

UPSC Mains GS-I — Previous Year Questions

284 Questions (2013–2025) • 255 Model Answers

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Geography and Environment

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q4. How are climate change and the sea level rise affecting the very existence of many island nations? Discuss with examples. (Answer in 150 words)

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q5. What are non-primary activities? How are these activities related to physiographic features in India? Discuss with suitable examples. (Answer in 150 words)

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q6. Explain briefly the ecological and economic benefits of solar energy generation in India with suitable examples. (Answer in 150 words)

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. What are Tsunamis? How and where are they formed? What are their consequences? Explain with examples. (Answer in 150 words)

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q14. Give a geographical explanation of the distribution of off-shore oil reserves of the world. How are they different from the on-shore occurrences of oil reserves? (Answer in 250 words)

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q15. How can Artificial Intelligence (AI) and drones be effectively used along with GIS and RS techniques in locational and areal planning? (Answer in 250 words)

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q16. Discuss how the changes in shape and sizes of continents and ocean basins of the planet take place due to tectonic movements of the crustal masses. (Answer in 250 words)

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q4. What is sea surface temperature rise? How does it affect the formation of tropical cyclones?

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q6. What is the phenomenon of 'Cloudbursts'? Explain.

2024 GS-I 15M • 150W

Medium

Q14. The groundwater potential of the gangetic valley is on a serious decline. How may it affect the food security of India?

2024 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q15. What are aurora australis and aurora borealis? How are these triggered?

2024 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q16. What is a twister? Why are the majority of twisters observed in areas around the Gulf of Mexico?

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q4. Discuss the consequences of climate change on the food security in tropical countries.

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q5. Why is the world today confronted with a crisis of availability of and access to freshwater resources?

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q6. How are the fjords formed? Why do they constitute some of the most picturesque areas of the world?

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. Why is the South-West Monsoon called 'Purvaiya' (easterly) in Bhojpur Region? How has this directional seasonal wind system influenced the cultural ethos of the region?

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q14. Comment on the resource potentials of the long coastline of India and highlight the status of natural hazard preparedness in these areas.

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q17. From being net food importer in 1960s, India has emerged as a net food exporter to the world. Provide reasons.

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Q4. Describe the characteristics and types of primary rocks. (Answer in 150 words)

Easy

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Q6. Discuss the natural resource potentials of 'Deccan Trap'. (Answer in 150 words)

Easy

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Q6. Each year a large amount of plant material, cellulose, is deposited on the surface of Planet Earth. What are the natural processes this cellulose undergoes before yielding carbon dioxide, water and other end products? (Answer in 150 words)

Easy

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Q7. Examine the potential of wind energy in India and explain the reasons for their limited spatial spread. (Answer in 150 words)

Easy

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Q7. Discuss in detail the photochemical smog emphasizing its formation, effects and mitigation. Explain the 1999 Gothenburg Protocol. (Answer in 150 words)

Easy

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Q14. What are the forces that influence ocean currents? Describe their role in fishing industry of the world. (Answer in 250 words)

Easy

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Q15. Describing the distribution of rubber producing countries, indicate the major environmental issues faced by them. (Answer in 250 words)

Easy

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Q16. Mention the significance of straits and isthmus in international trade. (Answer in 250 words)

Easy

2022 GS-I 15M • 250W

Q17. Troposphere is a very significant atmospheric layer that determines weather processes. How? (Answer in 250 words)

Hard

2022 GS-I 15M • 250W

Hard

Q17. Discuss global warming and mention its effects on the global climate. Explain the control measures to bring down the level of greenhouse gases which cause global warming, in the light of the Kyoto Protocol, 1997. (Answer in 250 words)

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q18. Explain the causes and effects of coastal erosion in India. What are the available coastal management techniques for combating the hazard? (Answer in 250 words)

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q20. Elucidate the relationship between globalization and new technology in a world of scarce resources, with special reference to India. (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q5. Despite India being one of the countries of the Gondwanaland, its mining industry contributes much less to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in percentage. Discuss. (Answer in 150 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q6. Explain the purpose of the Green Grid Initiative launched at World Leaders Summit of the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November, 2021. When was this idea first floated in the International Solar Alliance (ISA)? (Answer in 150 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. Describe the key points of the revised Global Air Quality Guidelines (AQGs) recently released by the World Health Organisation (WHO). How are these different from its last update in 2005? What changes in India's National Clean Air Programme are required to achieve these revised standards? (Answer in 150 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. What are the environmental implications of the reclamation of water bodies into urban land use? Explain with examples. (Answer in 150 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Medium

Q8. Why is India considered as a subcontinent? Elaborate your answer. (Answer in 150 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q14. Briefly mention the alignment of major mountain ranges of the world and explain their impact on local weather conditions, with examples. (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q15. How do the melting of the Arctic ice and glaciers of the Antarctic differently affect the weather patterns and human activities on the Earth? Explain. (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q16. Discuss the multi-dimensional implications of uneven distribution of mineral oil in the world. (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q17. Describe the major outcomes of the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). What are the commitments made by India in this conference? (Answer in 250 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q4. Discuss the geophysical characteristics of Circum-Pacific Zone. (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q5. The process of desertification does not have climatic boundaries. Justify with examples. (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q6. How will the melting of Himalayan glaciers have a far-reaching impact on the water resources of India? (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. How does the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020 differ from the existing EIA Notification, 2006? (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. Account for the present location of iron and steel industries away from the source of raw material, by giving examples. (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. What are the salient features of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan launched by the Government of India for water conservation and water security? (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q11. The interlinking of rivers can provide viable solutions to the multi-dimensional inter-related problems of droughts, floods and interrupted navigation. Critically examine. (Answer in 250 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q16. India has immense potential of solar energy though there are regional variations in its development. Elaborate. (Answer in 250 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q17. Examine the status of forest resources of India and its resultant impact on climate change. (Answer in 250 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q17. What are the key features of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) initiated by the Government of India? (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q4. Assess the impact of global warming on the coral life system with examples. (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q5. Discuss the causes of depletion of mangroves and explain their importance in maintaining coastal ecology. (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Medium

Q6. Can the strategy of regional resource-based manufacturing help in promoting employment in India? (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Medium

Q6. Discuss the factors for localisation of agro-based food processing industries of North-West India. (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. Coastal sand mining, whether legal or illegal, poses one of the biggest threats to our environment. Analyze the impact of sand mining along the Indian coasts, citing specific examples. (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q14. What is water stress? How and why does it differ regionally in India? (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q15. How can the mountain ecosystem be restored from the negative impact of development initiatives and tourism? (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 250W

Hard

Q17. How do ocean currents and water masses differ in their impacts on marine life and coastal environment? Give suitable examples. (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q17. Define the concept of carrying capacity of an ecosystem as relevant to an environment. Explain how understanding this concept is vital while planning for sustainable development of a region. (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q4. Why is Indian Regional Navigational Satellite System (IRNSS) needed? How does it help in navigation?

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q5. Why is India taking keen interest in resources of Arctic Region? (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q6. Define mantle plume and explain its role in plate tectonics. (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q6. What are the impediments in disposing the huge quantities of discarded solid wastes which are continuously being generated? How do we remove safely the toxic wastes that have been accumulating in our habitable environment? (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. What is wetland? Explain the Ramsar concept of 'wise use' in the context of wetland conservation. Cite two examples of Ramsar sites from India. (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. What are the consequences of spreading of 'Dead Zones' on marine ecosystem? (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q14. "The ideal solution of depleting ground water resources in India is water harvesting system." How can it be made effective in urban areas? (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q15. Defining blue revolution, explain the problems and strategies for pisciculture development in India. (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q16. What is the significance of Industrial Corridors in India? Identifying industrial corridors, explain their main characteristics. (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q17. How does biodiversity vary in India? How is the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 helpful in conservation of flora and fauna? (Answer in 250 words)

2017 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q5. How does the Juno Mission of NASA help to understand the origin and evolution of the Earth? (150 words)

2017 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. Mention the advantages of the cultivation of pulses because of which the year 2016 was declared as the International Year of Pulses by the United Nations. (150 words)

2017 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. Not many years ago, river linking was a concept but it is becoming a reality in the country. Discuss the advantages of river linking and its possible impact on the environment. (Answer in 150 words)

2017 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. How does the cryosphere affect global climate? (150 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q14. Account for variations in oceanic salinity and discuss its multi-dimensional effects. (250 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q15. Petroleum refineries are not necessarily located nearer to crude oil producing areas, particularly in many of the developing countries. Explain its implications. (250 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q16. In what way can floods be converted into a sustainable source of irrigation and all-weather inland navigation in India? (250 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q17. 'Climate change' is a global problem. How India will be affected by climate change? How Himalayan and coastal states of India will be affected by climate change? (Answer in 250 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q17. What characteristics can be assigned to monsoon climate that succeeds in feeding more than 50 percent of the world population residing in Monsoon Asia? (250 words)

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q13. Discuss the concept of air mass and explain its role in macro-climatic changes.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q14. Rehabilitation of human settlements is one of the important environmental impacts which always attracts controversy while planning major projects. Discuss the measures suggested for mitigation of this impact while proposing major developmental projects.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q15. The effective management of land and water resources will drastically reduce the human miseries. Explain.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q16. South China Sea has assumed great geopolitical significance in the present context. Comment.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q18. Present an account of the Indus Water Treaty and examine its ecological, economic and political implications in the context of changing bilateral relations.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Medium

Q19. Enumerate the problems and prospects of inland water transport in India.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Medium

Q20. In what way micro-watershed development projects help in water conservation in drought-prone and semi-arid regions of India?

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q14. Explain the factors responsible for the origin of ocean currents. How do they influence regional climates, fishing and navigation?

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q15. Discuss the Namami Gange and National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) programmes and causes of mixed results from the previous schemes. What quantum leaps can help preserve the river Ganga better than incremental inputs?

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q16. India is well endowed with fresh water resources. Critically examine why it still suffers from water scarcity.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q17. The states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are reaching the limits of their ecological carrying capacity due to tourism. Critically evaluate.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q18. How far do you agree that the behaviour of the Indian monsoon has been changing due to humanizing landscapes? Discuss.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q20. What are the economic significances of discovery of oil in Arctic Sea and its possible environmental consequences?

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q13. Should the pursuit of carbon credits and clean development mechanisms set up under UNFCCC be maintained even though there has been a massive slide in the value of a carbon credit? Discuss with respect to India's energy needs for economic growth.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q15. Environmental Impact Assessment studies are increasingly undertaken before a project is cleared by the Government. Discuss the environmental impacts of coal-fired thermal plants located at coal pitheads.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q16. Most of the unusual climatic happenings are explained as an outcome of the El-Nino effect. Do you agree?

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q17. Why are the world's fold mountain systems located along the margins of continents? Bring out the association between the global distribution of fold mountains and the earthquakes and volcanoes.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q18. Explain the formation of thousands of islands in Indonesian and Philippines archipelagos.

2014 GS-I 5M • 150W

Easy

Q19. What do you understand by the theory of 'continental drift'? Discuss the prominent evidences in its support. (100 words)

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q20. Bring out the relationship between the shrinking Himalayan glaciers and the symptoms of climate change in the Indian sub-continent.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q21. Major hot deserts in northern hemisphere are located between 20-30 deg N latitudes and on the western side of the continents. Why? (200 words)

2014 GS-I 5M • 150W

Easy

Q22(a). Bring out the causes for more frequent occurrence of landslides in the Himalayas than in the Western Ghats. (100 words)

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q22. Why did the Green Revolution in India virtually by-pass the eastern region despite fertile soil and good availability of water?

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q23. Account for the change in the spatial pattern of the Iron and Steel industry in the world.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q24. Critically evaluate the various resources of the oceans which can be harnessed to meet the resource crisis in the world.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q25. How does India see its place in the economic space of rising natural resource rich Africa?

2013 GS-I 5M • 150W

Easy

Q2(a). Do you agree that there is a growing trend of opening new sugar mills in southern States of India? Discuss with justification. (100 words)

2013 GS-I 5M • 200W

Medium

Q17(b). What do you understand by Run-of-river hydroelectricity project? How is it different from any other hydroelectricity project? [100 words]

2013 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q19. What are the consequences of Illegal mining? Discuss the Ministry of Environment and Forests' concept of GO AND NO GO zones for coal mining sector. [200 words]

2013 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q20. Enumerate the National Water Policy of India. Taking river Ganges as an example, discuss the strategies which may be adopted for river water pollution control and management. What are the legal provisions of management and handling of hazardous wastes in India? [200 words]

2013 GS-I 5M • 150W

Easy

Q20(a). Bring out the causes for the formation of heat islands in the urban habitat of the world. (100 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q21. Major hot deserts in northern hemisphere are located between 20–30° N latitudes and on the western side of the continents. Why?

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q24. With growing scarcity of fossil fuels, the atomic energy is gaining more and more significance in India. Discuss the availability of raw material required for the generation of atomic energy in India and in the world. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q25. It is said that India has substantial reserves of shale oil and gas, which can feed the needs of the country for quarter century. However, tapping of the resource does not appear to be high on the agenda. Discuss critically the availability and issues involved. (200 words)

Indian Society

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. How does smart city in India address the issues of urban poverty and distributive justice? (Answer in 150 words)

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q9. The ethos of civil service in India stand for the combination of professionalism with nationalistic consciousness – Elucidate. (Answer in 150 words)

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q17. Discuss the distribution and density of population in the Ganga River Basin with special reference to land, soil and water resources. (Answer in 250 words)

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q18. How do you account for the growing fast food industries given that there are increased health concerns in modern society? Illustrate your answer with the Indian experience. (Answer in 250 words)

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q19. Achieving sustainable growth with emphasis on environmental protection could come into conflict with poor people's needs in a country like India. Comment. (Answer in 250 words)

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q20. Does tribal development in India centre around two axes, those of displacement and of rehabilitation? Give your opinion. (Answer in 250 words)

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q5. Why do large cities tend to attract more migrants than smaller towns? Discuss in the light of conditions in developing countries.

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. What is the concept of a 'demographic winter'? Is the world moving towards such a situation? Elaborate.

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. Distinguish between gender equality, gender equity and women's empowerment. Why is it important to take gender concerns into account in programme design and implementation?

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q9. Intercaste marriages between castes which have socio-economic parity have increased, to some extent, but this is less true of interreligious marriages. Discuss.

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q10. In dealing with socio-economic issues of development, what kind of collaboration between government, NGOs and private sector would be most productive?

2024 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q17. What is regional disparity? How does it differ from diversity? How serious is the issue of regional disparity in India?

2024 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q18. Despite comprehensive policies for equity and social justice, underprivileged sections are not yet getting the full benefits of affirmative action envisaged by the Constitution. Comment.

2024 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q20. Critically analyse the proposition that there is a high correlation between India's cultural diversities and socio-economic marginalities.

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. Do you think marriage as a sacrament is losing its value in Modern India?

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q9. Explain why suicide among young women is increasing in Indian society.

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q10. Child cuddling is now being replaced by mobile phones. Discuss its impact on the socialization of children.

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q15. Identify and discuss the factors responsible for diversity of natural vegetation in India. Assess the significance of wildlife sanctuaries in rain forest regions of India.

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q16. Why did human development fail to keep pace with economic development in India?

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q18. Does urbanization lead to more segregation and/or marginalization of the poor in Indian metropolises?

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q19. Why is caste identity in India both fluid and static?

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q20. Discuss the impact of post-liberal economy on ethnic identity and communalism.

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. Explore and evaluate the impact of 'Work From Home' on family relationships. (Answer in 150 words)

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q9. How is the growth of Tier 2 cities related to the rise of a new middle class with an emphasis on the culture of consumption? (Answer in 150 words)

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q10. Given the diversities among tribal communities in India, in which specific contexts should they be considered as a single category? (Answer in 150 words)

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q18. Analyse the salience of 'sect' in Indian society vis-a-vis caste, region and religion. (Answer in 250 words)

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q19. Are tolerance, assimilation and pluralism the key elements in the making of an Indian form of secularism? Justify your answer. (Answer in 250 words)

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q20. Elucidate the relationship between globalization and new technology in a world of scarce resources, with special reference to India. (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Medium

Q9. Examine the uniqueness of tribal knowledge system when compared with mainstream knowledge and cultural systems. (Answer in 150 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q10. Examine the role of 'Gig Economy' in the process of empowerment of women in India. (Answer in 150 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q17. What are the main socio-economic implications arising out of the development of IT industries in major cities of India? (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q18. Discuss the main objectives of Population Education and point out the measures to achieve them in India in detail. (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q19. What is Cryptocurrency? How does it affect global society? Has it been affecting Indian society also? (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q20. How does Indian society maintain continuity in traditional social values? Enumerate the changes taking place in it. (Answer in 250 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. Has caste lost its relevance in understanding the multi-cultural Indian Society? Elaborate your answer with illustrations. (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q10. Do you agree that regionalism in India appears to be a consequence of rising cultural assertiveness? Argue. (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q15. Account for the huge flooding of million cities in India including the smart ones like Hyderabad and Pune. Suggest lasting remedial measures. (Answer in 250 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q18. Is diversity and pluralism in India under threat due to globalisation? Justify your answer. (Answer in 250 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q19. Customs and traditions suppress reason leading to obscurantism. Do you agree? (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. What makes the Indian society unique in sustaining its culture? Discuss. (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q9. "Empowering women is the key to control population growth." Discuss. (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q10. What are the challenges to our cultural practices in the name of secularism? (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q16. How is efficient and affordable urban mass transport key to the rapid economic development of India? (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 250W

Hard

Q18. Do we have cultural pockets of small India all over the nation? Elaborate with examples. (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q19. What are the continued challenges for women in India against time and space? (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 250W

Hard

Q20. Are we losing our local identity for the global identity? Discuss. (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. "Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms. Hence, caste system cannot be eradicated in India." Comment. (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q9. 'Despite implementation of various programmes for eradication of poverty by the government in India, poverty is still existing.' Explain by giving reasons.

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q10. How the Indian concept of secularism is different from the western model of secularism? Discuss. (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q17. Mention core strategies for the transformation of aspirational districts in India and explain the nature of convergence, collaboration and competition for its success. (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q18. 'Women's movement in India has not addressed the issues of women of lower social strata.' Substantiate your view. (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q19. 'Globalization is generally said to promote cultural homogenization but due to this cultural specificities appear to be strengthened in the Indian Society.' Elucidate. (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q20. 'Communalism arises either due to power struggle or relative deprivation.' Argue by giving suitable illustrations. (Answer in 250 words)

2017 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q9. In the context of the diversity of India, can it be said that the regions form cultural units rather than the States? Give reasons with examples for your viewpoint. (150 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q11. The spirit of tolerance and love is not only an interesting feature of Indian society from very early times, but it is also playing an important part at the present. Elaborate. (250 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q19. Distinguish between religiousness/religiosity and communalism giving one example of how the former has got transformed into the latter in independent India. (250 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 250W

Hard

Q20. "The growth of cities as I.T. hubs has opened up new avenues of employment, but has also created new problems." Substantiate this statement with examples. (250 words)

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q6. Has the formation of linguistic States strengthened the cause of Indian Unity?

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q8. To what extent globalization has influenced the core of cultural diversity in India? Explain.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q11. With a brief background of quality of urban life in India, introduce the objectives and strategy of the 'Smart City Programme'.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q12. What is the basis of regionalism? Is it that unequal distribution of benefits of development on regional basis eventually promotes regionalism? Substantiate your answer.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Medium

Q17. Major cities of India are becoming more vulnerable to flood conditions. Discuss.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q1. The ancient civilization in Indian sub-continent differed from those of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece in that its culture and traditions have been preserved without a breakdown to the present day. Comment.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q8. Describe any four cultural elements of diversity in India and rate their relative significance in building a national identity.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q9. Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty OR poverty is the main cause of population increase in India.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q10. How do you explain the statistics that show that the sex ratio in Tribes in India is more favourable to women than the sex ratio among Scheduled Castes?

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q11. Discuss the changes in the trends of labour migration within and outside India in the last four decades.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q12. Discuss the positive and negative effects of globalization on women in India.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q13. Debate the issue of whether and how contemporary movements for assertion of Dalit identity work towards annihilation of caste.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q15. Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata are the three mega cities of the country but the air pollution is much more serious problem in Delhi as compared to the other two. Why is this so?

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q19. Smart cities in India cannot sustain without smart villages. Discuss this statement in the backdrop of rural urban integration.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q11. How does patriarchy impact the position of a middle class working woman in India?

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q12. Why do some of the most prosperous regions of India have an adverse sex ratio for women? Give your arguments.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q13. The life cycle of a joint family depends on economic factors rather than social values. Discuss.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q14. Discuss the various economic and socio-cultural forces that are driving increasing feminization of agriculture in India.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q15. How do the Indian debates on secularism differ from the debates in the West?

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q15. Discuss the various social problems which originated out of the speedy process of urbanization in India. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q16. "Male membership needs to be encouraged in order to make women's organization free from gender bias." Comment. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q17. Critically examine the effect of globalization on the aged population in India. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q18. Growing feeling of regionalism is an important factor in generation of demand for a separate State. Discuss. (200 words)

Modern Indian History and Post Independence History

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q11. Mahatma Jotirao Phule's writings and efforts of social reforms touched issues of almost all subaltern classes. Discuss. (Answer in 250 words)

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q12. Trace India's consolidation process during early phase of independence in terms of polity, economy, education and international relations. (Answer in 250 words)

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. What were the events that led to the Quit India Movement? Point out its results.

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. Bring out the socio-economic effects of the introduction of railways in different countries of the world.

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q13. How did the colonial rule affect the tribals in India and what was the tribal response to the colonial oppression?

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q2. Why did the armies of the British East India Company - mostly comprising of Indian soldiers - win consistently against the more numerous and better equipped armies of the then Indian rulers? Give reasons. (Answer in 150 words)

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. Why was there a sudden spurt in famines in colonial India since the mid-eighteenth century? Give reasons. (Answer in 150 words)

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q11. The political and administrative reorganization of states and territories has been a continuous ongoing process since the mid-nineteenth century. Discuss with examples. (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q2. Trace the rise and growth of socio-religious reform movements with special reference to Young Bengal and Brahma Samaj. (Answer in 150 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. Assess the main administrative issues and socio-cultural problems in the integration process of Indian Princely States. (Answer in 150 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q11. To what extent did the role of the Moderates prepare a base for the wider freedom movement? Comment. (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q12. Bring out the constructive programmes of Mahatma Gandhi during Non-Cooperation Movement and Civil Disobedience Movement. (Answer in 250 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. Evaluate the policies of Lord Curzon and their long term implications on the national movement. (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q13. Since the decade of the 1920s, the national movement acquired various ideological strands and thereby expanded its social base. Discuss. (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q2. The 1857 Uprising was the culmination of the recurrent big and small local rebellions that had occurred in the preceding hundred years of British rule. Elucidate. (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. Examine the linkages between the nineteenth century's 'Indian Renaissance' and the emergence of national identity. (Answer in 150 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q11. Many voices had strengthened and enriched the nationalist movement during the Gandhian phase. Elaborate. (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q12. Assess the role of British imperial power in complicating the process of transfer of power during the 1940s. (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. Throw light on the significance of the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi in the present times. (Answer in 150 words)

2017 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. Why did the 'Moderates' fail to carry conviction with the nation about their proclaimed ideology and political goals by the end of the nineteenth century? (150 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q12. Examine how the decline of traditional artisanal industry in colonial India crippled the rural economy. (250 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q13. Highlight the importance of the new objectives that got added to the vision of Indian independence since the twenties of the last century. (250 words)

2017 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q18. The women's questions arose in modern India as a part of the 19th century social reform movement. What were the major issues and debates concerning women in that period? (250 words)

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q3. Explain how the Uprising of 1857 constitutes an important watershed in the evolution of British policies towards colonial India.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q4. Discuss the role of women in the freedom struggle especially during the Gandhian phase.

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q5. Highlight the differences in the approach of Subhash Chandra Bose and Mahatma Gandhi in the struggle for freedom.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q3. How different would have been the achievement of Indian independence without Mahatma Gandhi? Discuss.

2015 GS-I 12M • 200W

Medium

Q4. Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, despite having divergent approaches and strategies, had a common goal of amelioration of the downtrodden. Elucidate.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q5. It would have been difficult for the Constituent Assembly to complete its historic task of drafting the Constitution for Independent India in just three years but for the experience gained with the Government of India Act, 1935. Discuss.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q4. The third battle of Panipat was fought in 1761. Why were so many empire-shaking battles fought at Panipat?

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q6. Examine critically the various facets of economic policies of the British in India from mid-eighteenth century till independence.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q7. In what ways did the naval mutiny prove to be the last nail in the coffin of British colonial aspirations in India?

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q3. Defying the barriers of age, gender and religion, the Indian women became the torch-bearer during the struggle for freedom in India. Discuss. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q4. Several foreigners made India their homeland and participated in various movements. Analyze their role in the Indian struggle for freedom. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q5. "In many ways, Lord Dalhousie was the founder of modern India." Elaborate. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q6. Critically discuss the objectives of Bhoodan and Gramdan Movements initiated by Acharya Vinoba Bhave and their success. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q7. Write a critical note on the evolution and significance of the slogan, 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan'. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q8. Discuss the contributions of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to pre- and post-independent India. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q9. Analyze the circumstances that led to the Tashkent Agreement in 1966. Discuss the highlights of the Agreement. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q10. Critically examine the compulsions which prompted India to play a decisive role in the emergence of Bangladesh. (200 words)

Art and Culture

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. Discuss the salient features of the Harappan architecture. (Answer in 150 words)

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q2. Examine the main aspects of Akbar's religious syncretism. (Answer in 150 words)

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. 'The sculptors filled the Chandella artform with resilient vigor and breadth of life.' Elucidate. (Answer in 150 words)

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. Underline the changes in the field of society and economy from the Rig Vedic to the later Vedic period.

2024 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q2. Estimate the contribution of Pallavas of Kanchi for the development of art and literature of South India.

2024 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q11. "Though the great Cholas are no more yet their name is still remembered with great pride because of their highest achievements in the domain of art and architecture." Comment.

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. Explain the role of geographical factors towards the development of Ancient India.

2023 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q2. What was the difference between Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore in their approach towards education and nationalism?

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q11. What are the main features of Vedic society and religion? Do you think some of the features are still prevailing in Indian society?

2023 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q12. What were the major technological changes introduced during the Sultanate period? How did those technological changes influence the Indian society?

2022 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. How will you explain that medieval Indian temple sculptures represent the social life of those days? (Answer in 150 words)

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q12. Discuss the main contributions of Gupta period and Chola period to Indian heritage and culture. (Answer in 250 words)

2022 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q13. Discuss the significance of the lion and bull figures in Indian mythology, art and architecture. (Answer in 250 words)

2021 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. Evaluate the nature of the Bhakti literature and its contribution to Indian culture. (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. The rock-cut architecture represents one of the most important sources of our knowledge of early Indian art and history. Discuss. (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q2. Pala period is the most significant phase in the history of Buddhism in India. Enumerate. (Answer in 150 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q11. Indian philosophy and tradition played a significant role in conceiving and shaping the monuments and their art in India. Discuss. (Answer in 250 words)

2020 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q12. Persian literary sources of medieval India reflect the spirit of the age. Comment. (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. Highlight the Central Asian and Greco-Bactrian elements in the Gandhara art. (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. Safeguarding the Indian art heritage is the need of the moment. Discuss. (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q2. Assess the importance of the accounts of the Chinese and Arab travellers in the reconstruction of the history of India. (Answer in 150 words)

2018 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q2. Krishnadeva Raya, the King of Vijayanagar, was not only an accomplished scholar himself but was also a great patron of learning and literature. Discuss.

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q11. The Bhakti movement received a remarkable re-orientation with the advent of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Discuss. (Answer in 250 words)

2017 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. How do you justify the view that the level of excellence of the Gupta numismatic art is not at all noticeable in later times? (150 words)

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q1. Early Buddhist Stupa-art, while depicting folk motifs and narratives successfully expounds Buddhist ideals. Elucidate.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q1. The ancient civilization in Indian sub-continent differed from those of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece in that its culture and traditions have been preserved without a breakdown to the present day. Comment.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q2. Mesolithic rock cut architecture of India not only reflects the cultural life of the times but also a fine aesthetic sense comparable to modern painting. Critically evaluate this comment.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q1. To what extent has the urban planning and culture of the Indus Valley Civilization provided inputs to the present day urbanization? Discuss.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q2. Gandhara sculpture owed as much to the Romans as to the Greeks. Explain.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q3. Taxila university was one of the oldest universities of the world with which were associated a number of renowned learned personalities of different disciplines. Its strategic location caused its fame to flourish, but unlike Nalanda, it is not considered as a university in the modern sense. Discuss.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q5. Sufis and medieval mystic saints failed to modify either the religious ideas and practices or the outward structure of Hindu/Muslim societies to any appreciable extent. Comment.

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q1. Though not very useful from the point of view of a connected political history of South India, the Sangam literature portrays the social and economic conditions of its time with remarkable vividness. Comment. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 5M • 150W

Easy

Q2. Discuss the 'Tandava' dance as recorded in early Indian inscriptions. (100 words)

2013 GS-I 5M • 150W

Easy

Q2(b). Chola architecture represents a high watermark in the evolution of temple architecture. Discuss. (100 words)

World History

2025 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q10. Do you think that globalization results in only an aggressive consumer culture? Justify your answer. (Answer in 150 words)

2025 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q13. The French Revolution has enduring relevance to the contemporary world. Explain. (Answer in 250 words)

2024 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q12. How far is it correct to say that the First World War was fought essentially for the preservation of balance of power?

2024 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q13. How far was the Industrial Revolution in England responsible for the decline of handicrafts and cottage industries in India?

2024 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q19. Globalization has increased urban migration by skilled, young, unmarried women from various classes. How has this trend impacted upon their personal freedom and relationship with family?

2021 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q13. "There arose a serious challenge to the Democratic State System between the two World Wars." Evaluate the statement. (Answer in 250 words)

2019 GS-I 15M • 150W

Easy

Q13. Explain how the foundations of the modern world were laid by the American and French Revolutions. (Answer in 250 words)

2018 GS-I 15M • 250W

Medium

Q13. Why indentured labour was taken by the British from India to other colonies? Have they been able to preserve their cultural identity over there? (Answer in 250 words)

2017 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q4. What problems were germane to the decolonization process in the Malay Peninsula? (150 words)

2016 GS-I 12.5M • 150W

Easy

Q7. The anti-colonial struggles in West Africa were led by the new elite of Western-educated Africans. Examine.

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q6. Why did the industrial revolution first occur in England? Discuss the quality of life of the people there during the industrialization. How does it compare with that in India at present?

2015 GS-I 12.5M • 200W

Medium

Q7. To what extent can Germany be held responsible for causing the two World Wars? Discuss critically.

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q8. What were the major political, economic and social developments in the world which motivated the anti-colonial struggle in India?

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q9. What were the events that led to the Suez Crisis in 1956? How did it deal a final blow to Britain's self-image as a world power?

2014 GS-I 10M • 150W

Easy

Q10. The New Economic Policy - 1921 of Lenin had influenced the policies adopted by India soon after independence. Evaluate.

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q11. "'Latecomer' Industrial Revolution in Japan involved certain factors that were markedly different from what West had experienced." Analyze. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q12. "Africa was chopped into States artificially created by accidents of European competition." Analyze. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q13. "American Revolution was an economic revolt against mercantilism." Substantiate. (200 words)

2013 GS-I 10M • 200W

Medium

Q14. What policy instruments were deployed to contain the Great Economic Depression? (200 words)