



**UNLOCKIAS**

# WHEN THE PAPER COMES, PANIC SHOULDN'T.

— *Sherlocking Test Series* —

BLANK

TIME

UNCERTAINTY



UPSC MAINS  
GS PAPERS  
00:05



**10 FULL-LENGTH TESTS**

Simulate real exam pressure.



**DEPLOYABLE MODEL ANSWERS**

High-quality answers you can rely on.



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AI-powered evaluation with depth.



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Find gaps. Fix them. Move forward.



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Write. Review. Improve. Repeat.

10 full tests to turn **uncertainty** into exam-day **control**.



**TIMING**



**SELECTION**



**STAMINA**

## From panic to practiced.

FREE SAMPLE

# A Sample of the Sherlocking Test Series

Two General Studies (Paper I) questions and one Essay, drawn straight from the full-length test papers. **Attempt each question first** on the real Mains answer-sheet provided — then turn the page to its **Sherlocking model solution**: a deployable, fact-checked answer to measure yourself against.

**STEP 1****Attempt**

Write each answer on the exam-style sheet, under the clock.

**STEP 2****Compare**

Turn the page to the Sherlocking model solution and measure yourself against it.

**STEP 3****Improve**

Note the missing dimensions, facts and structure, and re-attempt.

**WHAT THIS SAMPLE CONTAINS**

**GS Paper I** Q1 — Social Issues (10 marks) · Q2 — Art & Culture (10 marks)

**Essay** One Section-A topic (125 marks)

**Full series** 10 full-length tests — Essay ×2, GS I–IV ×2 sets each — with model solutions.



SCAN TO ENROL

**Sherlocking Mains Comprehensive Module**[unlockias.in/courses](https://unlockias.in/courses)

## QUESTION-CUM-ANSWER BOOKLET

# Sample Full-Length Test

## GS PAPER I & ESSAY

Attempt on the sheets provided, as in the real examination

Roll No. ....

Name .....

Date ..... Time .....

Medium of Writing .....

Signature of Candidate .....

### GENERAL STUDIES – PAPER I · 10 MARKS EACH

- Q1.** Does rising female labour-force participation in India translate into greater economic autonomy for women? Examine. **10**
- Q2.** Bring out the features of Maratha fort architecture and the siting of hill forts that made them instruments of guerrilla warfare. **10**

### ESSAY – SECTION A · WRITE ANY ONE · 125 MARKS

- 1.** To question well is harder than to answer quickly. **125**
- 2.** What is built in a hurry seldom stands for long. **125**
- 3.** The smallest kindness outlives the largest monument. **125**
- 4.** We forgive others as a favour to ourselves. **125**

### INSTRUCTIONS

- This sample carries **two GS Paper I questions** and **one Essay section** (write any one topic). Attempt all.
- Answer each 10-mark GS question in about **150 words**; write the Essay in about **1000–1200 words**.
- Each question is followed by its **Sherlocking model solution** – attempt first, then compare. The model essay here is written on **Topic 3**.

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**Q1.** Does rising female labour-force participation in India translate into greater economic autonomy for women? Examine. **(10 marks)**

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## ◆ SHERLOCKING MODEL SOLUTION

## GS PAPER I · SET A · SOCIAL ISSUES

**Q1. Does rising female labour-force participation in India translate into greater economic autonomy for women? Examine. (10 marks)**

Female labour-force participation has risen sharply in recent years. But joining paid work and controlling what one earns are not the same thing. The gain in autonomy is real but partial.

**Rising participation does widen women's economic autonomy**

- 1. More women now enter and seek paid work:** a wider working base means more women earn an income of their own eg. female participation on usual status rose from 23.3 percent in 2017-18 to 41.7 percent in 2023-24
- 2. Cash wages reach the woman directly:** wages paid in cash, not in kind, go straight to the worker eg. about a quarter of women who worked in the last twelve months were paid in cash for that work
- 3. Women who earn cash largely decide how it is used:** having an income of one's own gives a real say over spending it eg. 85 percent of married women who earn cash decide alone or jointly how those earnings are used

**Rising participation does not by itself deliver autonomy**

- 1. Much of the increase is unpaid family labour:** a helper in a family enterprise works without any wage at all eg. 43.1 percent of rural self-employed women are unpaid helpers in household enterprises
- 2. Secure salaried work for women is shrinking:** a regular salaried job is the kind of work that most reliably puts earnings under a woman's own control eg. regular salaried women fell to 15.9 percent of working women, a seven-year low
- 3. Even among earners, sole control over money is limited:** earning cash does not always mean deciding on one's own how it is spent eg. only about 18 percent of married women with earnings decide alone how the money is spent, and one in six has no say

Participation is only the first step and does not by itself mean economic autonomy. The recent rise comes mostly from self-employment and unpaid help, so control over income grows only where work is regular and paid. Secure paid jobs are what turn these gains into real independence.

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**Q2.** Bring out the features of Maratha fort architecture and the siting of hill forts that made them instruments of guerrilla warfare. **(10 marks)**

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◆ SHERLOCKING MODEL SOLUTION

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GS PAPER I · SET B · ART & CULTURE

**Q2. Bring out the features of Maratha fort architecture and the siting of hill forts that made them instruments of guerrilla warfare. (10 marks)**

The Maratha forces were smaller and faster than the imperial armies they faced and avoided pitched battle against them by choice. Their method was the surprise raid and a quick retreat into the Sahyadri hills. The forts were built and placed to serve that method.

**Maratha fort architecture built for guerrilla warfare**

- 1. Gateways were bent at right angles to break an attacking charge:** the sharp turns made charging cavalry lose speed and fitted spikes stopped elephants from ramming the doors eg. the zigzag spiked gateways of Shivneri, the birthplace of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj
- 2. A narrow rock spur let defenders fire sideways down the climbing path:** the fortified spur, about 30 metres wide, gave defenders flanking fire along the approach eg. the Vinchukata or Scorpion Tail spur at Lohagad, a strip about 1,500 metres long
- 3. Stored water and grain let a garrison outlast a long siege:** rock-cut tanks and granaries inside the fort meant the garrison needed no supply from outside eg. the Ganga Sagar lake and granaries at Raigad
- 4. Hidden exits let the garrison sortie out and slip away:** concealed routes and a separate water source kept the garrison supplied and able to leave quietly eg. the Andhar Bavdi hidden well and escape routes at Panhala

**Siting of hill forts as instruments of guerrilla war**

- 1. A high ridge gave long sightlines to spot a column far off:** the crest position warned the garrison of an approaching enemy while it was still distant eg. the ridge fort of Rajgad, the first Maratha capital for about 26 years
- 2. Steep cliffs and dense forest replaced a large garrison:** the natural scarps and thick cover meant fewer men were needed to defend the fort and made heavy cavalry useless eg. the forested approach to Pratapgad, where Afzal Khan was killed in 1659
- 3. Forts placed within sight of each other let raiders hit and fall back:** a band could strike and then withdraw to the next fort in the chain eg. Torna, from which Purandar and other nearby forts are visible

The forts were not passive shelters. Their design and hill siting let small mobile bands raid a stronger enemy and then withdraw to safety. This use of the hills sustained the early Maratha state, and twelve Maratha forts are now India's 44th UNESCO World Heritage site.

# SECTION A

**Maximum Marks : 125**

**Write an essay on any ONE of the following topics, in about 1000–1200 words.**

- 1.** To question well is harder than to answer quickly. **125**
- 2.** What is built in a hurry seldom stands for long. **125**
- 3.** The smallest kindness outlives the largest monument. **125**
- 4.** We forgive others as a favour to ourselves. **125**

*In this sample, the Sherlocking model essay overleaf is written on Topic 3.*

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## ◆ SHERLOCKING MODEL ESSAY

## ESSAY · SECTION A · TOPIC 3

**Essay. The smallest kindness outlives the largest monument. (125 marks)**

On a rocky ridge in Delhi stand the massive sloping ramparts of Tughlaqabad, the fortress-capital that Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq raised in 1321 to declare his power in stone, a half-hexagon of walls running some six kilometres with fifty-two gates. Before long it stood emptied and left to the jackals, and the third city of Delhi has been a silent ruin ever since. A short way off, in the same years, an ageing Sufi teacher of the Chishti order, Nizamuddin Auliya, was quietly running a kitchen that fed the hungry who came to his door, whoever they were, saying that one who sleeps with a full stomach while a neighbour goes hungry is no true believer. He died in 1325, yet seven centuries later his dargah is still thronged every day by people of every faith, while the fort keeps only its emptiness. The stones settle the argument between them: the smallest kindness outlives the largest monument.

The line is at bottom a wager on what lasts, on whether the years keep stone or keep what a kindness leaves behind in a person. On one side stands the monument, the grandest human bid for permanence, the palace and the victory column and the empire raised to make a name endure in stone. On the other stands the smallest kindness, a cup of water offered, a stranger fed, a gentle word at the right moment, done without calculation and often without a name attached. The claim is about endurance: stone crumbles and dynasties fall, while a kindness lives on inside the person it touched and in every further kindness it goes on to cause.

That claim rests first on the nature of memory. Ask anyone what they actually keep of a person years after they are gone, and it is almost never a title or a possession, but a single act of care shown at a moment of need. Indian ethics gives this the name *karuna*, active compassion, and places it above detached knowledge, holding that the good must be done and not merely understood. This is why the *bhakti* and Sufi saints, who built no forts and left no treasuries, are remembered five centuries on while the sultans of their day are forgotten names. Kabir and Guru Nanak raised no monuments, yet their teaching of *daya* across caste and creed outlived every kingdom that surrounded them, because the smallest kindness outlives the largest monument.

Nowhere is that endurance more visible than in the *langar*. In the great hall of the Golden Temple at Amritsar, tens of thousands of people are fed a free meal every single day, seated in a single row regardless of faith, caste or wealth, the humblest and the wealthiest eating the same food from the same kitchen. It began as one small principle, that no one who comes should go hungry, and it has outlasted the empires that rose and fell around Punjab. The *langar* is proof that a kindness repeated becomes an institution, and that the institution keeps its life only so long as it remembers the small act at its root.

The state learns the same lesson in a harder school. Citizens forget the ribbon cut on a grand project, but they remember for a lifetime whether the ration reached them and whether the nurse was gentle. The face of the government that people actually keep is the ASHA worker walking to a remote hamlet to save a newborn, or the district collector who arrives during the flood and sits with the displaced rather than posing before the cameras. When the machinery is overwhelmed altogether, it is the neighbour who counts: the fishermen of Kerala who sailed their own boats into flooded streets to rescue strangers during the 2018 deluge are remembered in a way no relief circular ever will be. So it proves again: the smallest kindness outlives the largest monument.

History confirms the line even against its own grandest counter-examples. Vijayanagara, once among the richest cities on earth, whose bazaars are said to have sold diamonds by the measure, is today a field of

broken stone at Hampi, its temples roofless and its palaces gone. Beside that ruin, consider Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, who built no palace and left no fortune, but whose personal charity to the poor and whose fight for the remarriage of widows are honoured above even his scholarship. The mightiest structure raised to defy time is worn down by it, while a life of small mercies keeps its name. Permanence in stone is an illusion; permanence in people is the real thing.

The kindest acts are also the ones that ask for no name at all. A monument exists precisely to record a name, to shout it down the centuries, but the deepest kindnesses are done quietly and are remembered as acts rather than as advertisements of the giver. The anonymous blood donor and the organ donor save a stranger they will never meet and can never be thanked by. The grandmother nursing an ailing relative through years of illness, the teacher who quietly pays a poor child's fees, leave no plaque, yet they change lives in ways that ripple through people the giver never sees. Kindness, unlike the monument, does not need to be seen to endure.

When a person's compassion is built into a lasting institution, it serves multitudes long after the founder is gone: Jamsetji Tata endowed what became the Indian Institute of Science and a chain of trusts that have outlived him by generations, reaching far more people than any private act of alms ever could. A public well or a stepwell gives water to a village for centuries, guaranteeing that the help continues after the kind hand that raised it is dust. Great irrigation and drinking-water works have lifted whole regions out of thirst and famine, and there is nothing vain in that. A kindness that is not backed by system and resource may comfort one person for a day and leave the causes of suffering untouched.

The reconciliation lies in marrying the small act to the institution rather than choosing between them. The mid-day meal scheme was born of a simple wish, to feed hungry schoolchildren so they could learn, and that small kindness, scaled by system and science, now serves cooked meals to crores of students every day without losing its root in care for the hungry child. The Aravind Eye Care model turns low-cost surgery into sight restored for millions of the rural poor. These are monuments in the truest sense, because they are compassion made permanent. A system inherits its worth from the kindness that founded it, and it dies as a mere monument the moment it forgets the person it was meant to serve, humane at the bedside and not merely grand at the gate.

This is why the Constitution itself asks for kindness rather than only for power. Fraternity stands in the Preamble beside justice and liberty, and Article 51A asks every citizen to develop humanism and compassion for all living creatures. The framers understood that a republic is held together less by its towers and its budgets than by the everyday mercy of its people toward one another, an ethic meant to outlast any single government. The smallest kindness outlives the largest monument. This is no mere sentiment; it is the quiet foundation on which the whole edifice of the state finally rests.

The sultan who walled a whole city to outlast time left a ruin the centuries walked away from; the saint who only fed the stranger at his door is remembered every single morning, seven hundred years on. The truest monument a person or a nation can raise is not one of stone but one of compassion built into lasting systems, a langar that never closes, a school meal that always arrives, a hospital that stays gentle. The smallest kindness outlives the largest monument, because stone remembers only a name, while kindness remembers a person, and then goes quietly on to become the next kindness, and the next, long after every fortress has returned to sand.