

**HOW TO
WRITE? OUTSTANDING**

UPSC CSE ESSAY

360° Approach Guide to Essay Writing for Civil Services Exam



₹249/-

Ankur Tripathi



How to Determine Pre-Writing Strategies

How to Develop Essay Writing Composition

How to Create Essay Writing Content

How to Form Essay Writing Structure

How to Practice Essay Writing

HOW TO WRITE? OUTSTANDING UPSC CSE ESSAY

360 Degree Approach Guide to Essay Writing for UPSC Civil Services Examination

Ankur Tripathi | Author of 'Essay Writing Manual'
A Reference Book of Essay Writing

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Acknowledgement

The existence of this book is because of my students who faced tough time in the essay paper. My objective of writing the book is to develop proper understanding regarding essay writing. Writing a book is harder than I thought and more rewarding than I could have ever imagined.

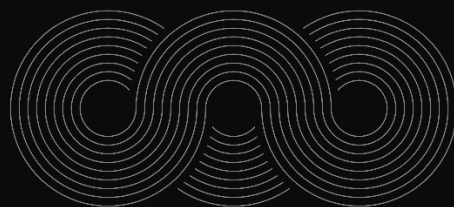
I express my deep appreciation to those aspirants who are preparing for UPSC Civil Services Examination. Their curiosity and enthusiasm have been key to my achievements in writing this book. I wrote for them, and their support is the driving force behind every word on these pages. Thank you so much for staying with me throughout this journey and being patient and supportive.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Scholars and Professors of **Delhi University** and **Jawahar Lal Nehru University (JNU)** for their unwavering support throughout this journey. Through all this, I came to know what criteria the examiner keeps in the answer sheet of essay writing. Their groundbreaking work laid the foundation for this exploration.

Finally, to the candidates who learned right along with me, thank you for turning these lectures into a well-written essay in their examination.

**“Books & Teachers
together form the
ladder of your success”**

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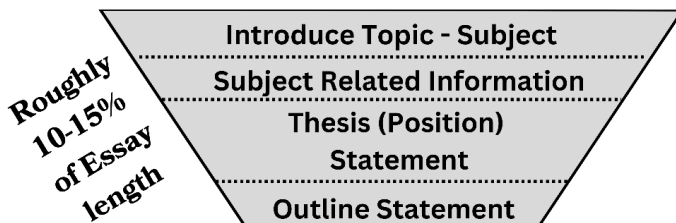


**07 Things UPSC
Aspirants must
Know to Write an
Outstanding Essay**

01 Know

What is the Structural Flow of an Essay?

ESSAY STRUCTURE



Funnel Diagram of Introduction Paragraph

Roughly 75-80%, of essay length (at least 20% length in each paragraph)

Paragraph - 1

Analyze / Evaluate the Position - Statement with Supported Content

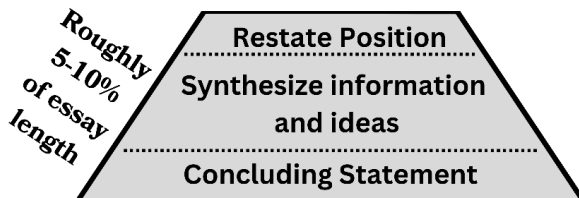
Paragraph - 2

Analyze / Evaluate the Position - Statement with Supported Content

Paragraph - 3

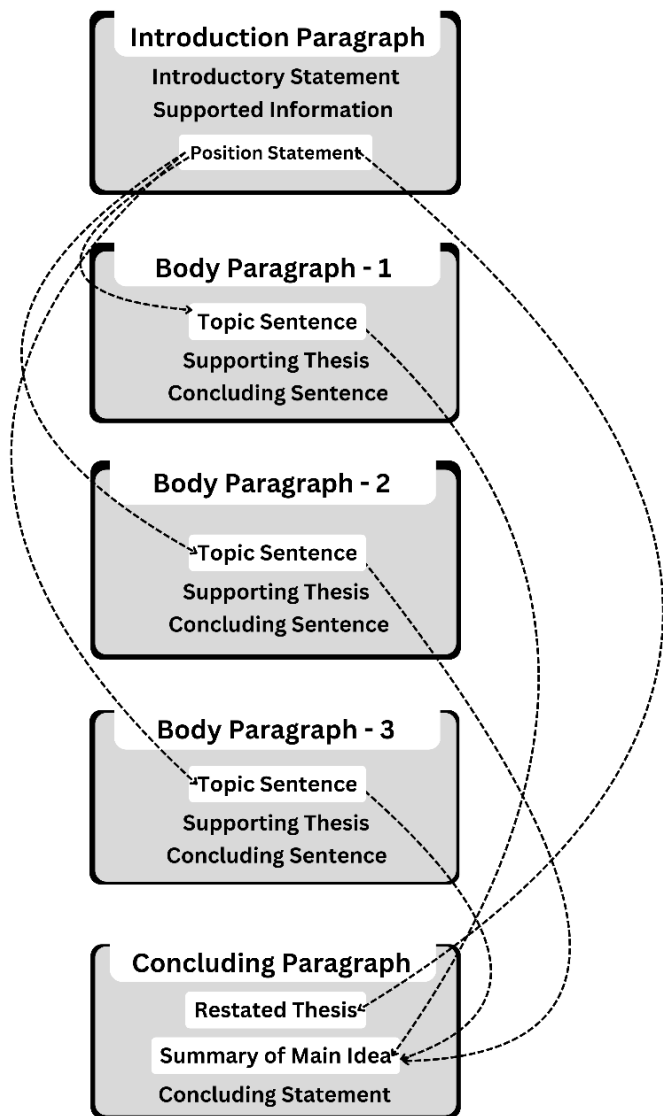
Analyze / Evaluate the Position - Statement with Supported Content

Rectangle Diagram of Three Body Paragraphs



Inverted Funnel Diagram of Conclusion Paragraph

Five-Paragraph Essay Structure



02 Know

What does Examiner look for an Essay?

Your examiner is evaluating your paper to see how well you have understood the subject you are writing, how well you can think independently about the material, and how well you can communicate your thinking to others. Your examiner may very well learn something from you too. But your examiner's primary aim in reading is to make judgments about your understanding, thinking, and communication.

On the other hand, your examiner grades you by checking your technical skills, checking if the essay is written in the correct technical way, which includes stating each point correctly in the formatting or structure of the essay.

In general when your examiner evaluate your paper he or she will imagine what it would be like for a typical reader to read your paper. So you should write for your typical reader, the interested individual looking to learn something, not your examiner, the person who has to grade you.

03 Know

How is your Essay Assessed and Marked?

Essays are assessed and marked based on a blueprint given to examiners. An essay assessment blueprint is a specific standard or guideline that states what is expected of a candidate in a particular assessment task which is presented through a specific marking template.

For better understanding, we have divided this blueprint into seven evaluation criteria, consisting of sixteen assessment aspects and their thirty-seven marking parameters.

Seven Evaluation Criteria

1. Format and structure
2. Organisation and order
3. Content
4. Form
5. Writing manner
6. Language
7. Examiner's discretion

Sixteen Assessment Aspects

1. Introduction paragraph
2. Body paragraphs
3. Conclusion paragraph
4. Structural flow
5. Sequential flow
6. Interpretation of Information
7. Supported material
8. Point of views and innovative ideas
9. Presentation of content material

10. Technical correctness of content material
11. Way of prose writing
12. Covering aspects of topic statements
13. Meaning and tone
14. Spelling and grammar
15. Sheet instructions
16. Sense of writing

Thirty-seven marking parameters

1. Is the Hook (Introduced) statement concise and catchy?
2. Is there any background/supported information related to the topic statement?
3. Is there a clear position/thesis statement and is it justified by valid reasons?
4. Do the paragraphs support the position?
5. Do the paragraphs provide specific justification through supporting elements?
6. Do the paragraphs make a clear conclusion that summarizes and transitions to the next main idea?
7. Does the paragraph restate the thesis statement?
8. Does the paragraph synthesize key points and pull them all together?
9. Does the paragraph presents a concluding thought?
10. Is there a proper structural flow between paragraphs?
11. Is there a proper sequential flow of ideas and information within the paragraphs?
12. Is the interpretation of information and ideas in each paragraph consistent with the context?

13. Is the interpretation of information and ideas in each paragraph be appropriate and accurate?
14. Do the supported elements match the context and not biased?
15. Are the supported elements proven?
16. Do the supporting elements help the claim or argument?
17. Are the Point of views and Innovative ideas helping to understand the issue?
18. Are the Point of views and Innovative ideas engaging and unique?
19. Are Point of views and Innovative ideas are logically correct?
20. Do Point of views and Innovative Ideas reflect thinking skills?
21. Are the content points justified with reasons?
22. Are the ideas, information, and supporting elements consistent and organised?
23. Is there technically correct use of criticism, analytical skills, argument-counter-argument development or comparison etc. in literary works?
24. Is the writing style consistent with the nature of the principle statement of the topic?
25. Is the prose appropriately neutral or formal?
26. Does the prose serve the purpose of the essay topic?
27. Are the key writing dimensions of the topic covered?
28. Is the Meaning of the language clear and precise?
29. Is the Tone of the language forthright and friendly?

30. Are the words spelled correctly?
31. Is the grammar of the sentences error-free?
32. Is the writing work performed in the space provided?
33. Is the answer (essay) written within the given word limit?
34. Is the sense of written expression well - written?
35. Is the handwriting understandable?
36. Are the information and ideas relevant to contemporary issues or problems and capable of offering solutions?
37. Does the writing reflect positive impact compared to others and is well structured?

Complete Blue Print of Essay Writing Evaluation

(All Allotted Marks are in Percentage) or (Marks/100)

Evaluation Criteria - Format and Structure	
Assessment Aspect- Introduction Paragraph	
Marking Parameters	Marks
Is the hook statement concise and catchy?	01
Is there any background information related to the topic statement, such as definitions, research papers, or any other information?	01
Is there a clear position / thesis statement and is it justified by valid reasons?	03

Evaluation Criteria – Examiner’s Discretion**Assessment Aspect- Sense of Writing**

Marking Parameters	Marks
Is the sense of written expression well written?	01
Is the handwriting good?	01
Is the writing able to relate to contemporary issues or problems and offer solutions?	01
Does the writing reflect positive impact compared to others and is well structured?	01

Evaluation Criteria – Examiner’s Discretion**Assessment Aspect- Sheet Instruction**

Marking Parameters	Marks
Is the writing work performed in the space provided?	01
Is the answer (essay) written within the given word limit?	01

Total Marks 100

Above are some assessment blueprints. You can learn complete assessment blueprints in the book.

04 Know

How many types of Essay Questions does UPSC ask in it's Essay Paper in current scenario?

In the current scenario UPSC is asking essay type questions based on deep meaning and profound statements. These profound essays are asked in the following three types of categories; proverb type, idiomatic type and quotation type and these three categories are asked in the following four statement forms; philosophical statements, psycho-philosophical statements, opinion statements and factual statements.

Let us discuss the categories in comprehensive way

1. Proverbs essay

A proverb is a concise, memorable statement expressing a truth or moral principle, often using **figurative language**. It's a short, popular saying that offers advice or wisdom. Proverbs are passed down through generations and can be found in various cultures.

Figurative Language: *Figurative language uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from their literal interpretation, often to create a more vivid or imaginative effect. It's a way to convey meaning beyond the surface level, using techniques like similes, metaphors, and personification.*

Examples of Proverb essays asked in UPSC Paper

i. Not All who Wander are Lost.

(UPSC CSE 2023)

ii. All ideas having large consequences are always simple.

(UPSC CSE 2024)

Four Essay Statement Forms

1. Philosophical Statements

Philosophical statements are declarative sentences that explore fundamental questions about reality, knowledge, morality, and existence. They can be statements of belief, ideas, or principles, often used to express a particular philosophical perspective. Examples include statements about the nature of consciousness, the meaning of life, or the existence of a higher power.

Examples of Philosophical Essays asked in UPSC Paper

i. Life is Long Journey Between Human Being and Being Human.

(UPSC CSE 2020)

ii. A Ship in Harbor is Safe, But That is Not what Ship is For.

(UPSC CSE 2022)

You can learn complete chapter of types of Essay Questions in the book.

05 Know

What Transition Words make an Essay Outstanding?

1. Introductory Phrases

In my opinion, It is believe, It is religious belief that, There is no doubt that, From his point of view, It seems that, I question whether , One may (dis) agree with, It may maintain that

2. Concluding Phrases

For the reasons above, As one can see, As noted, In other words, On the whole, In short, To be sure, Without a doubt, Obviously, Unquestionably, In brief, Undoubtedly, In any case, Summarizing, In any event

3. Supporting Opinions

First: Furthermore; Second: In Addition; Third: Also; Finally, Equally important, In the first place, Likewise, Besides, next, Moreover, Further, Again, Similarly

4. Introducing Details

For example, In fact, For instance, As evidence, In support this

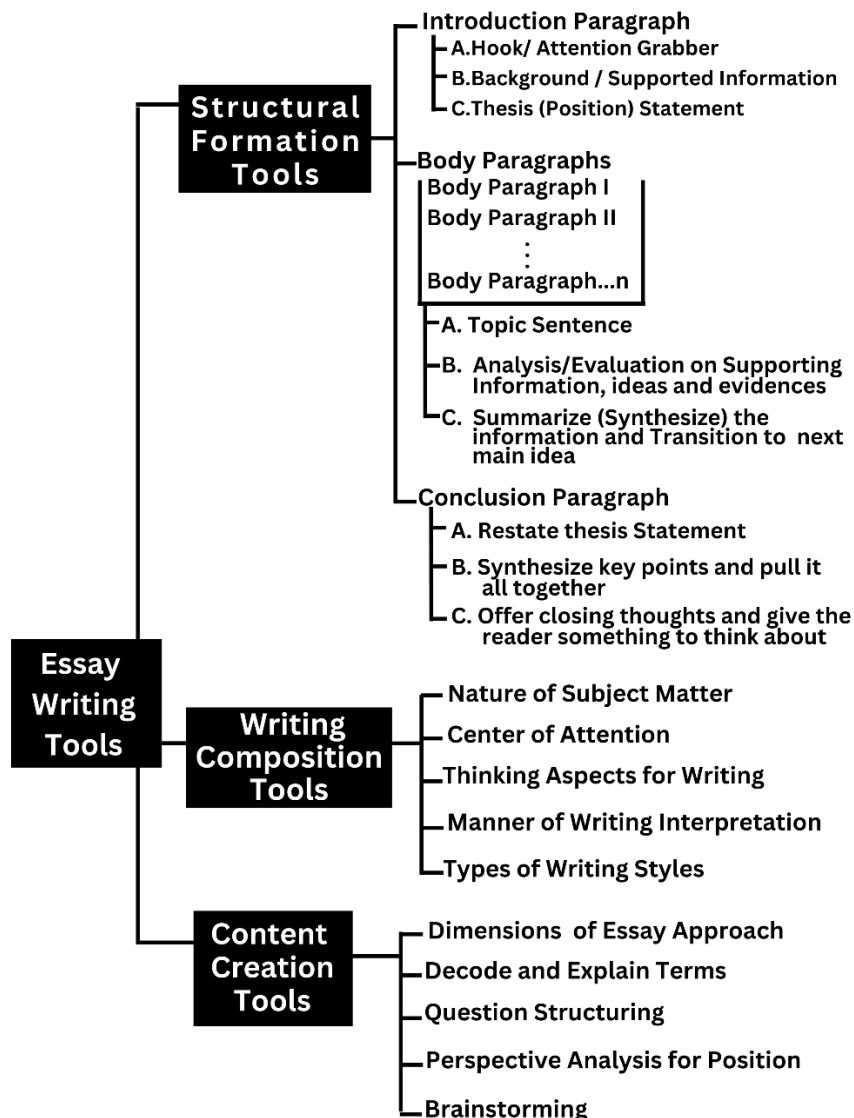
5. Cause and Effect

Since, Because of, Due to, For this reason, Therefore,

You can learn complete chapter of Transition Words in the book.

07 Know

What are the key essay writing tools that make an essay outstanding?





**Let's Discuss
Essay Writing Tools
to Understand the
Fundamental Ways
to Write an
Outstanding Essay**

01

Structural Formation Tools

- 📖 Chapter 1.1 – Thesis Statement
- 📖 Chapter 1.2 – Introduction Paragraph
- 📖 Chapter 1.3 – Body Paragraphs
- 📖 Chapter 1.4 – Conclusion Paragraph



1.1 Thesis Statement

Introduction

A thesis (position) statement summarizes the main idea of a paper or an essay. It prepares the examiner for what is to come and ties together arguments and claims. Thesis statement should answer the following questions: what is the subject of your essay? What is then your opinion on the subject? What is the purpose of the essay?

Where does the thesis statements go in my paper?

Your thesis statement should be placed near the end of your introduction after you have given the examiner some background and before you delve into the specific evidence or arguments that support your statement. But it can vary if the essay is long essay.

How to Create a Strong Thesis Statement

1. A strong thesis statement takes some sort of stand

Remember that your thesis needs to show your findings about subject or issue. For example, if you are writing an essay on Election Reforms in India, you might be asked to a contemporary issue 'one nation one election' to evaluate.

Thesis Statement

Following example can make an understanding better:

- × *There are some negative and positive aspects to the One Nation One Election.*

This is a weak thesis statement. First, it fails to take a stand. Second, the phrase negative and positive aspects is vague.

- ✓ *Because One Nation One Election promotes Parliament elections and State Assembly elections together that would require three times the current number of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verified Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs) to facilitate simultaneous elections and this translates to a need for approximately four times (40 lakh) additional machines, posing significant financial and logistical hurdles. one thing which is in favour of simultaneous elections is that for all three tiers, the voter is the same, the polling booth is the same, the people who conduct the election are same.*

This is a stronger thesis because it takes a stand, and because it's specific.

2. A strong thesis statement justifies discussion

Your thesis should indicate the point of the discussion. For example, your topic is kinship systems and religious beliefs. Using your own family as an example, you might come up with either of these two thesis statements:

- × *My family is an extended family because my family is a religious family.*

This is a weak thesis because it merely states an observation.

????

Features of a Good Thesis Statement

An ideal thesis statement should have the following characteristics:

1. It should be a complete sentence.

- × *My fear of the exam.*

- ✓ *My fear of the exam made my life miserable.*

2. It should not be a question.

- × *What are the reasons of global warming?*

- ✓ *There are three main reasons of global warming.*

3. It should not be too general.

- × *Festivals induce a feeling of happiness.*

- ✓ *Festivals are meant to celebrate our traditions and cultural heritage by spreading happiness.*

???????

Steps to Write a Thesis Statement

The thesis statement has two main parts: the topic and the controlling idea. The topic is the general idea of the essay, and the controlling idea is the specific

Thesis Statement

idea discussed in the essay. A third component of the thesis statement is called predictors or sub-topics. These predictors tell the examiner how many body paragraphs there will be in the essay, and what their content will be about.

Let's look at this example process to give you a better idea of how to get from your topic to your statement.

??????

You can learn complete chapter of Thesis Statement in the book.

1.2 Introduction Paragraph

Introduction

The first paragraph in an essay is called the introductory paragraph. It is the most essential paragraph in an essay because most of the time the piece of writing is judged from its beginning. An introduction's logical organisation can be compared to the image of a funnel. That is, the introduction usually begins with a general overview of your topic and then becomes more specific, narrowing to the thesis statement. Typically, the thesis statement is the last sentence in the introduction. It may, however, come near the end of the introduction. The thesis statement may also be more than one sentence, particularly in longer essay papers.

Possible Phases in the Introduction

A. Introduce the over all topic

- a. Hook statement to introduce the issue/topic
- b. Try not to make a broad/generalized statement
- c. Offer something concise and catchy

B. State the relevant information

- a. Provide general background information
- b. Offer some more specific information (if needed)

Introduction Paragraph

- c. Discuss the scope with the name of personality, if the essay is about a specific concept, article, quotation and proverbs etc.

C. Thesis Statement

- a. State your topic and position
- b. State the main aim of the essay
- c. Outline main points and ideas
- d. State the scope of the issue/subject (if needed)
- e. Closing and transition statement (if needed)

Let's understand with an example

Essay Topic

Social media is Triggering ‘ Fear of Missing Out ‘ amongst the youth , precipitating depression and loneliness.

(UPSC CSE 2024)

;

Step-I: Introduce the over all topic

With the popularity of mobile socialization, people have become more closely connected to their social media. While ??????

Step-II: State the relevant information

Various studies have shown a link between excessive social media use and an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and other mental health problems, specially fear of missing out (FoMO). This fear of missing out, drives social media ?????

Step-III: Thesis Statement

Studies show that repeated exposure to negative or harmful content, even in the form of memes, can cause fear of missing out (FoMO) in young people, resulting in them becoming desensitized and depressed due to being made fun of. Over time, this generalization can lead to a lack of empathy towards others and a feeling of loneliness in themselves, making their view of the world even more skeptical. Therefore, it is a serious concern for research and policy making on how to manage the 'fear of missing out' on social media platforms, which consequently promotes depression and loneliness among youth.

Types of Introduction Paragraphs

Essay introduction paragraphs can be classified based on their approach of showing the purpose of the essay through communication and introducing the thesis statement.

Considering the writing communication in UPSC Civil Services Examination, the introduction paragraphs of essays can be divided into the following types:

1.Statistics type Introduction

Example: Forests are the best case studies for economic excellence. (UPSC CSE 2022)

2.Definition type Introduction

Example: There is no path to happiness; Happiness is the path. (UPSC CSE 2023)

3. Analogy type Introduction

Example: Mathematics is the music of reason.

(UPSC CSE 2023)

4. Example type Introduction

Example: Not all who wander are lost. (UPSC CSE 2023)

5. Quotation type Introduction

Example: Inspiration for creativity springs from the effort to look for the magical in the mundane.

(UPSC CSE 2023)

6. Question type Introduction

Example: The doubter is a true man of Science.

(UPSC CSE 2024)

7. Anecdote (or Narration) type Introduction

Example: Nearly all men can stand adversity, but to test the character, give him power. (UPSC CSE 2024)

8. Turnabout type Introduction

Example: The cost of being wrong is less than the cost of doing nothing. (UPSC CSE 2024)

1. Statistics type Introduction: Provide a statistic or statistics to open your discussion and to give a concrete example that illuminates your topic.

Example

Forests are the best case studies for economic excellence.

(UPSC CSE 2022)

Forests provide a wealth of economic benefits and services, which demonstrate how natural systems can contribute to human well-being without compromising their long-term viability. A well-managed forest can provide resources in a sustainable manner, supporting long-term economic growth without depletion of natural capital. In this scenario, the World Bank reported that forests account for 1% of global jobs, employing over 33 million people, while in India, according to the Economic Survey 2021, the forest and logging sector contributes about 1% to the total GDP.

On the other hand, World Economic Forum surveys and case studies between 2015 and 2020 state that the rate of forest destruction and degradation

?????

2. Definition type Introduction: Provide an explanation, not a dictionary definition, of a term that your paper will cover.

Example

There is no path to happiness; Happiness is the path.

(UPSC CSE 2023)

Happiness is an emotional state, characterized by feelings of joy, satisfaction, and fulfilment. While there are many different definitions of happiness, it is often described as being associated with positive emotions and life satisfaction. The insightful quote by Gautama Buddha, "There is no path to happiness; happiness is the way" offers a profound perspective on the nature of happiness and how we should achieve it.

It suggests that ?????????

3. Analogy type Introduction: An analogy serves the same purpose as a metaphor i.e. to show how two things are alike but the ultimate goal is to make a point about the comparison that catches the examiner's attention and introduces the topic.

Example

Mathematics is the music of reason.

(UPSC CSE 2023)

Mathematics is the music of reason is an analogy, which is attributed to the English mathematician James Sylvester who stated, "Can not music be called the mathematics of the senses and mathematics the music of reason? The musician

feels mathematics, the mathematician thinks music: music is the dream, mathematics is the working life", that suggests that mathematics, like music, is a harmonious and structured form of human thought that appeals to our logic and sense of reason.

Furthermore, ???????

4. Example type Introduction: Begin with an example of your topic.

Example

Not all who wander are lost.

(UPSC CSE 2023)

You can learn complete chapter of Introduction Paragraph in the book.

1.4 Conclusion Paragraph

Introduction

A conclusion is the last paragraph of your essay and presents your final thoughts on the topic at hand without introducing new information. The conclusion accomplishes two important goals: it reminds the examiner of what they read before and creates both a lasting impact on the examiner and a sense of resolution.

Methods to Writing Conclusions

1. Answer the question “So what?”

This is where you will exhibit the importance of the paper and show the examiner why the essay provides meaningful and useful information.

2. Synthesize, don't summarize

Make sure you do not simply repeat what you have previously stated. Be sure to use the information from your paper to connect with your main idea.

3. Redirect the examiner

This is where you can be more creative and leave your examiner with a general message or something to think about. Be sure that if your paper is general to specific that your conclusion is specific to general.

4. Create a new meaning

It is important to note that this does not mean that you have to introduce new information. If you clearly demonstrate how your ideas work together, you can create a new outlook on your reasoning behind your essay.

Possible Phases in the Conclusion Paragraph

The shape represents the course of a conclusion, which starts with the most specific point of your essay, the thesis statement. Your restated thesis is followed by sentences that recapitulate the main points you have made to support your argument. Final impactful thought that leaves a lasting impression on your examiner and invites them to think beyond the horizons of your essay.

Let's understand conclusion phrases by imagining an essay topic.

Essay Topic

Indian Classical Music: A profound symbol of art and values.

First Phase: Restate the Thesis

In order to remind your examiners of what you have tried to prove in your essay, start your conclusion by restating your thesis. This version of your thesis statement should not simply be a word-for-word recapitulation of what you wrote in your introduction.

If Thesis Statement in Introduction paragraph is...

Despite this reputation, Indian classical music is generally passed down in the oral tradition where learners spend their learning years with a 'guru' where they learn to connect the music to the soul.

Then, Statement in Conclusion Paragraph can be...

?????

Examples of Conclusion Paragraph on writing Thesis Statement, which we used as example in the chapter- 02 (Introduction Paragraph)

1. Forests are the best case studies for economic excellence. (UPSC CSE 2022)

Thesis Statement: A well-managed forest can provide resources in a sustainable manner, supporting long-term economic growth without depletion of natural capital. Forests in all aspects are an indispensable part of our economy and it is these forests that show the way to drive the engine of economic excellence.

Conclusion Paragraph

Restate the Thesis: It forests demonstrate many key principles of economic efficiency, resilience and sustainability that can be applied to human economies.

Recapitulation the Main Points: Forests demonstrate sustainable resource management, which emphasizes the importance of long-term economic viability.

Concluding statement: Indeed, case studies from various global organizations make it clear that the diversity, balance and resilience displayed by forests can yield valuable insights about how humans can achieve economic excellence.

2. Not all who wander are lost. (UPSC CSE 2023)

Thesis Statement: The truth of individuals stepping out of their comfort zones and accepting the uncertainty that comes with disorientation and challenge the notion that success and satisfaction are only found through traditional linear paths, otherwise you will be lost. Those who stray from the conventional or expected path or seek different paths in life are not aimless or lost, but may be engaged in meaningful journeys of self discovery, growth and exploration.

Conclusion Paragraph

Restate the Thesis: The phrase challenges the idea that success and fulfilment are determined only by a straight path or a predetermined destination.

Recapitulation the Main Points: Wandering, whether physical, intellectual or spiritual, can be a path to self-discovery, growth and even success, rather than being a sign of being lost. Wandering,

when guided by a purpose or a desire for growth, can be a productive and fulfilling journey.

Concluding statement: Therefore, it allows individuals to learn, adapt, and discover new possibilities.

3. The cost of being wrong is less than the cost of doing nothing. (UPSC CSE 2023)

Thesis Statement: Doing nothing can impede progress, development and the realisation of potential benefits while wrong decisions may have negative consequences, but they also provide opportunities to learn and improve. The potential for long-term regrets and missed opportunities from not taking action can be significant. This price can manifest in various forms such as lost time, unrealised potential or a sense of unfulfilled purpose. However, in some situations the risk is so high that the potential cost of being wrong is greater than the cost of inaction.

Conclusion Paragraph

??????

You can learn complete chapter of Conclusion Paragraph Paragraph in the book.

02

Writing Composition Tools

- 📖 Chapter 2.1 – Nature of Subject Matter
- 📖 Chapter 2.2 – Center of Attention
- 📖 Chapter 2.3 – Thinking Aspects of Writing
- 📖 Chapter 2.4 – Writing Interpretation
- 📖 Chapter 2.5 – Types of Writing Styles

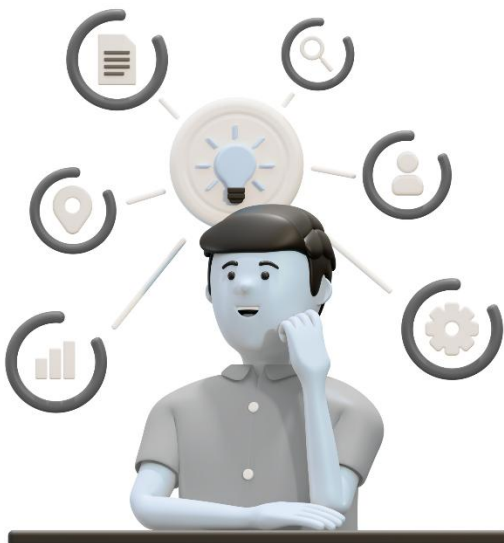


You can learn all chapters in the book.

03

Content Creation Tools

- 📖 Chapter 3.1 – Dimensions of Essay
- 📖 Chapter 3.2 – Decoding and Explaining
- 📖 Chapter 3.3 – Question Structuring
- 📖 Chapter 3.4 – Perspective Analysis
- 📖 Chapter 3.5 – Brainstorming



3.1 Dimensions of Essay Approach

Introduction

When discussing "dimensions of an essay," it refers to the different facets or perspectives from which you can analyse and approach a topic within your writing, often encompassing social, economic, political, environmental, technological, cultural, philosophical psychological and legal aspects, depending on the essay's subject matter.

Key Dimensions to Consider when Writing an Essay

1. Social Dimension

Examining the impact of an issue on society, including demographics, social structures, community dynamics, and cultural norms.

2. Economic Dimension

Analysing the financial aspects of a topic, considering costs, benefits, market trends, and economic policies.

3. Political Dimension

Exploring the political landscape surrounding an issue, including government policies, regulations, political parties, and power dynamics.

????????

Let's understand with examples

Example – 01

Social media is Triggering ‘ Fear of Missing Out’ amongst the youth, precipitating depression and loneliness. (UPSC CSE 2024)

As considering the topic, essay can approach at least six dimensions:

1. Psychological Dimension

Assess how social media affects ??????

2. Philosophical Dimension

Discuss how fundamental ideologies and philosophical perspectives among youth ?????

3. Social Dimension

Examine how social media has become a threat to privacy among youth, especially women.

4. Technological Dimension

Evaluate the potential challenges and impact of digital networking platforms as a means of communication and engagement among youth.

5. Historical Dimension

Compare the behaviour of youth in the social media era with the behaviour of youth before the social media era.

6. Ethical Dimension

Explore how social media impacts ????????

Example – 02

History is a series of victories won by the scientific man over the romantic man. (UPSC CSE 2022)

As considering the topic, essay can approach at least four dimensions:

You can learn complete chapter in the book.

3.4 Perspective Analysis

Introduction

Perspective analysis involves examining a topic from multiple viewpoints to gain a broader understanding. This helps to identify different interpretations and biases, leading to a more nuanced and critical analysis. During an issue analysis, you effectively express your perspective on the chosen topic, which can be in the form of opinions, recommendations, claims and reasons, or the presentation of different viewpoints.

In essence, Perspective analysis is the response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement and explain your reasoning for the position you take. In developing and supporting your position, you should consider ways in which the statement might or might not hold true and explain how these considerations shape your position.

In the essays being asked in the current pattern of UPSC Civil Services Exam, we can generally follow a four-step analysis process to formulate a position statement:

1. Identifying the nature of original statement
2. Finding hidden characteristics or context
3. Examining different viewpoints
4. Formulating a position statement

Let's understand with examples

Example 01

Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school. (UPSC CSE 2023)

1. Identifying the nature of original statement

The statement has two parts:

Part 1: Education is what

Part 2: remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school

Part-1 appears to be in the nature of 'the period being defined', while Part-2 of the original statement appears to be in the nature of category term which relates to the period being defined. Thus, the nature of statement is a 'Definition' which defines Education with respect to what we have learn in schools.

Accordingly, new statement can be-

The true meaning of education goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge within the school.

2. Finding hidden characteristics or context

The statement in one sense defines education in the context of school, but the sentence- *what remains after school*, in another sense raises the question of *in what context education defines its real meaning*. There is no doubt that it is long life.

Therefore, new statement can be-

Education is not confined to the classroom walls but extend into the broader context of life.

3.Examining different viewpoints

There can be four viewpoints on the topic-statement:

- i. Learning to acquire knowledge
- ii. Learning to build a career
- iii. Learning social harmony
- iv. Learning personal development

Statements on viewpoints

i. Learning to acquire knowledge

School learning plays a vital role in imparting knowledge but it is useless if it does not emphasize on the development of cognitive abilities like critical thinking, problem solving, etc. even after schooling is over.

ii. Learning to build a career

????????

iii. Learning social harmony

????????

iv. Learning personal development

One disadvantage of learning through a formal institution like school is that our qualities are evaluated by someone else (the examiner), but beyond this, ??????

4. Formulating a position statement

“The true meaning of education is not just what you learn in school or any formal institution, but how you learn to learn”.

[NOTE POINT: The essay statement "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school" is a saying of Albert Einstein]

Example 02

There is no path to happiness; Happiness is the path. (UPSC CSE 2024)

You can learn complete chapter in the book.

3.5 Essay Brainstorming

Introduction

Brainstorming is an important part of the determining pre writing strategy process. Essay brainstorming is a method for not only generating ideas but also extend and explain those ideas. It can help you reduce anxiety and focus on the most relevant content.

Brainstorming lead to unique and insightful perspectives on a topic and helps to focus on the most relevant and important aspects of their topic. Brainstorming is the most important tool to understand the dimension and scope of content creation in minimum time. In short, brainstorming helps you generate ideas before you start writing, and it can help you create a well organised essay.

Types of Brainstorming

In UPSC Civil Services Examination, following four types of Brainstorming we can approach to write an outstanding essay:

1. Cluster- Brainstorming
2. Tree- Brainstorming
3. Table(T)– Brainstorming
4. Mind Maps- Brainstorming

1. Cluster- Brainstorming

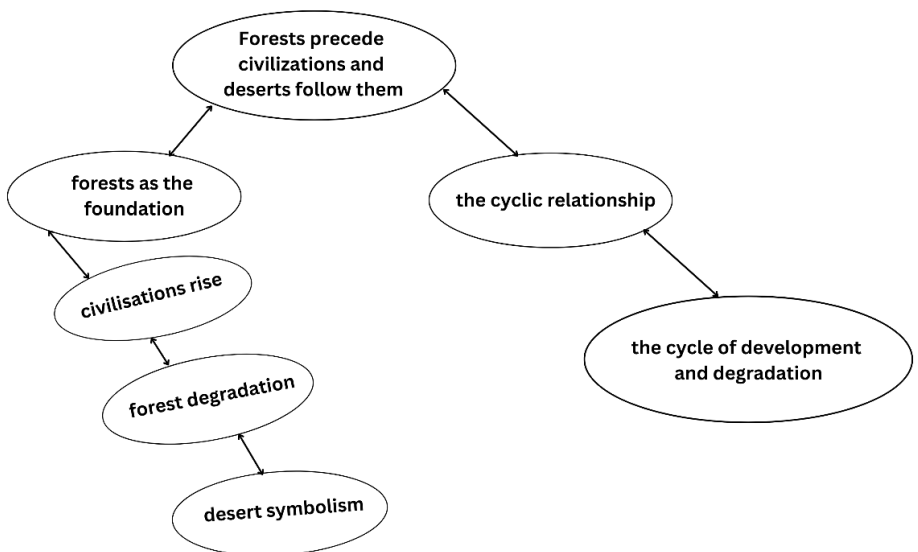
This visualization method works when we have a lot of random thoughts coming into mind and we try to make a connection between major issue of the topic, their concepts and evidences.

Let's understand with an example

Example

Forests precede civilizations and deserts follow them. (UPSC CSE 2024)

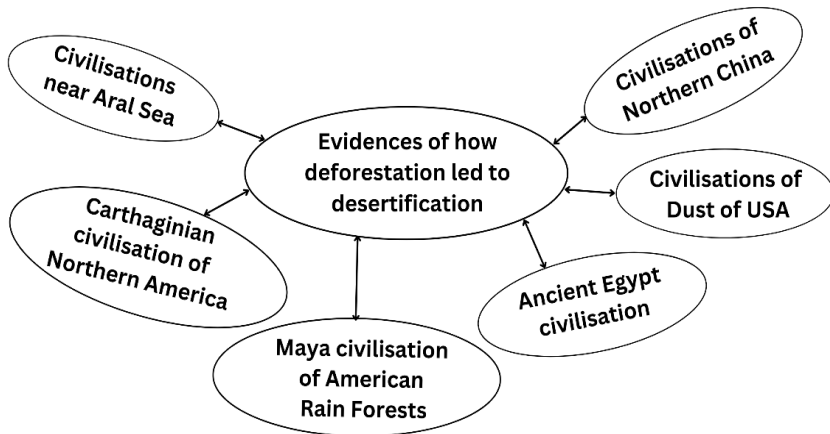
i. Clustering on Concepts



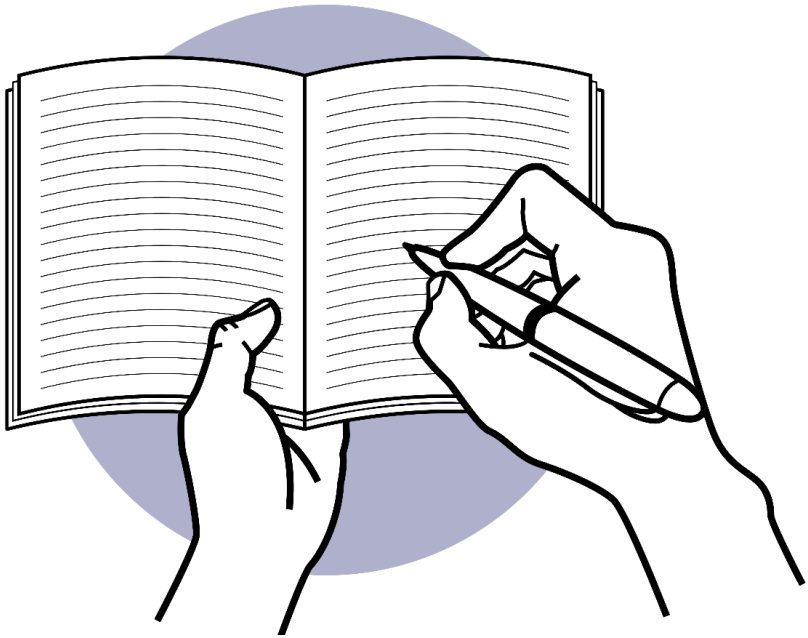
ii. Clustering on Evidence- civilisation that thrived in forest regions

?????

iii. Clustering on Evidence- how civilisation's act to deforestation led to desertification



You can learn complete chapter in the book.



**Let's Start
Practicing (Pre Writing
Work with Essay) to
Score Outstanding Grades
in Essay Paper of UPSC
Civil Services Exam**

01

Novice Stage of Practice

Novice writers often fail to elaborate points and evidence in ways that make their essays seem to be mere outlines and make them appear to be unthinking.

Essay Topic

“Peace is the cornerstone element that brings all other elements into existence”

We are using this example to understand how aspirants should practice essay writing in the Novice Stage. We are comprehensively discussing every point of the essay writing tools, so that aspirants develop an understanding and thinking of essay writing. After practicing at least five (05) essays in this manner, aspirants do need to go so deep into the pre-writing task.

Pre - Writing Work

1. Writing Composition

1.a Nature of Subject Matter

The Subject of essay has deep meaning and containing comprehensive and universal phenomena. Therefore, the topic is categorised in Profound Essay category.

The understanding and knowledge of the subject can be examined and analyzed through beliefs, observations and justifications. For this reason the nature of the essay reflects Epistemological Philosophy.

1.b Center of Attention

Because the nature of the topic is philosophical and the goal of writing is to persuade the examiner towards the author's position and justification. Therefore, the essay can be classified as Reader-Centric.

1.c Thinking Aspects for Writing

Critically Examine to take position.

Critically Analyse to make judgement.

1.d Manner of Writing Interpretation

The nature of essay is philosophical and based on opinions, personal experiences and universal beliefs, so almost all sentences are composed in a Subjective Manner.

Very less writing part of essay is based on facts and proofs and reflects writing in an Objective Manner, specially where judgment based facts are required.

1.e Types of Writing Interpretation

- a.** Philosophical Writing (approx. 45%)
- b.** Analytical Writing (approx. 20%)
- c.** Persuasive Writing (approx. 15%)
- d.** Reflective Writing (approx. 10%)

Why Philosophical Writing?

Writing of essay subject includes original arguments, arguments reconstructions, objections and philosophical and ideological experiments.

Why Analytical Writing?

Uncover the deeper meaning of specific statements and evidences with critically illustrate the connections between diverse ideas and evidences.

Why Persuasive Writing?

Get the examiner to agree with your arguments and evidences.

Why Reflective Writing?

To make links between theory and practice; also between past and present understanding or knowledge.

2.Content Creation

2.a Dimensions of Essay Approach

- a. Philosophical Approach
- b. Psychological Approach
- c. Historical
- d. Social Approach
- e. Political Approach
- f. Contemporary Approach

Why Philosophical Approach?

Discuss arguments and reasoning on fundamental ideas of peace and its relationship with human existence.

Why Psychological Approach?

Assesses how peace could impact human consciousness and reflects in human actions in different perspectives, (extremism, violence, war etc.)

Why Historical Approach?

Exploring context by looking at past events and trends related to the peace.

Why Social Approach?

Examining the role of peace in the existence of sustainable human society including community dynamics and cultural harmony.

Why Political Approach?

Exploring the importance of peace on the political landscape for national and global stability along with security.

Why Contemporary Approach?

Analysing the role of peace at various levels of human existence (individual, social, political and international) through contemporary evidence.

2.b Perspective Analysis for Position and Thesis Statement

???????

Therefore, the Position Statement can be:

"Peace is the cornerstone element of human existence that brings into existence all other elements at various levels of human life (individual, social, political and international)."

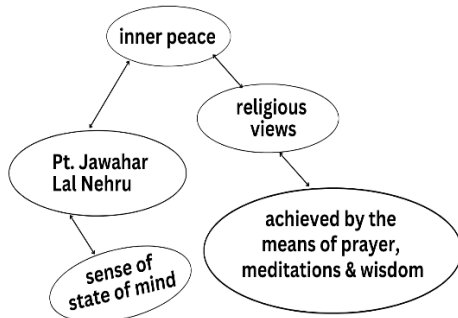
Explanation of Terms of Position Statement for Writing a Thesis Statement:

- 1)** State of mind and endurance are essential elements of human's existence resulting from peace. (individual level)
- 2)** Freedom is the essential element of prosperous society resulting from peace. (social level)
- 3)** Justice is the essential element of stable state resulting from peace. (political level)
- 4)** Human Rights are the essential elements of war free global regions resulting from peace. (international level)

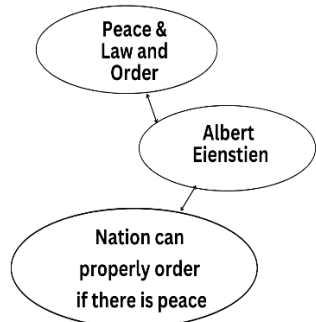
2.c Brainstorming

A. Cluster – Brainstorming

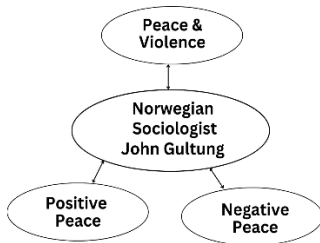
i. Clustering on Inner Peace



ii. Clustering on Peace & Law



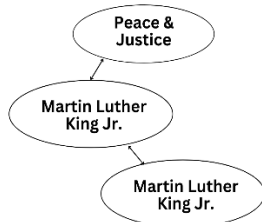
iii. Clustering on Peace & Violence



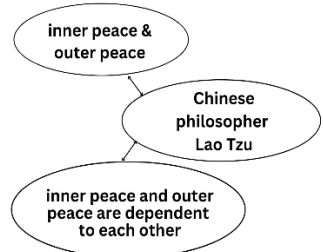
v. Peace & Human Rights



iv. Clustering on Peace & Justice



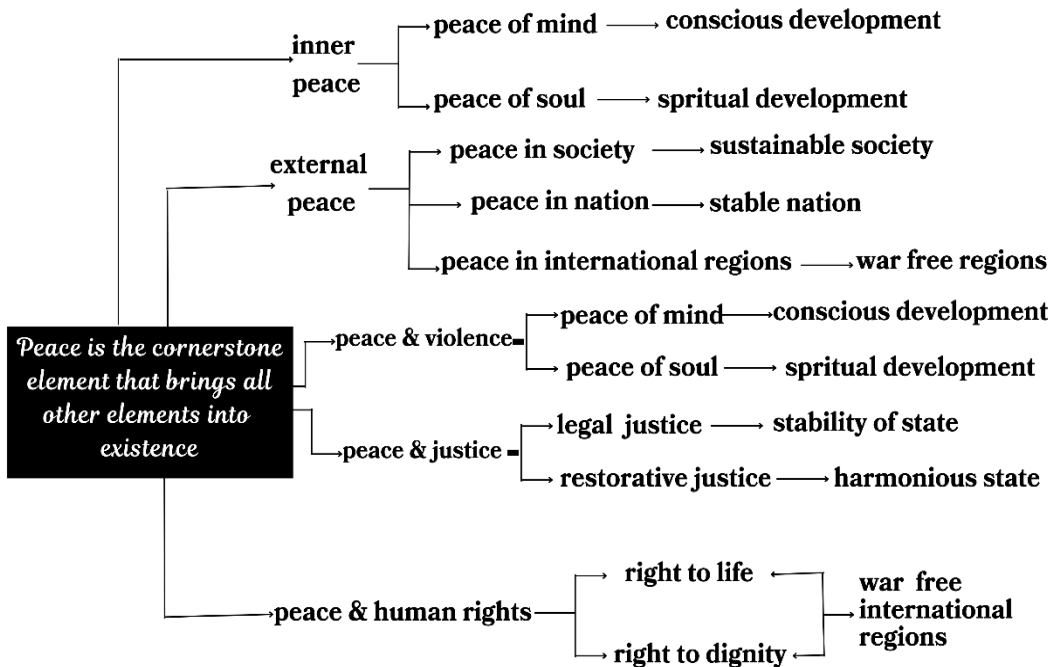
vi. Inner Peace & External Peace



B. Table (T) - Brainstorming

Key Element	Argument	Counter- Argument
inner peace and external peace are dependent to each other.	inner peaace guarantees human existence while outer peace sustain that guarantee.	inner peaace and outer peace are independent. individual development is the goal of inner peace while socio-political development is the goal of external peace.
inner peace is the core, the essence and the firm foundation of external peace.	if a society doesn't want conflict, war, violence then the people of society should seach peace within themselves.	External peace is the sense of sustainable and secure society which plays an important role in supporting individual to get inner peace.

C. Mind Map – Brainstorming



Essay

“ Peace is the cornerstone element that brings all other elements into existence”

Introduction Paragraph

In the contemporary times of these global conflicts, whether it is the Russian-Ukraine conflict or the Israel-Iran conflict or many others, our understanding of peace is in the absence of war or in another sense in armies fighting wars to win peace. However, this is only one political view of peace but not the only meaning because during a time without war it does not mean that people are at peace and society is peaceful while problems or hostilities still exist. Other than a political perspective, philosophers and scholars from all walks of life through history, be they religious gurus or sociologists, have stated peace as the greatest and highest goal or hope and they wish to achieve individually and for society and the world.

Furthermore, when we study scholars and researchers around the world, we find that they advocate peace as an essential element of human existence from history till now, and bring all other elements according to the context of use. For example, state of mind and endurance are essential elements of a person's existence resulting from peace.

Moreover, freedom and human rights, essential elements of a prosperous society, and justice and security, essential elements of a stable state, can only be possible when there is a peaceful society. On the other side, if we refer to the state of a place or an atmosphere, peace means quietness and silence. Yet, to understand the true meaning of peace it is important to analyse how its various aspects bring all the other elements into existence.

Body Paragraph – I

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru emphasized on peace in the sense of a state of mind. He stated "Peace is not merely the absence of war but it is also a state of mind and peace can come only to peaceful people". Here, in his view peace is not a relationship between nations, rather it is a state of mind arising from peace of soul, scholars consider it to be internal peace or inner peace.

It is a state of calm, serenity and tranquillity of mind that arise due to having no sufferings or mental disturbances such as worry, anxiety, greed, desire, hatred, ill-will, delusion and/or other defilements. Internal peace is peace within oneself; it is derived from practicing or training of mind of an individual. Sometimes, a man can create and maintain his inner peace in the noisy surrounding or in the un-peaceful society. In the view of religions, this type of peace can be reached by means of prayer, meditation, wisdom and other ways.

Body Paragraph – II

Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung linked the terms peace and violence and found that peace is the absence of violence and should be used as a social goal. Scholars have called it external peace or outer peace, which can be achieved through the attainment of all social virtues. Galtung further said that just as a coin has two sides, external peace also has two sides, negative peace and positive peace. Negative peace is the absence of personal violence while positive peace is an absence of structural violence or social justice.

Body Paragraph – III

The connection between peace and justice is intrinsic. The famous American civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr. also believed that peace is the result of the justice. In his view, definition of peace focusing only on the absence of unhappy situations was not satisfactory, but peace should also include justice in society because according to him, “true peace is not merely the absence of tension; this is the presence of justice”.

Furthermore, Albert Einstein's perception to peace was almost similar, but he also mentioned law and order. He stated, “Peace is not only an absence of war, but it means or includes the presence of justice, law, order or government ”. ???????

Body Paragraph – IV

??????

Body Paragraph – V

According to Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu is both inner peace and outer peace are dependent on each other as the former guarantees and sustains the latter. In this context, the famous saying of Lao Tzu is, “If there is to be peace in the world, there must be peace in the nations. If there is to be ????????

Body Paragraph - VI

Internal peace is the core, the essence and the firm foundation of external peace. Internal peace represents individual's peace while external peace represents peace in society. It is well known that society is a combination of each individual. If society is good, it is useful ????????

For instance, Dalai Lama stated same in his statement, "We can never ??????

Conclusion Paragraph

Therefore, from history of human existence till now, peace appears to be a gift that brings into existence all the other elements like virtue and most importantly security which leads to creating free minds and sustainable societies. No doubt, inner peace and outer peace are two different but interrelated concepts but inner peace is the true basis of peace in the society.

Mahatma Gandhi concluded the same in his statement “Each one has to find his peace from within and peace to be real must be unaffected by outside circumstances”. Ultimately, just as environment is the reason for the existence of various aspects of human life, so is peace.

You can learn complete chapter in the book.

02

Competent Stage of Practice

Essay Topic

“There is no way to control Emotions, Emotions are the way to control situations”

We are using this example to understand how aspirants should practice essay writing in the Competent Stage of Practice. We are discussing the less points of the essay writing tools which we used in the notative stage. This is because after practicing five essays the writing consciousness of the aspirants develops in such a way that they are able to understand the purpose of the essay while using less writing tools in the pre-writing work.

You can learn complete chapter in the book.

03

Proficient Stage of Practice

Essay Topic - 01

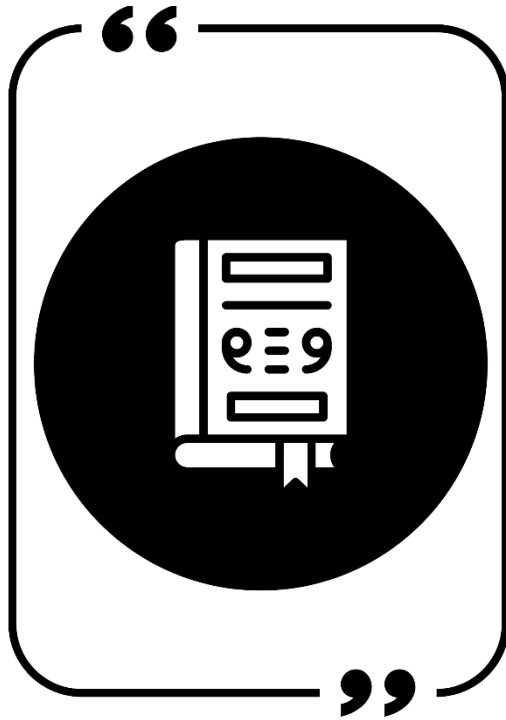
“Thinking is like a game, it does not begin unless there is an opposite team” (UPSC CSE 2023)

Essay Topic - 02

**“The Empires of the future will be the empires of the mind”
(UPSC CSE 2024)**

Writing proficiency refers to the ability to communicate ideas and information effectively. In this stage, the writing consciousness of the candidates develops in such a way that they are able to understand not only the purpose of the essay but also its scope. Even though we are providing more pre-writing work in examples, but in this stage, the understanding of the candidates becomes deeper and they do not need more such pre-writing.

You can learn complete chapter in the book.



Exam Oriented Proverbs and Quotes

Proverbs

1. **A bad excuse is better than none:** It is better to give a poor or implausible excuse which may, in fact, be believed than to have no explanation or justification at all: Variant of this proverb: a poor excuse is better than none.
2. **A bad workman quarrels with his tools:** Workers who lack skill or competence blame their tools or equipment when things go wrong. Variant of this proverb- a bad workman blames his too.
3. **A civil question deserves a civil answer:** If somebody asks you something politely, you should respond in the same manner. Variant of this proverb: give a civil answer to a civil question.
4. **A chain is no stronger than its weakest link:** A weak part or member will affect the success or effectiveness of the whole.
5. **A change is as good as a rest:** Doing something different for a time can be just as refreshing as taking a break from work also used more generally of any change in routine. Variant of this proverb: a change of work is a rest. Proverb expressing similar meaning: variety is the spice of life.

You can learn complete chapter in the book.

“Quotations”

“Courage”

1. “Courage isn't having the strength to go on – it is going on when you don't have strength.” (**Napoleon Bonaparte, French military and political leader**)
2. “You will never do anything in this world without courage. It is the greatest quality of the mind next to honour.” (**Aristotle, Greek philosopher**)
3. “Courage is about doing what you are afraid to do. The one who feels no fear is a fool and the one who lets fear rule him is indeed a coward We must have the courage to act instead of reacting.” (**Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, Indian aerospace scientist and former president of India**)
4. “Courage is not the absence of fear but rather the assessment that something else is more important than fear.” (**Franklin D. Roosevelt, former American president**)
5. “Courage is knowing what not to fear”. (**Plato, Greek philosopher**)

“Culture”

6. “Culture is the widening of the mind and of the spirit.” (**Jawaharlal Nehru, former prime minister of India**)

7. "Culture is the process by which a person becomes all that they were created capable of being. **(Thomas Carlyle, Scottish philosopher)**
8. "A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people." **(Mahatma Gandhi, political and spiritual leader of India)**
9. "Culture is the name for what people are interested in, their thoughts, their models, the books they read, and the speeches they hear." **(Walter Lippmann, an American writer)**
10. "A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots." **(Marcus Garvey, Jamaican political activist)**

"Education"

11. "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." **(Nelson Mandela, former prime minister of South Africa)**
12. "Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family." **(Kofi Annan, a Noble Laureate for Peace Prize)**
13. "Education is the best friend. An educated person is respected everywhere. Education beats the beauty and the youth." **(Chanakya, an Indian Philosopher)**

You can learn complete chapter in the book.



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About Author



Ankur Tripathi has published more than 100 research papers and articles. Some of his research papers and articles have been adopted as standard texts in universities and media platforms. He was the founder member of two premier Civil Services Institutes. Presently he is providing mentorship to UPSC Civil Services Aspirants for Answer Writing and Essay Writing for Main Examinations and providing an online platform (www.mainspractice.com), where Aspirants can get evaluated their Answers.

Idea of Book



In my teaching experience, many candidates have very good knowledge but due to lack of proper writing skills they failed to get good rank. My aim of writing this book is to provide an exam oriented essay writing guide to the candidates by which they can improve their writing skills and achieve excellent grades.

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