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UPSC Mains 2018 Essay

Year-wise PYQ pack · WRAP model answers with canonical links

Official UPSC stems in exam order. Each live answer sits on one WRAP URL; this PDF is the year pack, not a second copy of the article. Open the link under a question for the full page.

<https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains/essay/2018/>

Q1 · 125 marks

Alternative technologies for a climate change resilient India.

Essay · 2018 · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with a late monsoon and a pump. Stand:** usable, mendable, public.
- **Headings:** farm, water/energy, city, counter.

Peg a solar/irrigation scheme, not a brochure. Close on repair.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A farmer in Bundelkhand keeps a diesel pump and a rumour of solar. The monsoon is late again. 'Alternative technology' is not a pavilion in Delhi. It is whether the field drinks next week without breaking the household.

One stand

- **Climate-resilient means a buffer:** seed, water, power, a house that does not wash away. Alternative means a path that is not only more coal. Write use, repair, a public grid.

Heading map

What the line is asking

- **Alternative:** solar, a drip, a millet, a cooler roof - not only a new coal plant.
- **Climate change resilient India:** heat, flood, a failed monsoon, a coast.
- **Technology as a social object:** who owns it, who mends it.

Farm

- Seed, a weather SMS, a solar pump that is not a new debt trap.
- Crop insurance as a cousin of technology - a file that pays.

Water / energy

- Micro-irrigation, a recharge well, a rooftop that is actually net-metered.

- **Storage:** the missing brick in 'renewable India'.

Coast / city

- A mangrove, a drainage that was not concreted shut, a heat-action plan.

The counter

A solar panel on a poor roof with a loan is not resilience; it is a new EMI. And 'traditional' is not always kind (a floodplain hut). Technology without a right to repair and a public science is a catalogue.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** one machine the last person can mend. Expand - this is only the map.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/essay/2018/alternative-technologies-for-a-climate-change-resilient-india/>

Q2 · 125 marks

A good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge.

Essay · 2018 · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with a fee and a fever. Stand:** two lamps.
- **Headings:** family/school, science, state, counter.

Earn one philosopher once. Peg a vaccine or ASER.

Close on a practiced pair.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A parent pays a coaching bill and misses the child's fever. Love was the fee. Knowledge of the body was not. A good life, the line says, is inspired by one and guided by the other. The exam wants both lamps lit.

One stand

- **Love:** attachment, care, a widened we. Knowledge: a method, a school, a science that can say no. Write against both the sentiment poster and the clever cynic.

Heading map

What the line is asking

- **Inspired by love:** why we bother - a child, a river, a stranger in a queue.
- **Guided by knowledge:** how we bother - evidence, a craft, a limit.
- **Good life:** eudaimonia as a cousin, then India.

Family / school

- Care without a book is still care. A book without care is a rank.

Science / public

- A vaccine is love organised by knowledge.
- A rumour in a pandemic is love of 'our people' without a lab.

State

- Welfare that knows the last person (a list that is true). Knowledge as a census, love as a right.

The counter

Knowledge has run camps and famines. Love has covered a crime in the family. The line is a tension, not a slogan. And the poor are owed knowledge as a public good, not only love as charity.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** keep both lamps. Expand - this is only the map.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/essay/2018/a-good-life-is-one-inspired-by-love-and-guided-by-knowledge/>

Q3 · 125 marks

Poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere.

Essay · 2018 · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with a wall and a fever. Stand:** prosperity leaks without a floor.
- **Headings:** city, nation, world, counter.

Peg SDG / a finance commission. Close on a drain, not a gala.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A gated colony hires a guard from a basti that has no drain. The fever comes over the wall anyway. Prosperity that refuses the basti is already leaking. The topic is that threat: poverty anywhere, prosperity everywhere.

One stand

- **Not a sermon that the rich must feel sad. A material claim:** labour, demand, epidemic, legitimacy. Write SDG and **Art. 38** without a brochure.

Heading map

What the line is asking

- **Poverty:** capability, a wage, a stigma - not only a rupee line.
- **Prosperity:** health, a street that works, a firm that can hire.
- **Anywhere / everywhere:** the spillover.

City

- A slum next to a mall. TB, a flood, a vote.

Nation

- A lagging district that sends labour and takes back a crisis.
- Tax, a GST compensation, a finance commission as the plumbing of 'everywhere'.

World

- A pandemic, a refugee, a cheap good made in a fire-trap.

The counter

'Everywhere' can become a moral licence to lecture the poor on grit. **Ambedkar**: a floor first. And some prosperity is extractive; sharing the loot is not the same as ending the loot.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** lower the wall, raise the drain. Expand - this is only the map.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/essay/2018/poverty-anywhere-is-a-threat-to-prosperity-everywhere/>

Q4 · 125 marks

Management of Indian border disputes - a complex task.

Essay · 2018 · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with a river and a ridgeline. Stand:** manage, don't slogan.
- **Headings:** land/people, neighbours, sea, counter.

Peg one protocol or a border haat. Close on patience plus a red line.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A river changes course and a village wakes in another file. A patrol walks a ridgeline that maps disagree on. Border management is not a parade. It is a clerk, a soldier, a trader, a family with papers in two names.

One stand

- **Complex:** colonial lines, a glacier, a demographic, a nuclear neighbour, a federal state on the rim. Write the mix. Keep the counter: complexity is not an excuse for drift.

Heading map

What the line is asking

- **Management:** patrol, a talk, a trade, a rehabilitation, a map.
- **Disputes:** land, water, a people, a narrative.
- Not only two neighbours.

Land / people

- LAC, LoC, a fencing, an enclave history.
- Citizenship, a refugee, a border haat.

Neighbours

- **China:** a protocol and a clash. Pakistan: terror and a backchannel.
- **Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar:** the quieter files.

Sea / internal

- A maritime boundary, a fisherman in a jail.
- Insurgency as a border that runs through a district.

The counter

'Complex' can become a career of delay. A red line (no terror export, no silent salami) still has to be held. And the border person is not a pawn in a TV map.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** manage the file, hold the line, see the village. Expand - this is only the map.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/essay/2018/management-of-indian-border-disputes-a-complex-task/>

Q5 · 125 marks

Customary morality cannot be a guide to modern life.

Essay · 2018 · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with a panchayat marriage. Stand:** custom is weather; Constitution is the compass.
- **Headings:** gender, caste, speech, counter.

Earn **Ambedkar** once in each half. Peg **Art. 17** / 21.

Close on a test, not a sneer.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A panchayat 'settles' a marriage the court would not. The village calls it morality. The girl calls it a cage. Customary morality cannot be a guide to modern life - the line is a warning, not a joke about grandparents.

One stand

- **Custom:** habit with a sacred coat. Modern life: contract, a vote, a science, a woman who can leave. Guide: what we may justly enforce. Write **Ambedkar** in every section.

Heading map

What the line is asking

- **Customary morality:** honour, a purity rule, a feast, a silence.
- **Cannot be a guide:** it fails the stranger, the daughter, the 'outcaste'.
- **Modern life:** cities, a phone, a labour market, a Constitution.

Family / gender

- Khap, a dowry, a widow's dress. Custom as a law without a gazette.

Caste

- A well, a temple, a job. **Art. 17** vs a custom that never read it.

Speech / science

- A book banned by 'sentiment'. A vaccine refused as impurity.

The counter

Custom is also a language, a festival, a care of the old. Burning all custom is another fundamentalism. The guide is a test: does it widen the last person? If yes, keep. If it needs a beating to survive, it is not a guide.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** keep the song, drop the cage. Expand - this is only the map.

Open WRAP page —

<https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/essay/2018/customary-morality-cannot-be-a-guide-to-modern-life/>

Q6 · 125 marks

'The past' is a permanent dimension of human consciousness and values.

Essay · 2018 · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with a surname and a silence. Stand:** host the past; do not worship it.
- **Headings:** self, society, republic, counter.

Earn **Ambedkar** once. Peg a textbook or a museum.

Close on audit.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A child inherits a surname, a partition story, a recipe, a silence. The past is already in the house. The topic is that permanence: consciousness and values still drink from a well we did not dig.

One stand

- **Permanent dimension:** memory, a trauma, a Sanskrit line, a factory Act. Values: we choose which past to honour. Write against both amnesia and a civilisational police.

Heading map

What the line is asking

- **Past:** archive, a ruin, a family tale, a colonial file.
- **Consciousness:** how we see; a default story.
- **Values:** what we praise in that story.

Self

- A name, a mother tongue, a scar. Therapy as a modern way of hosting the past.

Society

- Caste as a past that walks. A festival as a past that feeds.

Republic

- The Constitution as a chosen past (**Ambedkar**, a freedom struggle) against another past (a varna police).
- Museums, a textbook war.

The counter

- **If the past is permanent, is reform a lie? No:** the dimension stays; the contents can be judged. And some 'pasts' are inventions of last Tuesday. A usable past is one that can sit with **Art. 14**.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** inherit, then audit. Expand - this is only the map.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/essay/2018/the-past-is-a-permanent-dimension-of-human-consciousness-and-values/>

WRAP Exams

Q7 · 125 marks

A people that values its privileges above its principles loses both.

Essay · 2018 · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with a red light and a queue. Stand:** perk without rule loses both.
- **Headings:** office, caste, citizen, counter.

Earn **Ambedkar** once. Peg **Art. 14**. Close on a surrendered ease.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A car with a red light jumps a queue that a Constitution made equal. The light is a privilege. The queue was a principle. When the light is the only politics, both the queue and, later, the light, go. The topic is that bargain.

One stand

- **Privilege:** a quota of ease - a farm loan waived for the loud, a bungalow, a caste exemption from a rule. Principle: a rule that binds the loud too. Write from the top.

Heading map

What the line is asking

- **Privileges:** ease, a name, a vehicle, a 'contact'.
- **Principles:** equality, a merit that is fair, a tax that is paid.
- **Loses both:** legitimacy first; then the perk in a crash.

Elite / office

- A VIP culture. A regulator captured. A university seat as a family heirloom.

Caste / gender

- **A privilege of birth that calls itself culture. Principle:** **Art. 15-17**.

Citizen

- A subsidy I love more than a working bus. Principle as a public good I underfund.

The counter

The poor's 'privilege' of a ration is not the same as a red light. Do not preach principle to a hungry queue. **Ambedkar**: smash the unearned perk at the top. And some principles (a free press) look like privileges to a strongman.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** drop one perk that breaks a queue. Expand - this is only the map.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/essay/2018/a-people-that-values-its-privileges-above-its-principles-loses-both/>

Q8 · 125 marks

Reality does not conform to the ideal, but confirms it.

Essay · 2018 · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with a painted wall and two meal lines. Stand:** ideals are tests, not posters.
- **Headings:** republic, science, self, counter.

Peg a scheme that paid vs a slogan. Close on confirmation as practice.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A school wall paints 'equality'. The mid-day meal still has two lines. Reality did not copy the paint. Yet a scholarship that actually arrives confirms the ideal in a passbook. The topic is that hard pair: not conformity, confirmation.

One stand

- **Not conform:** the world is stubborn. Confirm: when we act, the ideal either pays rent in a life or it was a poster. Write **Hegel** lightly; write a PHC.

Heading map

What the line is asking

- **Reality:** a drought, a caste, a budget.
- **Ideal:** fraternity, a net-zero, a vow of truth.
- **Confirms:** a working tap, a court that bites, a vaccine.

Republic

- Preamble vs a riot. Confirmation is a conviction, a rebuilt house, a list that includes the last name.

Science

- A hypothesis does not conform to nature; nature confirms or kills it.

Self

- A diet, a lie dropped. The body confirms.

The counter

'Confirmation' can become 'whatever happened was the ideal' - a theodicy of the winner. The line is not that might is right. It is that an ideal unused is unconfirmed. And some ideals (dignity) judge reality even when reality wins the week.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** try the ideal in a file, then read the passbook. Expand - this is only the map.

Open WRAP page —

<https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/essay/2018/reality-does-not-conform-to-the-ideal-but-confirms-it/>

Compiled answer key

Last pages of this pack. Each question links to the WRAP model answer on wrapexams.com.

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Q1 125 marks	Q2 125 marks	Q3 125 marks	Q4 125 marks
Q5 125 marks	Q6 125 marks	Q7 125 marks	Q8 125 marks

Question-wise key

Q1 · 125 marks Solution

Q2 · 125 marks Solution

Q3 · 125 marks Solution

Q4 · 125 marks Solution

Q5 · 125 marks Solution

Q6 · 125 marks Solution

Q7 · 125 marks Solution

Q8 · 125 marks Solution

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