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UPSC CSE MAINS

Previous Year Questions

Moral Thinkers & Philosophers — GS-IV

Previous Year Questions (verbatim, official syllabus)

29 Questions

Year range: 2013–2025

Verbatim from official UPSC papers

"Master Mains with PYQs — consistency is key"

— Neil Sir, Founder, UnlockIAS

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29 Questions across 1 Sections

1. Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers f...

29Q

Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world

2025 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q7. What are the major teachings of Mahavir? Explain their relevance in the contemporary world.

2024 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q5. "Learn everything that is good from others, but bring it in, and in your own way absorb it, do not become others." – Swami Vivekananda

2024 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q6. "Faith is of no avail in the absence of strength. Faith and strength, both are essential to accomplish any great work." – Sardar Patel

2024 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q7. "In law, a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics, he is guilty if he only thinks of doing so." – Immanuel Kant

2023 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q11. "The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer." — Mahatma Gandhi

2023 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q12. "To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves, the nation moves." — Jawaharlal Nehru

2023 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q13. "Do not hate anybody, because that hatred that comes out from you must, in the long run, come back to you. If you love, that love will come back to you, completing the circle." — Swami Vivekananda

2021 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q8. What does each of the following quotations mean to you? (a) "Every work has got to pass through hundreds of difficulties before succeeding. Those that persevere will see the light, sooner or later." — Swami Vivekananda

2021 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q9. "We can never obtain peace in the outer world until and unless we obtain peace within ourselves." – Dalai Lama

2021 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q10. "Life doesn't make any sense without interdependence. We need each other, and the sooner we learn that, it is better for us all." - Erik Erikson

2020 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q8. What teachings of Buddha are most relevant today and why? Discuss.

2020 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q9. What do each of the following quotations mean to you? (a) "Condemn none : if you can stretch out a helping hand, do so. If not, fold your hands, bless your brothers, and let them go their own way." – Swami Vivekanand

2020 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q10. "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." - Mahatma Gandhi

2020 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q11. "A system of morality which is based on relative emotional values is a mere illusion, a thoroughly vulgar conception which has nothing sound in it and nothing true." – Socrates.

2019 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q11. "An unexamined life is not worth living." – Socrates

2019 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q12. "A man is but a product of his thoughts. What he thinks he becomes." – M. K. Gandhi

2019 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q13. "Where there is righteousness in the heart, there is beauty in the character. When there is beauty in the character, there is harmony in the home. When there is harmony in the home, there is order in the nation. When there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world." – A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

2018 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q1. "The true rule, in determining to embrace, or reject any thing, is not whether it has any evil in it; but whether it has more evil than good. There are few things wholly evil or wholly good. Almost every thing, especially of governmental policy, is an inseparable compound of the two; so that our best judgment of the preponderance between them is continually demanded." — Abraham Lincoln

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2018 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q3. "Anger and intolerance are the enemies of correct understanding." – Mahatma Gandhi.

2018 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q4. "Falsehood takes the place of truth when it results in unblemished common good." – Tirukkural

2018 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q5. "In looking for people to hire, you look for three qualities : integrity, intelligence and energy. And if they do not have the first, the other two will kill you." — Warren Buffett What do you understand by this statement in the present-day scenario ? Explain.

2017 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q9. "Great ambition is the passion of a great character. Those endowed with it may perform very good or very bad acts. All depends on the principles which direct them." — Napoleon Bonaparte. Stating examples mention the rulers (i) who have harmed society and country, (ii) who worked for the development of society and country.

2017 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q11. "If a country is to be corruption free and become a nation of beautiful minds, I strongly feel there are three key societal members who can make a difference. They are the father, the mother and the teacher." - A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. Analyse.

2016 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q7. Discuss Mahatma Gandhi's Concept of Seven Sins.

2016 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q8. Analyse John Rawls's concept of social justice in the Indian context.

2015 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q7. "The weak can never forgive; forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."

2015 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q8. "We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light."

2014 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q7. Which eminent personality has inspired you the most in the context of ethical conduct in life? Give the gist of his/her teachings. Giving specific examples, describe how you have been able to apply these teachings for your own ethical development.

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2013 GS-IV 30M · 450W

Q6. Given below are three quotations of great moral thinkers/philosophers. For each of these quotations, bring out what it means to you in the present context: (a) 'There is enough on this earth for every one's need but for no one's greed.' — Mahatma Gandhi (150 words, 10 marks) (b) 'Nearly all men can withstand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.' — Abraham Lincoln (150 words, 10 marks) (c) 'I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who overcomes his enemies.' — Aristotle (150 words, 10 marks)