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In Paper 2, a passage or two passages will be given and you are asked to answer a few questions based on the passage. This section aims at testing your ability to grasp and assimilate ideas when you read a passage and your expressiveness of what you have grasped. The questions are aimed at testing your vocabulary and command of the language. The last question (the Application Question) will require the student to synthesise information and respond to concepts or ideas in the passage or passages.

The questions in the General Paper do not follow any prescribed syllabus, and are intended to assess your maturity of thought, your awareness of the issues faced by the world and your country, your ability to discuss these issues and come to definite conclusions and your comprehension skills and ability to express your answer with accuracy and clarity.

### 3. Paper - 1

#### **ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM THE PAPER.**

***Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.***

1. To what extent is a stable family vital for a successful society?
2. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of being educated abroad.
3. Is it ever right for one country to become involved in the internal affairs of another?
4. "Films which have the greatest appeal are usually those which have the least value". By reference to specific examples, consider how far this is a fair assessment.
5. Consider the arguments for and against the use of the death penalty in a modern society.
6. "In today's world, power is determined by economic success, not military might". Discuss.
7. How far can we satisfy the worldwide demand for food and still protect the environment?
8. Compare the effectiveness of any two of the following as a means of news coverage: the radio, television, newspapers.

1. Freedom
2. Population
3. Poverty
4. Effects of Scientific Discoveries
5. Role of Scientific Discovery
6. Democracy
7. Natural Resources of a Country
8. Tradition
9. Writers and their Themes
10. Importance of History
11. Mass Media
12. The Use of Leisure
13. University education
14. Sources of Energy
15. Language
16. Education
17. War and Peace
18. International organisations
19. Tourism
20. Balance of Nature
21. Wealth of the Sea
22. Influence of Climate
23. Music
24. Mass production
25. Photography

The General paper requires a student to read widely as this course deals with an array of topics. The student in his discussion of the topic of his choice will be able to draw from his knowledge gained by reading the topics discussed in this book. TIME, NEWSWEEK, THE ECONOMIST, SCIENCE DIGEST AND OMEGA are some of the magazines that the student should read if they are made available. He may borrow copies, old or new, from friends and read them at leisure. In any case, while studying this course or reading magazines and books, the student is strongly advised to keep a notebook in which he may jot down the new words and phrases he comes across. Frequent reference to this book will have the effect of fixing these words in his active vocabulary. The student is advised to read those books that interest him. If the main points are noted down while reading, he may refer to them later on to refresh his memory.

It is important to write the essay according to a plan or an outline. With a plan the student must know where he is going and in what direction he intends to proceed. It is a great mistake to think that ideas will come and will arrange themselves as the essay proceeds. The question set will stimulate thinking

If the question is about the dangers of soil erosion, the following introduction may be suitable:

*Soil erosion in nature, though a beneficial process, is accelerated by human mismanagement. Nature sets the balance between denudation and soil formation. Man easily disturbs the balance by deforestation and the destruction of natural vegetation. This man-accelerated denudation is what is known as soil erosion.*

The main body of the essay is the easiest part to write, if the student has prepared the outline. After the difficulties of the opening sentence have been overcome, the writer is on the open road and, if his ideas have been arranged, he should have little difficulty in pressing forward. It is in the middle portion, or body of the essay, that the main facts of the subject are set out and the argument is developed.

The essay should be well rounded off. There is always the danger of leaving the subject hanging in the air as if the subject was left unfinished. The conclusion should give the impression that it is the end, and that, at least for the time being, all has been said that can be said. It must have an air of finality, and to secure this the wording and the phrasing of the last sentence should be considered carefully. All the great essayists make not only fine beginnings, but good endings too. The essay on the importance of history can be concluded as follows:

*The importance of history cannot be over-emphasised. The recent trend is to treat history, a subject referred to in the past as the parent of all subjects, as a dull catalogue of events. Its humanizing influence is not disputed. It is a record of man's struggles, his successes and failures and his aspirations and their fulfilment. It traces the progress of man and his civilization. The danger, if it is extirpated from the curriculum, will be grave.*

The essay on soil erosion which should explain the dangers of erosion and the measures to be taken to halt the process may be concluded thus:

*Soil erosion is not an alarmist's fear. It is very real and a threat to mankind. We who know the causes and the methods of prevention must fight unremittingly if the future generations are to be fed. The alternative is starvation, the price that man has to pay for interfering with the balance of nature.*

- (h) Quotations, proverbs and illustrations used should be brief and direct.
- (i) Sequence of tenses should be maintained.
- (j) See that your expression is grammatical and idiomatic.
- (k) Remember what Swift has said: "Proper words in proper places make the true definition of style."

## **SOME DON'TS**

- (a) Do not write a very lengthy introduction or conclusion.
- (b) Do not lose sight of the subject matter of the essay.
- (c) Do not use words and phrases you are not sure of.
- (d) Do not repeat the same idea in the same way.
- (e) Do not refer to a fact or an event unless you are sure of it.
- (f) Though the length of the essay is prescribed by the examiner, you should not hesitate to write a few words more or less. What is important is your sincere attempt to discuss the topic or answer the question and give completeness to your piece of writing.
- (g) Do not use more words than necessary to express an idea. In particular, do not use superfluous adjectives and adverbs and long-winded expressions.
- (h) Avoid the use of jargon and slang and unfamiliar words.