

GS-I: HISTORY

Answer Writing Workbook

Previous Year Questions · 2013 to 2024

Name: _____

Roll No: _____ Batch: _____

Start Date: _____ Target Date: _____



How to Use This Workbook

Answer Space Allocation:

5 Marks — 1 A4 page of writing space (~50 words)
10 / 12.5 Marks — 2 A4 pages of writing space (~150–200 words)
15 Marks — 3 A4 pages of writing space (~250 words)

Each Question Header Shows:

Question Number · Sub-Theme · UPSC Year · Marks

Track Your Performance:

Use the Date / Score / Remarks line below each question card.
Get your answers evaluated and note the score for revision tracking.

Total Questions: 85 | Sections: 5 | Years: 2013–2024



Q.1 · Performing Arts & Artistic Traditions | UPSC 2022 | **15 Marks**

Discuss the significance of the lion and bull figures in Indian mythology, art and architecture.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____



Q.2 · Performing Arts & Artistic Traditions | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

Discuss the Tandava dance as recorded in the early Indian inscriptions.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



Q.3 · Performing Arts & Artistic Traditions	UPSC 2018	10 Marks

Safeguarding the Indian art heritage is the need of the moment. Discuss.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



Q.4 · Bhakti & Sufi Movement | UPSC 2021 | **10 Marks**

Evaluate the nature of the Bhakti literature and its contribution to Indian culture.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.5 · Bhakti & Sufi Movement	UPSC 2014	10 Marks

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.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



Q.6 · Bhakti & Sufi Movement | UPSC 2018 | **15 Marks**

The Bhakti movement received a remarkable re-orientation with the advent of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Discuss.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.7 · Buddhist Art & Architecture | UPSC 2016 | **12.5 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.8 · Buddhist Art & Architecture	UPSC 2014	10 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.9 · Buddhist Art & Architecture | UPSC 2019 | **10 Marks**

Highlight the Central Asian and Greco-Bactrian elements in Gandhara art.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



Q.10 · Ancient Civilizations, Geography & Learning Centres	UPSC 2015	**12.5 Marks**

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.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.11 · Ancient Civilizations, Geography & Learning Centres	UPSC 2014	10 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.12 · Ancient Civilizations, Geography & Learning Centres	UPSC 2024	10 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.13 · Ancient Civilizations, Geography & Learning Centres	UPSC 2023	10 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.14 · Ancient Civilizations, Geography & Learning Centres | UPSC 2014 | **10 Marks**

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.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.15 · South Indian Kingdoms & Temple Culture | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

Chola architecture represents a high watermark in the evolution of temple architecture. Discuss.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.16 · South Indian Kingdoms & Temple Culture | UPSC 2022 | **15 Marks**

Discuss the main contributions of Gupta period and Chola period to Indian heritage and culture.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.17 · South Indian Kingdoms & Temple Culture	UPSC 2016	12.5 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____



Q.18 · South Indian Kingdoms & Temple Culture | UPSC 2024 | **10 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.19 · South Indian Kingdoms & Temple Culture | UPSC 2024 | **15 Marks**

"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.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.20 · Northern & Medieval Dynasties	UPSC 2020	15 Marks

Indian philosophy and tradition played a significant role in conceiving and shaping the monuments and their art in India. Discuss.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.21 · Northern & Medieval Dynasties | UPSC 2017 | **10 Marks**

How do you justify the view that the level of excellence of Gupta numismatic art is not at all noticeable in later times?

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.22 · Northern & Medieval Dynasties | UPSC 2020 | **10 Marks**

Pala period is the most significant phase in the history of Buddhism in India. Enumerate.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.23 · Northern & Medieval Dynasties	UPSC 2023	15 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____



Q.24 · Literature, Inscriptions & Historical Sources | UPSC 2018 | **10 Marks**

Assess the importance of the accounts of the Chinese and Arab travellers in the reconstruction of the history of India.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.25 · Literature, Inscriptions & Historical Sources | UPSC 2022 | **10 Marks**

How will you explain that medieval Indian temple sculptures represent the social life of those days?

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.26 · Literature, Inscriptions & Historical Sources | UPSC 2015 | **12.5 Marks**

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.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.27 · Literature, Inscriptions & Historical Sources | UPSC 2020 | **15 Marks**

Persian literary sources of medieval India reflect the spirit of the age. Comment.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.28 · Literature, Inscriptions & Historical Sources | UPSC 2020 | **10 Marks**

The rock-cut architecture represents one of the most important sources of our knowledge of early Indian art and history. Discuss.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.29 · Literature, Inscriptions & Historical Sources | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

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.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.30 · Literature, Inscriptions & Historical Sources | UPSC 2023 | **15 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____



2. Modern Indian History — Mid-18th Century to Present

PYQs 2013 – 2024

Q.31 · Economic Impact & Structural Changes under Colonial Rule | UPSC 2014 | **10 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.32 · Economic Impact & Structural Changes under Colonial Rule	UPSC 2017	15 Marks

Examine how the decline of traditional artisanal industry in colonial India crippled the rural economy.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.33 · Economic Impact & Structural Changes under Colonial Rule	UPSC 2023	15 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.34 · Economic Impact & Structural Changes under Colonial Rule | UPSC 2022 | **10 Marks**

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.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.35 · Economic Impact & Structural Changes under Colonial Rule	UPSC 2022	10 Marks

Why was there a sudden spurt in famines in colonial India since the mid-eighteenth century? Give reasons.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.36 · Nationalist Leaders & Ideological Perspectives	UPSC 2016	12.5 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.37 · Nationalist Leaders & Ideological Perspectives | UPSC 2015 | **12.5 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.38 · Nationalist Leaders & Ideological Perspectives | UPSC 2015 | **12.5 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____



Q.39 · Nationalist Leaders & Ideological Perspectives | UPSC 2018 | **10 Marks**

Throw light on the significance of the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi in the present times.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.40 · Nationalist Leaders & Ideological Perspectives	UPSC 2023	10 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.41 · Revolts, Uprisings & Military Conflicts | UPSC 2017 | **10 Marks**

Clarify how mid-eighteenth century India was beset with the spectre of a fragmented polity.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



Q.42 · Revolts, Uprisings & Military Conflicts | UPSC 2016 | **12.5 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.43 · Revolts, Uprisings & Military Conflicts | UPSC 2014 | **10 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



Q.44 · Revolts, Uprisings & Military Conflicts | UPSC 2019 | **10 Marks**

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.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.45 · Revolts, Uprisings & Military Conflicts | UPSC 2014 | **10 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.46 · Social Reform Movements & Women's Question	UPSC 2017	15 Marks

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?

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____



Q.47 · Social Reform Movements & Women's Question | UPSC 2021 | **10 Marks**

Trace the rise and growth of socio-religious reform movements with special reference to Young Bengal and Brahmo Samaj.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.48 · British Administration & Viceregal Policies | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

In many ways, Lord Dalhousie was the founder of modern India. Elaborate.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.49 · British Administration & Viceregal Policies	UPSC 2020	10 Marks

Evaluate the policies of Lord Curzon and their long term implications on the national movement.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



3. Freedom Struggle — Stages, Contributors & Contributions

PYQs 2013 – 2024



Q.50 · Key Contributors & Ideological Currents | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

Several foreigners made India their homeland and participated in various movements. Analyze their role in the Indian struggle for freedom.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.51 · Key Contributors & Ideological Currents | UPSC 2017 | **10 Marks**

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?

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.52 · Key Contributors & Ideological Currents | UPSC 2017 | **15 Marks**

Highlight the importance of the new objectives that got added to the vision of Indian independence since twenties of the last century.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.53 · Key Contributors & Ideological Currents | UPSC 2016 | **12.5 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____



Q.54 · Major Movements & Phases of Freedom Struggle | UPSC 2015 | **12.5 Marks**

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.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.55 · Major Movements & Phases of Freedom Struggle	UPSC 2019	15 Marks

Many voices had strengthened and enriched the nationalist movement during the Gandhian phase. Elaborate.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.56 · Major Movements & Phases of Freedom Struggle | UPSC 2021 | **15 Marks**

Bring out the constructive programmes of Mahatma Gandhi during Non-Cooperation Movement and Civil Disobedience Movement.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.57 · Major Movements & Phases of Freedom Struggle	UPSC 2019	15 Marks

Assess the role of British imperial power in complicating the process of transfer of power during the 1940s.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____



Q.58 · Major Movements & Phases of Freedom Struggle | UPSC 2019 | **10 Marks**

Examine the linkages between 19th century 'Indian Renaissance' and the emergence of national identity.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.59 · Major Movements & Phases of Freedom Struggle	UPSC 2024	10 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



4. Post-Independence — Consolidation & Reorganisation

PYQs 2013 – 2024

Q.60 · Nation-Building: Policies, Leaders & Movements	UPSC 2014	10 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.61 · Nation-Building: Policies, Leaders & Movements	UPSC 2013	10 Marks

Critically discuss the objectives of Bhoodan and Gramdan movements initiated by Acharya Vinoba Bhave and their success.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.62 · Nation-Building: Policies, Leaders & Movements | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

Discuss the contribution of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to pre- and post-independent India.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.63 · Nation-Building: Policies, Leaders & Movements | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

Write a critical note on the evolution and significance of the slogan "Jai Jawan Jai Kisan".

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



Q.64 · States Reorganisation & Federal Integration | UPSC 2021 | **10 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



Q.65 · States Reorganisation & Federal Integration | UPSC 2018 | **15 Marks**

Discuss whether formation of new states in recent times is beneficial or not for the economy of India.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.66 · States Reorganisation & Federal Integration	UPSC 2016	12.5 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.67 · States Reorganisation & Federal Integration | UPSC 2022 | **15 Marks**

The political and administrative reorganization of states and territories has been a continuous ongoing process since the mid-nineteenth century. Discuss with examples.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.68 · Wars, Diplomacy & Territorial Integrity | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

Analyze the circumstances that led to Tashkent Agreement in 1966. Discuss the highlights of the agreement.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.69 · Wars, Diplomacy & Territorial Integrity | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

Critically examine the compulsions which prompted India to play a decisive role in the emergence of Bangladesh.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____



5. History of the World — Industrial Revolution to Decolonization

PYQs 2013 – 2024

Q.70 · American & French Revolutions	UPSC 2013	10 Marks

American Revolution was an economic revolt against mercantilism. Substantiate.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.71 · American & French Revolutions	UPSC 2019	15 Marks

Explain how the foundations of the modern world were laid by the American and French revolution. (250 words)

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.72 · Anti-Colonial Movements & Decolonization | UPSC 2013 | **10 Marks**

Africa was chopped into states artificially created by accident of European competition. Analyse.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.73 · Anti-Colonial Movements & Decolonization | UPSC 2016 | **12.5 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.74 · Anti-Colonial Movements & Decolonization | UPSC 2017 | **10 Marks**

What problems were germane to the decolonization process of Malay Peninsula?

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.75 · Anti-Colonial Movements & Decolonization | UPSC 2014 | **10 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.76 · Anti-Colonial Movements & Decolonization | UPSC 2014 | **10 Marks**

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?

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.77 · Anti-Colonial Movements & Decolonization	UPSC 2018	15 Marks

Why was indentured labour taken by the British from India to other colonies? Have they been able to preserve their cultural identity over there?

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.78 · Industrial Revolution & Technological Change | UPSC 2024 | **15 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.79 · Industrial Revolution & Technological Change	UPSC 2013	10 Marks

Latecomer Industrial revolution in Japan involved certain factors that were markedly different from what the west had experienced.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.80 · Industrial Revolution & Technological Change	UPSC 2015	12.5 Marks

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?

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____

Q.81 · Industrial Revolution & Technological Change | UPSC 2023 | **10 Marks**

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.82 · World Wars, Great Depression & Totalitarianism	UPSC 2013	10 Marks

What policy instruments were deployed to contain the great economic depression?

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 10 Remarks: _____

Q.83 · World Wars, Great Depression & Totalitarianism | UPSC 2021 | **15 Marks**

> "There arose a serious challenge to the Democratic State System between the two World Wars." Evaluate the statement.

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____

Q.84 · World Wars, Great Depression & Totalitarianism	UPSC 2024	15 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 15 Remarks: _____



Q.85 · World Wars, Great Depression & Totalitarianism	UPSC 2015	12.5 Marks

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

Date: _____ Score: _____ / 12.5 Remarks: _____