to refine it. It really works especially with conclusion, as just before closure of the prescribed time, your conclusion may not be a best piece of writing.
- By concentrating on content and smooth transition between various ideas with interesting introduction and conclusion, one can cross the language barrier. Stick to simple meaningful sentences logically linked in the main flow of the essay, you need not worry about flowery language at all.

If you have done all of these things, you are probably done writing and if time permits, you need to turn to highlight key assumptions, analysis and conclusion by simply underlining it.

Essay writing can be challenging, there is no doubt. But, try to think of it as a way you can teach yourself about the issues and ideas that are important to you. Who knows, maybe one of these ideas will turn into your rank deciding shot!

ESSAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

3 Mock Tests evaluated by 2 experts

(Experts Support: Telephonic Discussion / Email Interaction)

Every Mock Test Paper Answer booklet is evaluated by 2 experts for proper feedback, comments & value addition.

REGISTRATION OPEN

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ESSAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

Expert Guidance, Feedback & Telephonic Discussion

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Essay Paper in civil services examination carries 200 marks out of the 2000 mark scheme of the main examination. Like the interview (that carries 300 marks), the success and rank of an aspirant is determined significantly by this little but important segment. It is infact easy, simple and beautiful paper. But sadly most of the aspirants do not realize this until it is too late. Not many candidates have managed to score over a 100 marks according to the statistics of the 2009 main results. There have been a shockingly high number of double and even single digit scores on the essay score-card of this time. But, this should not and does not mean that this paper is difficult or is non- scorable .

This simply indicates towards the need of a good strategy through experienced guidance and practice in right direction that's all. There are students who have scored 150 plus marks in 2009 main examination only, for instance - Puneet Gulati, AIR-319 has scored 140 in the UPSC-2009. Puneet too recognizes the importance of strategy - he writes: "while none of us can justify the extremely low scores given out by UPSC, I do think that there does exist a strategy for tackling the Essay paper, which, if adopted and implemented thoughtfully, can reap a decent 50-70% mark in the Essay. Such marks will ensure that a candidate does not fail to make it to the list just because of poor showing in the Essay".

The nature of essay writing for the Civil Services Examination is different than those of the academic or scholarly essay writings. As in here, one has to be diplomatic in taking up a stand and tackling the issues concerned. The precision of language, discipline of thought and lot of patience in showing up the views are the prerequisites. Remember! Your entire personality is going to be judged on every single word that you happen to write. Therefore, one needs to be extra careful about choosing the words.

But now let us first answer some of the basic questions – like, what is an essay? And how should one write it to obtain the maximum marks?

Essay is an art of writing ones thought in a very coherent, logical, and lucid manner so as to make an impact or place an individual opinion for due consideration in the ongoing debate. Essay writing reflects a democratic way of making a point. Therefore, essay is one of the most popular forms of literature for placing one's view point in the public. There can not be a definition to an essay as such; as it varies according to the subject matter and an individual writer who is attempting the essay.

Literally the word 'essay' means an "attempt". It is an attempt to compose one's thoughts so as to present them in a logically coherent structure and sequence. It is a literary composition usually in prose form, dealing with a particular subject and bringing out its various aspects one by one, with a view to present a graphic picture of the whole subject-matter in a very well-knit composition. Thus, an essay becomes a test not only of one's knowledge and information but also of the maturity of thoughts, rationality of imagination and of the ability of presentation of an individual.

In order to obtain a high score in the essay paper of the UPSC, one needs to understand the requirement of this exam along with the purposes of this exam. As it is quite evident that UPSC is looking for a mature decision maker, a good administrator and an overall leadership quality in you. So you got show all these attributes in not only the essay writing but in all of your write ups including your optional subjects as well as the G.S. Remember! Come what field may you come from like science, commerce, art, or humanities there is always a scope of showing the above mentioned attributes. Just you have to learn to produce them as and when needed. Further you need to have a comprehensive understanding of the nature of the current essay paper and equip your self with the changing trend.

The nature of the current essay trend is opinion based. For this, one has to first of all be able to differentiate the meanings of knowledge and opinion. Knowledge is basically a very broad and absolute term that shows things to be eternally true i.e. true in all times to come - that which is objectively true i.e. true for all human beings. It can be falsified by none at no point in time. So most of our knowledge claims would infact not be fitting into this criteria of knowledge, as nothing can be so authoritatively be true, that too for all times to come. Therefore, we should avoid being authoritative in our judgements regarding a particular stand point. As such claims at best be one of the sound opinions, not an absolute knowledge as we often tend to show. Hence we got to be decent enough to accept this fact and keep our self at a balanced position avoiding the extremes. Further -

knowledge could also refer to the scientific knowledge where the knowledge claims are supported by logic and verifiable evidences. Such definitions of knowledge is acceptable therefore, support your knowledge claims with proper evidence and adequate logic.

Then there are opinions which most of the time we possess and often get confused with knowledge. Opinions are something that one makes based on his/her belief system and understandings of the world. So while giving the opinions one has to show maturity and objectivity having a democratic outlook of things. At the same time scientific attitude has to be displayed i.e. a logical justification has to be provided each time an opinion is made.

This is where students generally lack and commit errors on a given topic, they never follow-through to justify their opinions. The first thing that one must realize is that your audience (the experienced diplomats who check your essay scripts) is not in the least bit interested in your “opinion” or anyone's opinion for that matter. This is a shock to some students who believe that what we've been doing is just trading opinions on various topics. The confusion lies in the fact that some students are only attending to the *first* part of a two-part process — they are forgetting or not sufficiently following the *second* part of the process. The experienced readers are just *not* interested in your opinions. They are rather interested in the *argument* that you can give which explains *why* you hold that opinion. Giving an argument that supports and defends your opinion is the second-part of the two-part process that we encounter in our writings and discussions. Generally speaking, you should treat all opinion-statements as *logical conclusions*, and the art of good reading and writing is to dig back to the premises, the assumptions, and the evidence that led a person to draw that conclusion. Just as in math classes, wherein providing *only* your conclusions is unacceptable, you must “show your work” in essay-writing too.

So an argument comprises of three statements- which are also called as premises. They are Major premises, minor premises and the conclusion. For example –

1. There is smoke on the hill : Major premiss
2. where there is smoke there is fire : Minor premiss
3. Therefore, there is fire on the hill. : The Conclusion

In the above example it is evident that there is a logical connectivity between these premises and finally in the conclusion. The premises logically converse into the conclusion. So it is coherent to conclude the idea of fire on the hill when smoke is evident, showing the logical relation between the

fire and the smoke. This is called method of drawing logical inferences in logic. On the similar fashion we have to write our ideas with logical connectivity to the next idea hence maintaining the harmony and the lucidity of a good write up. Then things look simple and smooth. It becomes a delightful reading for the reader and finally you become successful in impressing upon the examiner who in turn fetches you with good marks.

Once a student has stated his belief say in the following manner - “God makes our destiny”, or “abortion is immoral”, or “animals should not be tortured”, or “racism is bad”, or “science is too masculine” etc. —he/she has only *begun* to give a proper response, which is yet to be justified. One must now go on to detail the *specific reasons* and the *specific evidences* that led him/her to hold that belief. This second step is the only truly important part of a good paper, and some students never even begin to provide it in their essays.

“Opinions” are like “armpits”, everyone has them and nobody really cares. A class in which everyone just stated their opinions (for or against) the death-penalty, for example, would be as fascinating and illuminating as a class in which everyone just stated their favorite ice-cream flavor. The smart reader wants to know *why* a person holds a particular opinion, but some students mistakenly believe that simply *stating* the opinion is enough. It is not enough to write “I am against the death-penalty” in your essays and then move on to some additional opinions. One must explain in detail the reasons, experiences, and factual evidence that lead a person to be against the death-penalty. One can argue against the death-penalty on ethical grounds, social grounds, religious grounds, epistemic grounds, economic grounds, and more.

A student must articulate the most compelling grounds for their opinion and present them in the most persuasive and logical terms possible. Notice also that each and every “controversial” claim that is made in the sequence of your argument will likely need additional argumentation and justification. For example, it will not be terribly helpful to claim that you believe capital punishment is wrong *because* the Bible says so. It will then be immediately incumbent upon you to give some argument for *why your* interpretation of the Bible is the only correct one, and then you will also have to give some argument for the *existence* of God, and quickly follow this with a strong argument for why God is communicating through *this* scripture and not, say, the Bhagavad Gita, and so on. All this is a very tall order, especially when we remember that the essay topic in this case is only the death penalty and one should stay focused on the topic at hand.

When someone feels very strongly about some issue (say - the death penalty, animal rights, the existence of Fate, etc.), they can become so close to their belief — so familiar and comfortable with it — that this belief will seem utterly natural and uncontroversial to them. It will seem so obvious as to be unworthy of any further explanation and justification. This is one of the most common reasons why students neglect to give arguments for their opinions/beliefs. Students believe that many of their claims are so obvious that they don't need to “spell it out” which is WRONG!

Beware! Of the followings:

- I. Adamant conviction does not substitute for logical argumentation. (e.g., yelling or weeping does not improve the cogency of someone's position.) Appealing to fear is also a fallacy. For example, a lawyer might say “If you do not convict this criminal, one of you may be his next victim.” This is fallacious because what a defendant might do in the future is *irrelevant* to determining whether he is responsible for a crime committed in the past. It may be relevant at the time of sentencing, but not during the deliberation of guilt or innocence.
- II. Nothing follows from the fact that you passionately believe x to be true, except that you passionately believe x to be true. In other words, the external world need not mimic your subjective internal states. (e.g., believing with every fiber of your being that Jim Morrison is still alive, has nothing whatever to do with Jim's current status.)
- III. Correlation is not necessarily cause. (e.g., a recent prime time T.V. program argued that since a number of wealthy men had consulted with psychics about their investments, psychic insight *caused* their investment.)

Thus the most important aspect of your essay is the subject matter. You should expect to devote a significant amount of time in simply brainstorming ideas for the subject matter before you actually start writing the essay.

To begin brainstorming a subject, you should look deep into your background, interests, information and aptitudes. Yes friends! Your previously learned skills would be a good asset as they shall reflect your individuality and originality. You got to learn to access them and use them in right perspectives. Consider the following points for brainstorming your past and incorporate them in not only deciding the topic of your essay but also in keeping those skills and experiences intact in writing the entire essay.

Take the help of your educational backgrounds in deciding the topic - suppose if you are a science student you may choose a topic where there are possibilities of applying your years long learned skills and some of those important facts that you can substantiate your answer with and make it more informative. And if you are say - a law graduate or sociology/political science/geography/philosophy etc. student choose your topic accordingly. As then you have the X-factor, an edge over many other students. Moreover, that is going to represent your individuality and originality which is widely appreciated.

Lastly but the most importantly remember the teachings of the preamble of Indian constitution particularly the ideals and aspirations – those magical words sovereignty, socialism, secularity, democracy, republic, equality, liberty, fraternity etc. You need a comprehensive understanding of these words as they are not merely words but a concept in themselves. If you really happen to understand what they mean that time onwards you become the most eligible candidate who can not be stopped from entering into the service. Well, they need a great deal of thinking and introspection. They will get reflected in your personality through your writings anyway.

Thus, Essay requires the student to exhibit not only the art of writing, but also the art of thinking. Our Essay Enrichment Programme is modeled to cater the needs and requirements of the students coming from all walks of life. It is intended to harness and harmonize those vital components of the essay so as to optimize the examination scores of the course participants.

ESSAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

Fee	: Rs 3000
Nature	: Flexible
No of Mock Test	: 3

Process of Evaluation: Every Mock Test Paper Answer booklet is evaluated by 2 experts for proper feedback, comments & value addition

The Essay Enrichment Programme of **THE VISION IAS** proposes to incorporate the following to enable the candidates with adequate skills, to equip them with required information and to empower them with valuable experiences and exposures needed for the confidence building and securing the high scores in the UPSC examination.

1. Strategic guidance for the Essentials of a Good Essay

We shall provide you with the training of the followings:

- a. Exposure of the subject-matter**
- b. Building the structure of your essay**
- c. Developing your own Style**
- d. How to incorporate your personal Imprint i.e. your originality**
- e. How to use your previous learnt skills and knowledge into the essay**

2. Developing the Stages in Essay Writing

A plan is necessary for all compositions, just as a plan is necessary to build a house or to make a garden. For compositions of considerable length, it is always wise to make a written plan. Our programme is designed to teach you the details of the following.

There are four stages in Essay Writing: -

- i.** Think about the subject and jot down on paper all the facts or ideas.
- ii.** Arrange these facts according to the topic and so construct an outline of the structure in a tree form demarcating clearly the shares of introduction, body and the conclusion.
- iii.** Write the essay following the structure and incorporating suitable examples from current happenings.
- iv.** Revise what you have written.

3. How to make the right Choice of the Subject

4. Guidelines for Collection of materials

5. How to discipline our selves within a Word limit

6. Language competency

7. Logical Arrangement keeping the natural connectivity of the ideas

8. Writing The Essay

a. How to Begin an Essay

b. How to start with a good introduction

c. How to develop arguments and proceed in the body

d. How to converse your thoughts into a logical conclusion.

e. How to use the relevant Quotations and Proverbs to make the essay more effective

9. How to make the rational choice of that one essay out of the six (given in the UPSC) in order to use your full potentialities and experiences to give your best shot.

The course will comprise of a detailed study materials covering all the above issues. Students will be taught a host of tangible innovative techniques which can uniquely enhance the rating of their essays. Within the area-wise coverage, all potential topics will be discussed. Similarly, due stress will be given to ignite the original thinking capabilities of the students with reference to these topics.

There shall be 3 mock test papers strictly on the UPSC patterns comprising 6 essays on 200 marks platform as part of this Essay Enrichment Programme. The test-papers will be diagnostically evaluated so as to bring out the vulnerabilities and strengths of students. The tests are periodically placed in the course so that academic progress of each student can be tracked. And a regular personal interaction shall be made available on individual basis so as to tackle the student specific problems on essay writing. At the end a list of probable essays for main paper shall be provided along with their proper structures.

ESSAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

3 Mock Tests evaluated by 2 experts

(Experts Support: Telephonic Discussion / Email Interaction)

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ANALYSIS & APPROACH – IAS ESSAY PAPER: MAINS 2010

- TEAM VISION IAS

This year around UPSC has once again established itself to be an unpredictable service commission. The essay paper which was characterized with reduced number of options and unconventional choices has only reaffirmed it. One can argue about the paper being different i.e. very unconventional but as far as the subject matter of these essays is concerned, this is not true. This could be established with close analysis and deeper insight into the subject matter of these essays. They reveal the underlying co-relationship of 21st Century India, its people and the overall societal structure. They correlate with long lived spiritual heritage of this ancient, historically and culturally rich country.

Let us get into the heart of the matter that these essays incorporate in themselves and try to unravel those hidden secrets behind these essay topics in order to arrive at a general understanding of the subject themes of these essays. I am sure that this will be of great help to the candidates who have taken up main 2010 examination and attempted one of these essays and are awaiting either in oblivion or in stipulation or willing to evaluate as to how did they perform in the examination hall. Aspirants who are freshers and are curious enough to develop a strategic plan to tackle them in times to come or even the experienced fellows who want to probe deep into the matter can squeeze some benefits out of this write up.

They all can make an evaluation or at least give a rethinking to such interesting ideas of national and international importance with now available luxury of calm mind and plenty of time that was not at all the case with the poor fellows who were taking up the test in the examination hall. So, let us decipher the intricacies inherent in this year's essay topics one by one.

Following were the topics on which one had to write (on any of the four given essays topics in about 1500-2000 words ideally) to qualify for 2010-Main Examination.

- 1. Geography may remain the same, history need not.**
- 2. Should a moratorium be imposed on all fresh mining in tribal areas of the country?**
- 3. Preparedness of our society for India's global leadership role.**
- 4. From traditional Indian Philanthropy to the Gates-Buffett model - a natural progress or a paradigm shift?**

A General Understanding of the Subject Matter of these essays

The First essay demands a comparative and comprehensive understanding of the philosophy of geography as well as the philosophy of history. Those basic tenants that go on to constitute the discipline of Geography and that of the History i.e. the fundamentals of geography and fundamentals of history as well as the inside boundary that separates them should be well understood. For example, the evolution of the discipline of Geography took place in two dimensional framework - Spatial and Temporal. So geography which etymologically is the combination of two Latin terms namely - 'geo' & 'graphia', meaning 'earth' and 'description' respectively envisages to study earth's landscape, topography as well as the structural outlook, which change with time and space. So, geographical changes are spatial as well as temporal.

Now, these changes happen in two ways: one through **tectonic activities** which is entirely a natural process and the other - with the **growth of civilizations**, hence is anthropogenic in nature. Of these two, the first one happens in geological time-scale, which is a very large time span to be comprehended by human experience. For example the landscape changes- like that of the drift of the continents propounded by the German geographer - Alfred Wegner or the evolution of the Himalayas etc. have taken place in geological time frame, which happens in billions of years therefore, they are not perceptible to the humans as the history of men is hardly 10,000 years old. While, the second change takes comparatively smaller time span for example- settlement patterns etc. So, the changes with human factor or what can be called as man-made geographical changes happen in geo-historical time (i.e. comparatively very short time span). But even this time span is not a perceptible one. Thus, in both of the contexts, geography may be said to have remained the same, which is stated by the first part of the essay topic.

Coming to the second portion of the topic i.e. 'History', this relates to a temporal study of human-kind, its evolution as well as the civilization. Therefore, the time frame of history happens to be very short as compared to the geological time stretch of geography. So, history inculcates perceptible changes and in fact does not remain the same. Thus historical changes are rapid which makes it more dynamic to the humans than what Geography does.

This is the inherent theme of this essay topic. One can argue the essay on the above explained direction with bringing up evidences to support the arguments that one chooses to incorporate. These evidences shall depend on ones vast reading, comprehensive understanding as well as on the technical knowledge of History and Geography. So, anybody equipped in such skills can come up with a good essay and can fetch marks ranging from 100-130.

While, the second essay-'**Should a moratorium be imposed on all fresh mining in tribal areas of the country?**' throws open a dichotomy and expects the candidates to solve the Puzzle of *Development* on the one hand and *Preservation of tribal culture*, on the other. On one hand, we have a much needed developmental imperatives to explore newer vistas for industrializations that are based on cheap and

abundantly available raw materials which can enhance our production and hence the well being of the people, removing them from the vicious net of poverty and hunger. To give the 2/3rd Indian mass better chances of life is a challenge which can only be taken when we have possibilities of rapid industrialization. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru-a great visionary, statesman and one of the founding fathers of our nation has envisaged it in the second five year plan. Thus fresh mining to the mineral-rich places that are often near plateaus and hilly areas becomes an inevitable imperative. But at the same time, these places are the homes of our primitive tribes. They hold and carry the scarce heritage of our ancient culture, values and practices that have become so vulnerable today and are at the verge of extinction. Therefore, saving them is our national, moral and humane responsibility.

Moreover, they do not have to do much about our ambitious developmental aspirations as the fruits of development are hardly shared by them. So, within this paradoxical situation one has to come up with mature, balanced, intelligent and innovative ideas that can take care of both of these critical and equally important issues. At the same time, a high degree of care has to be taken in taking a stand or suggesting means in favour or against of any of these two needs, as they both happen to be very delicate, fragile and sensitive. So, the need is to arrive at what Buddha would call a middle path or Aristotle's golden mean of the two i.e. permission of mining can only be granted to those areas where there is less mobilization and displacement of these naturally habituated tribes and where there is a possibility of providing similar alternate habitat to the displaced people so that after displacement they can feel at home.

Though our past experiences of displacement have not been good and went adverse to the interests of these tribes but we can identify the possible areas of their vulnerability. Three cases can be outlined-

1. Special case i.e. where tribals have a unique habitat which might not be changed 2. Where there lie options of displacement and 3. Where they are ready to mingle and mix in the mainstream development borne life style e.g. some areas of north eastern states. Areas falling in the first category may be avoided for mining considerations while in the second two cases; it may be permitted with due care and precaution. Thus a clear cut orders to stop all fresh mining in tribal areas of the country shall contradict the very premises of development on which all our planning and policies rest. Therefore, a middle path is to be argued and concluded very thoughtfully. A candidate well versed in above requirement can fetch marks ranging from 100-140 comfortably.

The 3rd Essay- '**Preparedness of our society for India's global leadership role**' is something that can be called as a favourite topic for all kinds of students - be it a history student, a sociology student, a public administration student or a student of literature and philosophy all have enough space to accommodate their ideas and bring out a newer dimension to it. So the scope is immense in this essay. I have personally surveyed this and found that over 80% students have preferred this essay as they felt that they can identify and connect their studies and understanding of India in this essay well.

Well, this essay demands understanding of Indian society and its progress and requires a vision of India as a global leader. Since the very ancient times, India was recognized as the 'World guru' or the 'World leader' because of its prosperity, spirituality, well-being and welfare based governance. India has a recorded history of over 5000 years old. So its societal structure can be divided into ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary periods. The development of our society during all these periods could be seen in three

dimensions; namely- (a) Spiritual (b) Psychic or Attitudinal (c) Physical. Physically a society can be said to have developed when basic amenities of the people are fulfilled, there lies a decent standard of life and overall prosperity is reflected through its people. Today we have fast moving cars, computers, machines, aero-planes, space shuttle, mobile and internet based satellite communication etc. which are good sign of our physical growth. Today we have plenty of Nobel prizes to win every year, mentally our children think far better than what our older generations did. So, mentally human society has taken a significant leap. Spiritually, a society can be analyzed with its openness, broad thinking and universalistic aptitude reflecting highest degree of human rationality and scientific temper rather than superstition, dogmatism and old conventions. People see themselves as part of one unified family. They get feelings of Brahman-hood and associate themselves with one universal god. Infact they feel the expressions of Brahman within themselves and do not discriminate one human with the other. In India the age old values of "*Vashudhaiv Kutumbkam*" and "*sarvam khalvidam brahamam*" etc. well incorporate such spiritual practices.

A society can only be said to have acquired an all round developed status when all these three dimensions are in a balanced state. As in the physical and psychic levels of development, there lies a risk which is very critical in nature. As in these levels of developments their negative counterparts too get evolved with each and every developmental attempt. For example - if we have developed fast moving cars in our physical level, than the risk of severe accidents too arise with it simultaneously. Similarly in the psychic level, on one hand we get plenty of Nobel prizes to win every year whereas on the other hand various mental disorders have also arisen. Today, frustrations, anxieties and suicidal tendencies have increased many folds. Thus, with physical and psychic levels of development their negative counterparts also evolve. Only in the spiritual development there is no negativity. Therefore, there lies an intricate relationship amongst these three levels, which have to be brought into harmony then only a society could be said to have been developed in true sense.

Indian society enjoys such status since the very ancient times. In the medieval time as well, people had a strong foundation in spirituality. They were enriched with higher standards of values, ethics and morality. The social consciousness was characterized with confidence, people believed in themselves; in this way psychically the society was strong. Physically too the society had enough wealth to fulfill the needs and requirements of its people. Their overall status had been remarkably good and satisfactory.

In the medieval times i.e. the period of Delhi Sultanate and the Mughals, Indian society though saw little deterioration in their physical well being but overall the society had managed the intricate balance amongst the three levels.

It was the modern period i.e. the period of European invasion that culminated into British rule and colonization which caused a great deal of harms to the societal structure of India. This happened in two levels – physical level and psychic level. Physically - following the policy of 'Drain of Wealth' the Britishers did all their bits to exploit, extract and export Indian wealth to England. In this process they did not care about the long term destruction that followed with such crazy exploitation of the very structure of Indian economy, trade, commerce and occupation of the people. Psychically too they have destroyed the attitude

of the society to an extent that Indians lost their faith and belief in themselves. This was in fact a great deal of loss to Indian society, which shall take time to get revived.

Thus, the contemporary Indian society comprised with the people who were physically and psychically exploited for over two and half centuries. But spiritually they could not have been affected much by the alien intrusions. Hence, spirituality is the base of Indian society which remained firm and Unshakable during all these periods of crisis.

After the Independence, the visionary leadership of Pandit Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Ballabh Patel, Dr. Ambedkar etc. provided a strong foundation in shaping the present form of governance which is based on modern principles of democracy, socialism and secularism. All of these have been very well incorporated in our constitution, which enjoys the privilege of being one of the largest written constitutions that the world ever saw.

Such solid foundations that are reflected in our constitution have provided Indian society a strong and much needed foundation standing on which today India is self reliant in Food grain production and most of our basic needs. Today India is recognized as one of the fastest growing economy and leader on many fronts. That is why even President Obama, the World's most powerful man said: "When India speaks, the World Listens".

In 1960s our late P.M. Smt. Indira Gandhi went to USA for help i.e. to seek food grains and other economic needs followed by series of famines during that decade and before. She had to wait half an hour in the presidential corridor to meet the President. Today, the scenario has changed to a level in which U.S. President comes to India and seeks employments for the American people. In the international organizations like - ASEAN, SAARC, G-20, BASIC, IBSA etc. India is playing a leadership role. While, in other organizations like G-8, SCO, EU etc. India has been given an observer status which signifies India's role, participation and respect in the International Forums. The harmonious and peaceful coexistence principles of NAM which is based on India's ancient value system of "Sarva Jan Hitaya cha" and "Vashudhaiv Kutumbakam" has been evolved from Indian societal structure which has provided the world an alternate to the immature and sentimental principles of polarization during 2nd World War. India even before achieving independence have played very significant role in the formation of the U.N. India is a founding member of many other institutions of the UN which are based on Indian's age old lived principles of Humanism and Universalism.

Thus, Physically India has strengthened itself back within very short span of time i.e. just in 63 years and so. Today, India is the 2nd fastest growing economy of the world. This has boosted the psychological status of the people of India who constitute together a confident social consciousness. Today, Indians have started

believing in themselves and feel proud of being an Indian. This is a great sign of improvement of Indian society.

The preparedness of Indian society is reflected through its economic development, prosperity of the people and international position. Indian society has a good status on all these fronts. Though there still exist some social evils in the present Indian society like - poverty, mass scale hunger, unemployment, mal nourishment, illiteracy, ignorance and other forms of evil practices. But, with good development figures, successful working of democracy, education and good governance they all shall vanish with time. The day is not very far when Indians shall once again reassume its position of global leader. As we are the only society which has got a harmonious balance in all the three above mentioned fundamental pillars on which a society stands.

Some, of these aspects can well be elaborated with logical arguments and thus a good essay shall come out. A student refined into these basic aspects of society should get marks ranging from: 100 to 145 in this essay. So, this becomes a good choice.

The 4th essay topic: ***“From traditional Indian Philanthropy to the Gates-Buffett model – a natural progress or a paradigm shift?”*** is very philosophical in nature. In this, one has to be aware of the difference between the Indian practice of ‘paropkara’ and the contemporary western practice of ‘philanthropy’. Then, one is supposed to comment on whether today’s practice of philanthropy is a natural progress or a Paradigm shift?

Before taking a position I would like to elaborate upon these two practices then shall logically arrive to the conclusion. In India, the concept of philanthropy was called as ‘Paropkara’ i.e. ‘Par’ + ‘Upkara’ which means ‘service to others’. Thus, the philanthropy was seen as service or as a duty not only when one had enough wealth but also when one did not have much. The people who gave away their money or wealth used to consider themselves indebted to whom they paid. They never considered themselves obliging to the needy or the beneficiary. We have example of Harishchandra, Bharathari, Raja Bhoga, Ashoka etc. who testify this system of philanthropy that have been practiced since the time immemorial.

Today’s practice of philanthropy is a western adaptation. In this system most of our wealthy people (who have become billionaire very recently) are imitating the western philanthropists like- Bill and Milinda Gates, Warren Buffett etc. These multi billionaires are motivated by widespread fame and recognition that it brings with it. So, most of Indian philanthropists who are so eager to transform themselves as a modern western man gets trapped into the illuminating power of westernization and get confused between the two.

Modernization is not westernization. It is rather an outlook of mind which is based on the principles of democracy, secularism and freedom, socialism, equality and universalism. Therefore, today's practice of philanthropy by recently-made-rich Indians cannot be called as a natural development it is rather a paradigm shift.

Now, I have put on enough light on the heart of the issues, one can always employ his/her vision and understanding to further elaborate upon it. You can make it more substantive by placing relevant facts and figures in a coherent way. Thus, this essay is more of philosophical in nature than being factual or something that you learn in your books. This should fetch you marks 100-140, provided written well.

In this way we have seen that today's main examination has become very competitive like things in every other walk of life that we undertake presently. One needs to have a comprehensive understanding of Indian society, culture, people, practices, and philosophies. The best way to prepare essay writing is to actually write it on some of these topics or on similar issues and get oneself evaluated. **Essays should be taken seriously as they shall not only change your rank and portfolio but also can be decisive in the making of the final list of successful candidates.**

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