



# MASTERING ESSAY & ANSWER WRITING

for UPSC Civil Services  
IAS/ IPS & State PSC Main Exam

**13**  
New  
Chapters  
Added in  
this Edition

- How to Structure the 6 Types of Essays
- Writing Philosophical Essays
- How to Write answers of Current Affairs - 4 Sample Essays
- Illustrations and Examples to facilitate understanding
- Common Mistakes and tips to avoid them
- Tips & Ideas to improve English Writing Skills
- Quotations, Anecdotes, Stories and Poems to make your Essay Stand out

**SAMPLE**

4 Sample Essays

13 Mind Maps

**Dr. Awdhesh Singh**

Corporate  
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## DISHA PUBLICATION

45, 2nd Floor, Maharishi Dayanand Marg, Corner  
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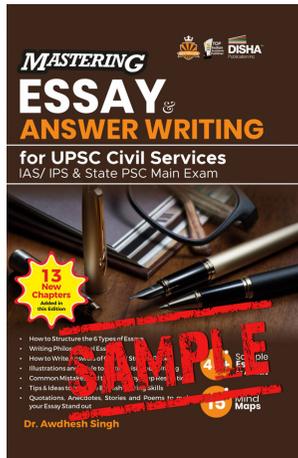
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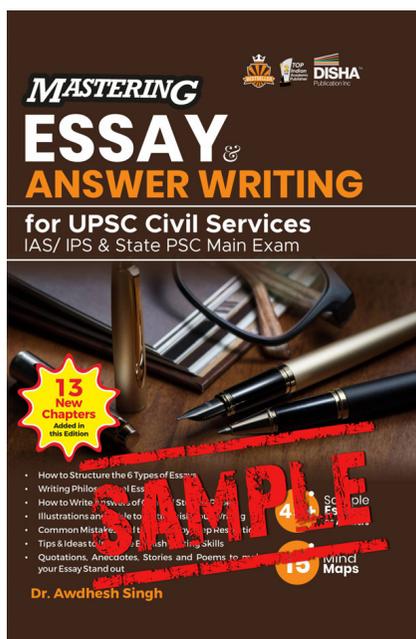
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# Section Two



## **PREPARATION FOR ESSAY PAPER**



*Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work.*

DISHA™  
Publication Inc

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*~ Steven King*

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## STEPS OF ESSAY WRITING

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**“I’m not a very good writer, but I’m an excellent rewriter.”**

**– James Michener**

Execution is always the most critical step in any mission. For example, Sportspeople prepare for several years before displaying their skill in a game of only a few minutes. In the same way, an examination displays the result of all your years of preparations.

You can’t develop the skill of writing simply by reading a book or watching a video lesson. Instead, you have to get into action to build writing skills. This chapter discusses the steps to help you write great essays that can fetch you high scores in the competitive examination.

### **I. SELECTION OF ESSAY**

In the UPSC Mains examination, the essay paper consists of two sections having four essays each. You have to write one essay from each section. Selecting the right topic is thus the first crucial step for writing an essay, and choosing the right topic itself can add 10-20% of your marks.

Selecting one topic from the four given topics implies that you have to eliminate three topics from each section. The following rules can help you select the right essays:

#### ***Rules for the selection of an Essay***

##### ***(i) Understanding the Topic***

Don’t choose a topic which you don’t understand properly. For example, the topics like ‘Reality does not conform to the ideal, but confirms it’ (CSE 2018), or ‘Wisdom finds truth’ (CSE 2019) are too philosophical, and it is not easy to write essays on such topics.

Therefore, if you write an essay without understanding the topic, you may digress and get poor marks.

However, if by chance, you have already read or practised such an unconventional essay topic earlier, you must choose such a topic to make a mark since very few candidates would be choosing this topic.

### ***(ii) Knowledge of the Topic***

You can't write good essays on some topics unless you have accurate knowledge of the subject. For example, if you wish to write an essay on the topic 'Rise of Artificial Intelligence: the threat of jobless future or better job opportunities through reskilling and upskilling' (CSE 2019); you can't do justice to the essay unless you possess appropriate knowledge on Artificial Intelligence (AI). You must know how AI affects jobs worldwide and how to re-skill and up-skill to create jobs in this area.

Therefore, you must attempt an essay on this topic only if you are a domain expert or have studied the subject area well. When the essay topic pertains to your area of expertise, you must prefer such an essay since you stand an excellent chance of outscoring others by writing on a specialised topic.

### ***(iii) Availability of Material***

Most essay topics in CSE come from the syllabus of the General Studies (GS) papers. Hence, you usually have the requisite knowledge of the subject, which can be helpful to write answers in 150-250 words. However, you often don't have sufficient material like data, anecdotes, quotes, stories, and information to write a 1000-1200 words essay.

Hence, while choosing a topic for an essay, assess how much ready material you have on the given topic. You must select an essay where you already possess enough material.

## **2. DISSECTING THE TOPIC**

Often, an essay or a question covers multiple areas. Therefore, dissecting the topic into different parts is essential to plan the essay.

For example, the essay '**A good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge**' has three components:

- \* What is a good life?
- \* How love inspires people to have a good life?
- \* How does knowledge guide people to have a good life?

You must include all three dimensions in your essay. The topic of the essay should be crystal clear in your mind before you write your first word on paper.

### **3. THESIS AND ANTITHESIS**

We must develop the thesis statement for writing an essay. The thesis statement informs the reader of the author's point of view or stand, and it should be specific and address one main idea. Furthermore, it must incorporate the question(s) you intend to answer in the essay.

We must also develop the antithesis on debatable issues, the opposite of the thesis, and provide the counter-view. Antithesis is vital to offer a 360-degree view of the issue. Here you act as devil's advocate to argue the antithesis. However, your intention is not to support the antithesis. Instead, you wish to prove the weakness of antithesis to strengthen the thesis. A thesis is thus a prelude of conclusion and must be written keeping the conclusion in mind. We shall learn deeply about the thesis in a later chapter.

### **4. BRAINSTORMING**

Brainstorming is a standard method in management and administration to generate new ideas and solutions. It is often done in groups wherein the participants are encouraged to think aloud and give their suggestions based on whatever thoughts come to their minds.

Brainstorming is an essential step of essay writing too. However, the difference here is that all the ideas come from the mind of a single individual, the writer, who jots them down on paper and then finally uses those for writing answers or essays. Considering the importance of

brainstorming for essay writing, we shall discuss this topic in detail in the next chapter.

### **5. RESEARCH AND RECALL**

After brainstorming, recall the information and knowledge from your memory about the brainstorming ideas. If you find that you have enough material on the essay topic, research to find the relevant information, quotations and data about the thesis and antithesis. After that, incorporate the material appropriately into the structure of the essay.

### **6. PRIORITIZE AND REORDER**

You have the limitation of time and words for writing your essays. If you have lots of material available for the essay, you must prioritise the ideas generated during brainstorming and drop the irrelevant or less important ideas. After that, you must reorder the ideas for the flow and logical consistency.

### **7. STRUCTURE OF THE ESSAY**

An essay is divided into three broad parts, i.e. 'Introduction', 'Body' and 'Conclusion', further sub-divided into paragraphs. There is no hard and fast rule about the length of a paragraph. Each paragraph must have at least one cohesive idea. It should neither be too short nor too long. Don't present the entire thought in a single or 2-3 long paragraphs, nor go for 15-20 shorter ones.

It would help if you made your paragraphs of optimum length to make it easier for the examiner to navigate the entire text. For example, it is reasonable to use 10-15 paragraphs in an essay of 1000-1200 words.

We shall discuss all three parts of the structure of an essay in the forthcoming chapters.

### **8. DEVELOP FLOW IN THE ESSAY**

The flow of an essay means the way an article holds together and moves from point to point. It is like shifting the gears of a car. The transition should be smooth and not abrupt. Flow ensures cohesion and synergy of

facts, data, and information, making the essay lucid and improving the reading experience.

We shall discuss flow in a separate chapter later in this book.

## **9. REVISE**

Revision involves rearranging, adding, or removing paragraphs, sentences, or words. Revision can be done after a draft is complete or during the composing process. The purpose of revision are as follows,:

- ★ Identify the effectiveness of thesis and antithesis
- ★ Reconsider the structure and revise it if needed
- ★ Identify the weaknesses of your essay
- ★ Reconsider logic, reasoning and evidence
- ★ Incorporate appropriate evidence to make your arguments stronger
- ★ Clarify unclear positions
- ★ Assess the flow in the essay
- ★ Ensure that the essay serves its purpose

After considering the above factors, you must revise and rewrite the essay while practising at home. The regular revision will continuously improve the quality of your writing.

## **10. EDIT AND PROOFREAD**

Editing means looking into each sentence carefully and ensuring that it's well designed and serves its purpose. Proofreading involves checking the spelling and grammatical mistakes and correcting it. We can learn about our common mistakes by editing and proofreading our drafts while practising essays or answer writing at home and avoid them in the examination hall.

In the examination, editing can help us correct the mistakes we tend to make when we are in the flow of writing.

## Section Three



**MASTER  
WRITING  
SKILLS**



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*A writer is working when he's staring  
out of the window*

**DISHA**  
Publication Inc. ~ *Burton Rascoe*

## BEST PRACTICES FOR ANSWER WRITING

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**“A professional writer is an amateur who didn’t quit.”**

**– Richard Bach**

The UPSC Civil Services Examination strives to select the best candidates for top government positions in India at the Central and State levels. Hence, in his writings, a civil service aspirant must display the right aptitude, worthy of a civil servant. Following certain practices can help you write answers and essays to convince the examiner that you possess the desired qualities of a good civil servant.

According to the UPSC Mains syllabus, “The questions are likely to test the candidate’s basic understanding of all relevant issues, and ability to analyze, and take a view on conflicting socio-economic goals, objectives and demands”. The syllabus for the essay paper further provides, “Candidates may be required to write essays on multiple topics. They will be expected to arrange their ideas in an orderly fashion and write concisely. Credit will be given for effective and exact expression”.

This chapter shall discuss the best practices for writing essays and answers to the General Studies papers. However, the tips shall also be helpful for the Personality Test (interview).

### **I. AVOIDANCE OF EXTREME VIEWS**

Some issues like reservation, Farm laws, Citizen Amendment Act (CAA) are controversial since many people support these issues, while many oppose them vehemently. Most of us have extreme views about these political, religious, social and economic issues. For example, we either support reservation passionately or strongly oppose it. Once we form a view, we gather more material to support our opinions and ignore alternative views.

Hence, over some time, we become biased as our thoughts get hardened. We often fail to realize that people may have the opposite view on the same issue, which may also be valid.

A good civil servant must take a holistic view, and analyse an issue from all sides. Hence, while writing your answers or essays, you must avoid expressing extreme opinions either in favour or against controversial topics and present a balanced view consistent with the government policy and constitutional values.

However, there should be no compromise on issues like honesty and integrity, truthfulness, and faithfulness. You must take an extreme position favouring ethical, moral, and legal principles in such matters.

## **2. BE DIPLOMATIC**

We learn diplomacy quite early in life. For example, when we are asked during our childhood whether we love one of our parents more than the other, we try to avoid answering the question since we know that one of them is bound to feel hurt irrespective of our answer. When forced to reply, we often say that we love both equally, though, in reality, we may love one parent more than the other. In the same way, parents also say that they love their children equally, though they too may have a favourite. Naturally, we like some people more than others, but sometimes; it may not be wise to express it openly.

Hence, while writing answers on many issues, particularly controversial topics, it is better to be diplomatic rather than write what you feel. Diplomacy is sometimes the best way to answer or avoid answering a question. The author Bo Bennett explains, “Diplomacy is more than saying or doing the right things at the right time. It is to avoid, saying or doing the wrong things at any time”.

Let us understand how to give diplomatic answers in some real-life situations. For this purpose, we take an example of a candidate appearing for a job interview.

**Question: Do you use Facebook at work?**

If you have and it's against the organisation's policy, don't add to the problem. If it is allowed, say you restrict your use of social media only during the breaks.

**Question: Don't you feel you might be over-qualified or too experienced?**

Discuss how your experience will benefit the organisation. Let them know that you have a sincere interest in the role, and you will find the work fulfilling.

**Question: What are your limitations?**

Respond with a strength that, if over-done, can get in your way and become a weakness. For example, you may say that you are pretty compassionate, and sometimes people misuse your kindness.

**Question: Tell me something about yourself.**

This question is not to describe yourself, but it wishes to know your suitability for the job. Hence, it would help to let the interviewer know about your qualities concerning the job.

**Question: What are your strengths and weaknesses?**

You must avoid elaborating on your weaknesses. The key is to focus on your strengths and describe a weakness briefly, which is not very relevant to the job you are applying for or one that can be viewed as strength. For example, being a workaholic can be considered strength.

**3. POLITICAL CORRECTNESS**

Civil services aspirants need to be politically correct while writing their answers. Being politically correct means avoiding language or behaviour that any particular person or group might find unkind or offensive. In addition, you must never stereotype or generalize any class of people. Even if something happens most of the time, don't universalize for all people.

For example, many people may believe that certain professions like the police or army may not be suitable for women. They may have their reasons for it. However, making such a statement would be politically incorrect since it is against gender equality and can offend women. In the same way, many people believe that poor or African Americans may be more inclined to commit blue-collar crimes. They may even produce data to support their claims.

Irrespective of your personal beliefs, you must avoid making such statements as a prospective public servant. But, unfortunately, there were many instances when the top leaders courted controversies due to their politically incorrect opinions. Some prominent examples are as follows.

- ★ In 2008, Sheila Dikshit, the former Chief Minister of Delhi, had commented on women venturing out late. “One should not be adventurous being a woman.”
- ★ In 2012, the West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee blamed the rising incidence of rapes on “men and women interacting more freely with each other.” She went on to say, “Earlier, if men and women would hold hands, they would get caught by parents and reprimanded. But now, everything is so open. It’s like an open market with open options.”
- ★ In 2014, Mulayam Singh Yadav, the former CM of Uttar Pradesh, made a statement during an election rally. “Boys make mistakes. They should not be hanged for this.”
- ★ In 2021, Karnataka Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar said, “Today, I am sorry to say this; lots of modern women in India want to stay single. Even if they get married, they don’t want to give birth. They want surrogacy. So there is a paradigm shift in our thinking, which is not good.”

You must avoid making such politically incorrect statements that can spoil your impression and chances of success in the UPSC.

#### **4. GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE**

An ordinary citizen of a country, particularly in a democracy, is rarely happy with their government. Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill once said, “The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter”.

However, when aspiring to become a civil servant, you must think like a civil servant and not as a journalist or an ordinary person on the street. So, instead of using intuition, personal experiences, and biases, learn to use facts, data and reasoning to conclude. Learn to appreciate the government’s perspective rather than finding fault in all government policies.

The government’s job is not easy since it has to take decisions knowing well that it can’t please everyone, and a section of people are likely to oppose the decision. Abraham Lincoln once said, “The true rule, in determining to embrace, or reject anything, is not whether it has any evil in it; but whether it has more evil than good. There are few things wholly evil or wholly good. Almost everything, especially of governmental policy, is an inseparable compound of the two; so that our best judgement of the preponderance between them is continually demanded.”

It is a fact that every social, political or economic issue has multiple perspectives, and every person or group views the issue from their perspective. Therefore, it is not surprising that almost every government decision is questioned by some citizens while supported by others. For example, many Indians oppose legislation like Citizen Amendment Act (CAA), but many vehemently defend it. When you go through the different opinions of experts in newspapers or watch TV debates on these issues, you can find sufficient reasons to justify both sides. Of course, you too may have your perspective on such controversial issues. Still, you must be extremely careful in taking an unconditional side during the civil services examination on such issues.

While you may discuss both pros and cons of a policy, you must finally support the view of the government giving due justifications. You can find the rationale from the press notes of the government or by visiting government websites.

It is also essential to understand that the government is not equivalent to the political party in power. So, for example, you may disagree with the political views of the BJP (the party in power in the Centre). Still, if the Parliament or State Legislature makes a law or the Government issues an order, you must respect it and abide by it.

You cannot be anti-establishment, if you plan to join the government establishment. Therefore, as a civil service aspirant, you must not criticize or condemn a government policy that has been passed by the Parliament or issued by the duly elected government in the Centre or State. The legality and constitutional validity of the law or policy can be done only by the Honourable Supreme Court of India. Hence, till such time the Court does not quash a government decision; it is a decision of the government which must be obeyed by the citizens, more so by the civil servants. However, you may discuss the pros and cons of any policy and give your suggestions to improve upon them without being aggressively critical. <sup>TM</sup>

### **5. FOUNDATIONAL VALUES OF CIVIL SERVANTS**

Civil servants must possess certain values to perform their jobs in a righteous manner. These values are often called the foundational values of the civil servants, which include integrity, impartiality, political neutrality, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance, compassion towards the weaker sections and courage of conviction. You learn about these values in the Ethics, Integrity and Aptitude (GS-4) paper.

Your writings must display these qualities in you. For example, you may vote for a political party and support its ideologies, but you must not reveal any political bias in your answers and maintain absolute neutrality. Furthermore, you must never give the impression that you are joining the civil services for the sake of power, perks and prestige. Instead, you must show your dedication to public service and display empathy and compassion towards the weaker sections of society, following the foundational values of a civil servant.

## **6. MULTIDIMENSIONAL OUTLOOK**

Civil services examination is genuinely multi-dimensional. Unlike other competitions like JEE, NEET or CAT, where you have to prepare only a few subjects, you have to prepare a wide variety of topics like science & technology, geography, history, polity, economics, current affairs, etc. in the UPSC. The examination syllabus is quite exhaustive as it selects the candidates for multiple civil services like IAS, IPS, IFS, IRS etc. which need different kinds of aptitudes. Even after the appointment, a civil servant might have to work in various ministries and departments, which may require a diversity of skills and application of a wide variety of knowledge.

Hence, civil servants must possess a multi-dimensional outlook of the issues. They must know the social, economic, political or psychological impact of a problem. For example, you can view the topics like CAA or NRC from different perspectives and provide a multi-dimensional analysis of each case.

## **7. OPTIMISM AND POSITIVITY**

No society is ideal, and it is easy to get cynical in a diverse society like India, where people have a wide range of aspirations. It is always easy to criticize, and as Dale Carnegie said, "Any fool can criticize, complain, and condemn—and most fools do. But it takes character and self-control to be understanding and forgiving."

As citizens of India, we have developed the habit of criticizing the government and its policies. However, as aspiring civil servants, we don't have the luxury to criticize the government; as we may soon be a part of it. A civil servant is there to solve problems and get the work done. For this reason, civil servant aspirants must display optimism and positivity in all their answers and essays. Instead of talking about the government's failures, they must speak about its achievements. Instead of talking about the weaknesses in the government, they must talk about the strengths; instead of talking about the problems, they must provide solutions.

It is important to remember that a civil servant is a problem solver and not a critic. He is the man on the spot who must give hope to the citizens

rather than disappoint them with his pessimistic views. A positive attitude is essential to demonstrate that you have the right aptitude for the job. Let's take an example:

Two salesmen were sent to an African country by a shoe manufacturing company to discover new markets to sell their company shoes.

The salesmen spent a couple of weeks there, then came back to report their findings to their manager.

The first salesman said, *'There is no market in that country. I did not see anyone wearing shoes there.'*

The second salesman said, *'There is a huge market in that country. I did not see anyone wearing shoes there.'*

In this story, both salesmen observed the same facts (no one was wearing shoes in the African country), but their conclusions are precisely the opposite as per their attitude. Therefore, it should not be difficult for you to understand which one would be chosen for the job and get faster promotions in his career.

## **8. DON'T BE EMOTIONAL**

An aspiring civil servant must be a rational thinker. Hence, you must write essays in an impersonal way without getting personal or emotional. It will help if you do not make a passionate appeal to the invoked feelings of the examiner or try to get sympathy. Instead, you must display rational thinking and objectivity in your writings.

## **9. AVOID USING A PERSONAL NOUN**

You must not give personal examples, experiences or anecdotes in your essay unless the essay demands explicitly. Accordingly, you must avoid using personal nouns (like I, we, or you) while writing an essay or answer unless they relate to your personal experiences in narrative types of essays. Likewise, we must avoid using individual judgemental words and instead refer to the evidence to support our views.

**Personal:** I think that milk is good for health.

**Better:** From examining the findings, it is evident that milk is good for health.

**Personal:** I believe that being a good listener makes a person a better leader.

**Better:** According to global studies, being a good listener makes a person a better leader.

**Personal:** I am sure that India will become the largest economy in the world by 2050.

**Better:** Some scholars argue that India will become the largest economy in the world by 2050.

## **10. PROVIDE SPECIFIC DETAILS**

Whenever possible, provide specific details of an event instead of a general statement. For example, when you write the sentence “Many Indians are vegetarians”, it is vague since it does not throw light on the proportion of the vegetarian population of India, which you wish to convey. So instead, you must write a better statement, “Forty per cent of Indians are vegetarians, which provides specific information.”

Similarly,

**Normal:** Many people came to the party.

**Better:** One hundred people came to the reception party of Ankit.

**Normal:** The practice of ‘sati’ in India was abolished many years ago.

**Better:** The practice of ‘sati’ in India was abolished in 1829.

## **11. LOGICAL ANALYSIS AND EVIDENCE**

You must discuss all sides of the issues in your answers and choose the right option based on reason and logic supported by evidence. So, for example, even if you are inclined to support the government policies, it should not appear biased. You must, therefore, present not only compelling

arguments to prove your point of view but also independent evidence or data to convince the reader.

You can use the following types of references to make your arguments more convincing.

- ★ In issues like corruption, human development, provide reference of national or international agencies.
- ★ In legal issues, refer to the specific provisions of laws, or the case laws of Higher Courts
- ★ In health issues, provide scientific studies from national or international organizations
- ★ In economic matters, provide the latest data, and relevant statistics from national or international financial agencies
- ★ In ethical and moral issues, quote the great philosophers and thinkers

It would be best to display your convincing power using reason, logic, and evidence in your write-ups to impress the examiner.

## **12. SIMPLICITY**

Some candidates try to impress the examiner by using complex words and jargon, often leading to spelling mistakes, long sentences with convoluted sense, and grammatical mistakes. However, the civil services examination is not a language skill test but your suitability to work as a good administrator. Moreover, as a civil servant, you have to deal with different segments of society; most of them are not even literate. Hence, you must have the ability to explain any concept in the most straightforward language, which everyone can understand.

Simplicity is indeed the ultimate sophistication. The power of simplicity in writing was best said by Albert Einstein, "If you can't explain it to a six-year-old, you don't understand it yourself." A good writer is one who, like a bee, can suck nectar from multiple flowers and then convert them into a product, honey, which can be consumed by everyone. Hence, it would help if you learned from different sources and knew the essence.

After that, you must present the matter in a simple language that everyone can appreciate and understand.

Hence, you must frame smaller sentences, use simpler words of English and present your ideas most simply. The examiner is impressed by good arguments presented in simple language, which displays a forthright attitude expected of a civil servant rather than an unsubstantial discourse packaged in flowery or complex language.

### **13. BEFITTING CONCLUSION**

The conclusion is the last but not the least part of an essay. Our brain makes an overall assessment based on the peak-end rule.

After the event is over, we remember the peak of the event and the end. You can enhance your peak by giving excellent references, anecdotes, stories etc. Finally, your conclusion must be impressive and befitting. It must provide a solution to the problem and give hope to the reader that you have a clear vision to solve complex issues of life. Therefore, you must try to conclude your answer with an impressive statement that summarizes your arguments and point of view and leaves a lasting impression on the reader. In an essay, ending with some quote, poem, or saying is a good practice.

## Section Four



# **PREPARATION OF GS PAPER**





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*~ Joseph Heller*

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## ILLUSTRATIONS AND TABLES

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**“No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader. No surprise in the writer, no surprise in the reader.”**

**Robert Frost**

Illustrations are valuable tools for explaining a complex concept in a simple way. It is wisely said, “A picture is worth a thousand words.” Sometimes, instead of words, we can convey complex ideas with a single image. In general, we write the answers and essays in paragraph format. However, sometimes we can use illustrations to make our writings more interesting and differentiate them from others in some situations. <sup>TM</sup>

The illustrations can be of different types-

- 1. Maps**
- 2. Chart**
- 3. Flow Charts**
- 4. Diagram**
- 5. Tables**

The benefits of using illustrations in your UPSC answers are as follows:

- ★ They break the monotony of writing and make your answer interesting
- ★ Diagrams can explain the concepts in lesser times and fewer words
- ★ Graphs that differentiate your answer from others enhance your answer quality.
- ★ Pictorial representation demonstrates a deeper understanding of the concept.

- ★ When running out of time, diagrams can help you depict your ideas quickly and fetch you decent marks.
- ★ Charts can present information in the most condensed form and explain the topic better
- ★ Maps can help you explain the events and issues more accurately and precisely.

Let us now discuss the different types of illustrations that can be used to write better answers and essays:

### I. MAPS

Maps can be used while answering the questions regarding geography and international affairs. Let's take a question

**Question: India has immense potential of solar energy though there are regional variations in its development. Elaborate. (GS1, 2020)**

In this case, we can draw a quick diagram of the potential solar energy as following dividing them into low, medium and high potential areas.

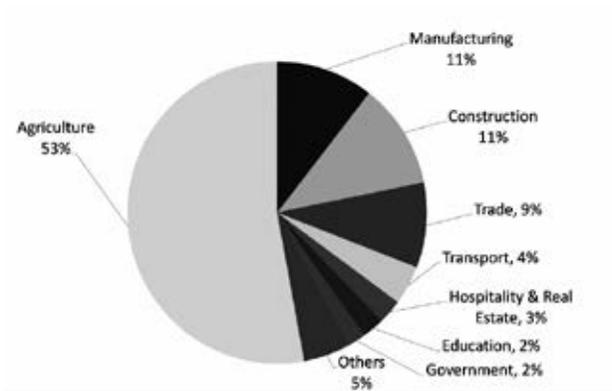


## Figure: India's Solar Resources

### 2. CHARTS

We can use various types of charts to present the information in a very compact form.

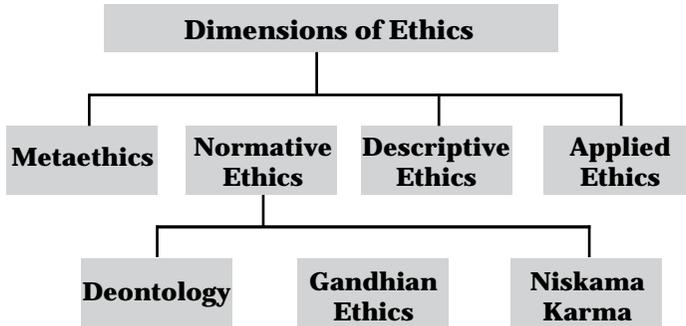
For example, we can use a pie chart to show the employment sector-wise. You don't have to mention all the sectors if you don't remember them. Instead, you can show the important sectors and put the rest in the misc categories.



**Figure: Employment by Sector (2009-10)**

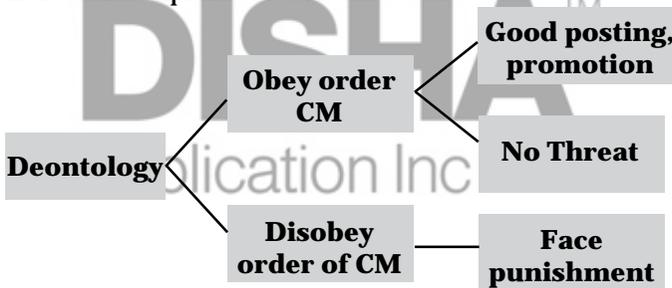
### 3. FLOW CHARTS

We can use different types of the chart to display certain types of information in a very crisp manner. For example, if you have been asked questions about the dimensions of ethics (GS-IV), it is best to make a **hierarchy chart** to explain.



**Figure: Dimension of Ethics**

We can also use flow charts to display the decision tree. For example, assume that in a GS-4 case study, a DM is asked by the CM to perform an illegal job. He was threatened with punishment if he didn't follow the order while promised rewards (good posting and promotion) if he followed the CM's order. Then, we can show the dilemma of the DM in the form of the **decision tree** and explain our answer.



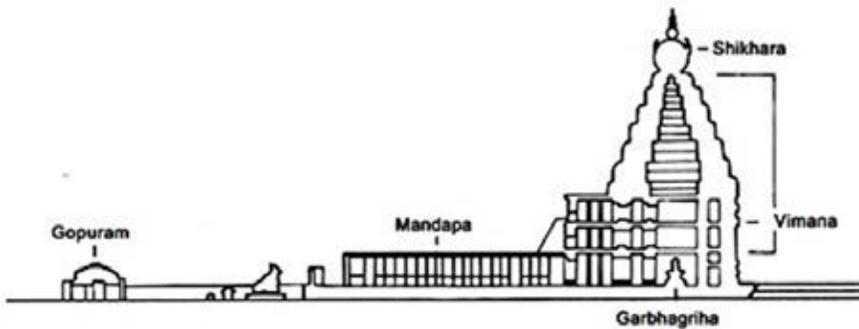
**Figure: The Decision Tree of the DM**

#### **4. DIAGRAM**

We can sometimes explain the concepts of arts and culture better by using a diagram. For example, take the following UPSC question.

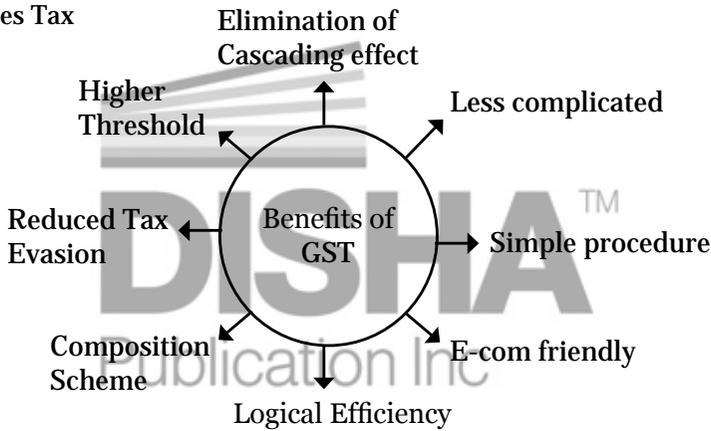
**Question: Chola architecture represents a high watermark in the evolution of temple architecture. Discuss. (GS-1,2013)**

While answering such questions, you can draw a picture of a Dravidian style of a temple with the essential features as shown in the picture and then describe them briefly.



**Figure: Outline of Dravidian Style of Temple**

You can use the following diagram to explain the benefits of Goods and Services Tax



**Figure: Benefits of GST**

In the same way, we can use the following diagram for showing the different principles of good governance according to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).



**Figure: Good governance principles of UNDP**

While analysing an issue, you can better convince the reader about your point of view by giving some examples. For example, suppose you want to prove that the Indian government is taking severe action against the corrupt and inefficient civil servants. In that case, you can give examples of the IAS, IPS, or IRS officers who have been arrested or compulsory retired in recent times.

## **5. TABLES**

Sometimes, we can use a table to convey our ideas better. For example, consider a case study where an honest IAS officer is fighting corruption and started an NGO for this purpose lawfully. However, his actions cause lots of problems to the politicians and the other government officers. He is given a message to wind up his NGO, failing which a case would be initiated against his NGO for illegal funding and malpractices, which could cause his suspension and even dismissal from service. In the case study, you are asked to provide various options along with their merits and demerits.

While answering this question, you can use tables to illustrate the merit and demerits of the issue, as shown in the following table:

<b>Options</b>	<b>Merits</b>	<b>Demerits</b>
1. Wind up the NGO and stop the social work.	No investigation by the government.	His fight against corruption suffers. His conscience may trouble him.
2. Resign from the membership of the NGO.	He can run the NGO indirectly, and the social work may continue partially.	Running an NGO indirectly is against conduct rule and also unethical. Effectiveness of the NGO may suffer in his absence.
3. Refuse to obey the direction and continue to run the NGO.	Ethical and transparent. It shows the officer as a strong person.	He may face enquiry and trouble in future. His career may be affected.

After discussing the merit and demerit of each option, you can suggest the best option available to the officer.

In this chapter, we learnt how to make our answers and essays shine by using illustrations and diagrams. However, you must not put them unnecessarily. The graphics must be relevant and useful. Moreover, you must draw them accurately and label them appropriately. You can also use a pencil or coloured pens to draw your diagrams.

It is a good idea to make your notes using different diagrams. Such a practice can help you understand the concept better and draw the relevant diagrams in the examination effortlessly.

## Section Five



# **ESSAY™** **PRACTICE**



*There is no rule on how to write.  
Sometimes it comes easily and perfectly:  
sometimes it's like drilling rock and then  
blasting it out with charges*

DISHA™  
Publication Inc

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*~ Ernest Hemingway*

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## PART C: WRITING ESSAY USING MIND-MAP

### Instructions

- ★ In this section, there are five mind-maps.
- ★ You can make the best use of this section in the following manner:
- ★ Read the mind map carefully.
- ★ Read a couple of essays or articles on this topic online.
- ★ Add or delete points stated in the mind-map using your best judgement.
- ★ Write an essay using the new mind-map in your own words.

**DISHA**  
Publication Inc

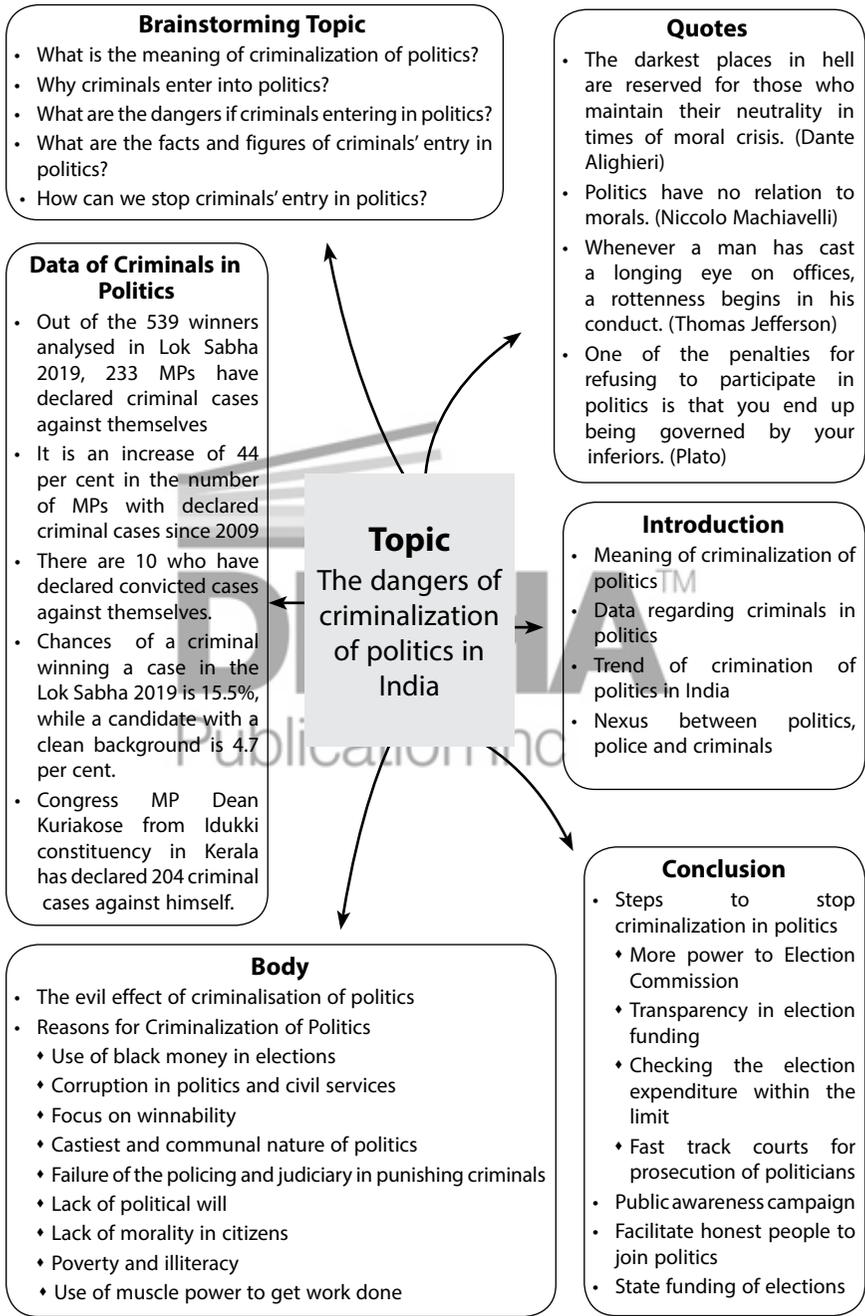
*If you wait for inspiration to write  
you're not a writer, you're a waiter*

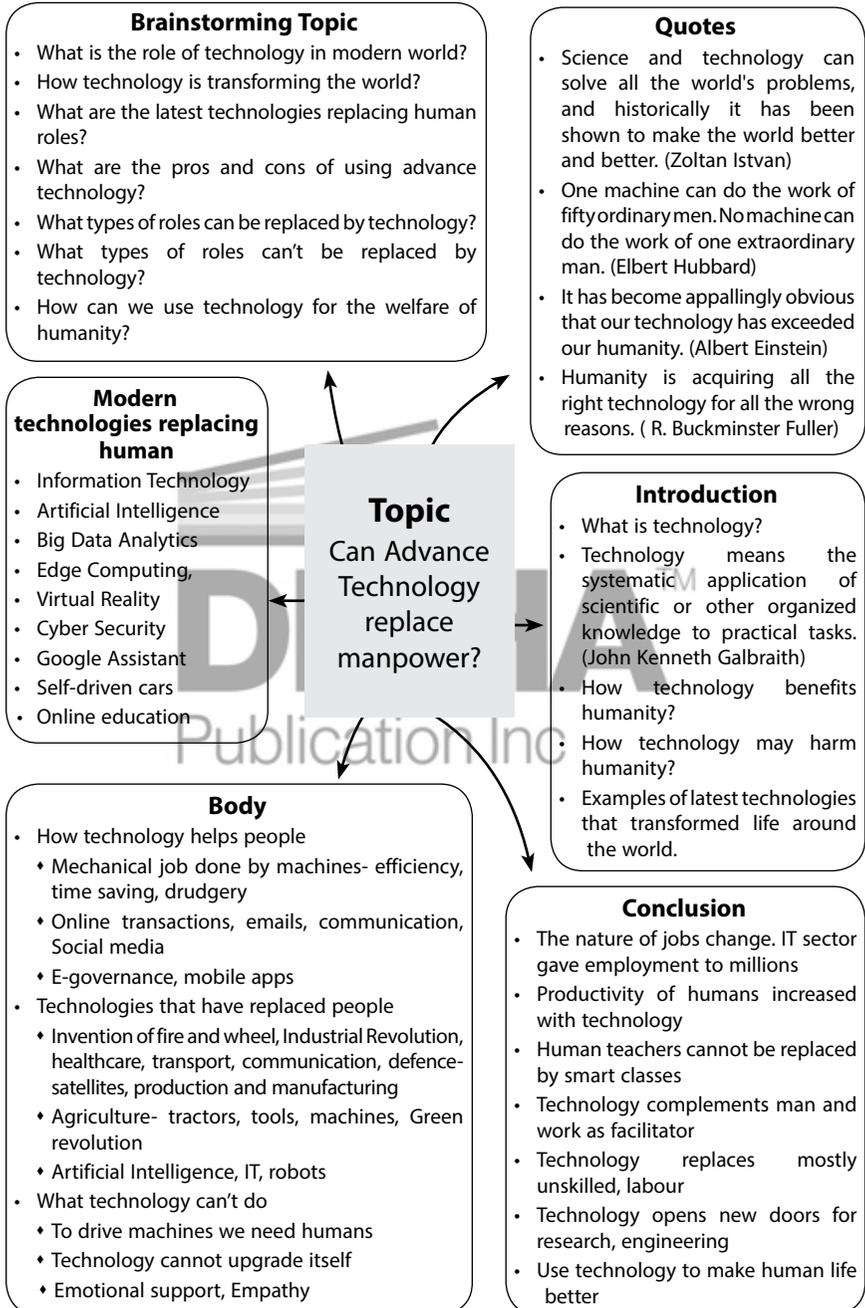
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*~ Dan Poynter*

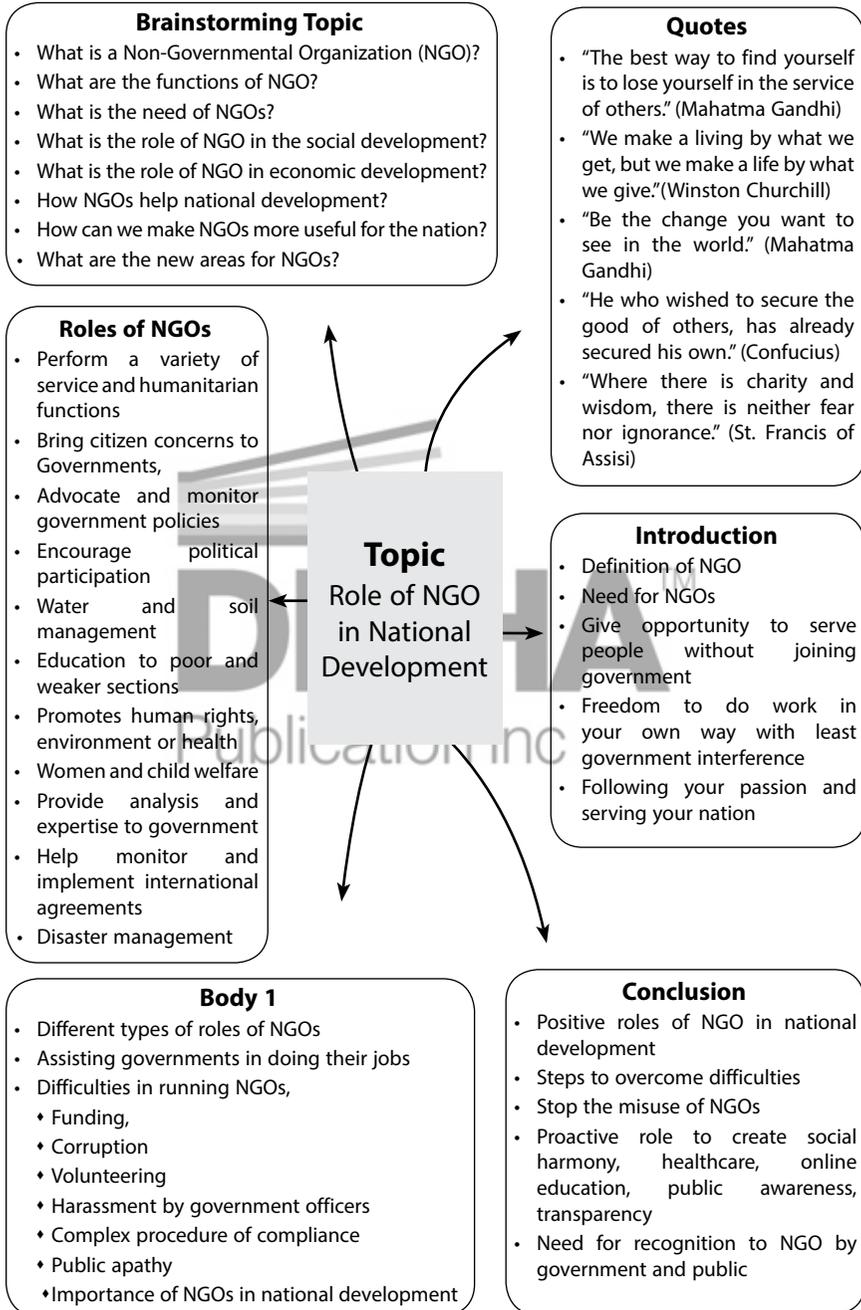
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**MIND MAP 1**



**MIND MAP 2**

**MIND MAP 3**



**MIND MAP 4****Brainstorming Topic**

- What is farm loan waiver?
- Why is farm loan waiver done in India?
- How the concept of loan waiver started in India?
- What are the pros and cons of farm loan waiver?
- What can be done instead of farm loan waiver?

**Quotes**

- Definition of loan waiver
- Economists regard loan waiver to be a populist and fiscally risky measure
- First nation-wide farm loan waiver implemented in 1990 by Janata Party government led by then Prime Minister V.P. Singh and costed the government Rs 10,000 crores.
- Agitations by farmers have been held demanding loan waivers
- Political parties have announced Loan waivers for farmers before election

**Body 1**

- Waiving of farm loan has become a great political issue in India
- Congress recently won elections in three states, where farm loan waiver was an important issue,
- The farmers of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh were promised farm loan waiver by Congress
- The total exposure of banks to farmers in the three states in the form of loans as of March 31, 2018 was Rs 1,47,000 crore.
- Banks are unlikely to get repayments for a substantial part of the loan
- The government failed to fulfil its promise due to lack of resources

**Topic**  
The problem  
of Farm Loan  
Waiver in India

**Body 2**

- Farmers are most disciplined in their repayment behaviour.
- In September 2018, agricultural NPAs (about 8%) were far lower than in industry (about 21%).
- Repeated loan waiver encourages loan defaults
- Impact of Farm Loan Waiver
  - ♦ Demands for loan waiver across India by farmers
  - ♦ The farmers not under distress too would not pay up their loans
  - ♦ Honest farmers feel cheated
  - ♦ Reduced availability of loan in future for farmers
  - ♦ Mounting bank NPAs

**Body 3**

- Develop institutional mechanism for farm loan waiver
- Appoint a regulatory authority to supervise the scheme of loan waiver.
- Waiver based on a scientific basis for calculating stressed assets and restructuring them
- Waiver strictly based on commercial considerations in more humane manner.
- Wilful defaulters must be dealt with strictly

**Conclusion**

- Positive roles of NGO in national development
- Steps to overcome difficulties
- Stop the misuse of NGOs
- Proactive role to create social harmony, healthcare, online education, public awareness, transparency
- Need for recognition to NGO by government and public

**MIND MAP 5**

**Brainstorming Topic**

- What is meant by social media?
- How social media is affecting the society?
- What are the pros and cons of social media?
- How social media is a selfish medium?
- How can we make best use of social media?

**Body 1 (Facts)**

- Three billion people, approximately 40% of the world's population uses social media, especially,
- Young people are use it on average of 61 minutes per day, impacting a huge swath of humanity.
- More people die taking selfies in India than anywhere else in the world= 159 out of 259 in total
- In 2017, Global Ransomware Damage Costs Expected To Exceed \$5 Billion

**Topic**  
 Social Media is inherently a selfish medium

**Quotes**

- "Privacy is dead, and social media hold the smoking gun."- Pete Cashmore, Mashable CEO
- "The beauty of social media is that it will point out your company's flaws; the key question is how quickly you address these flaws."- Erik Qualmann, author of "Socialnomics"
- "We all make mistakes. But social media can frame those mistakes and display them infinitely."- Unknown
- "Social media is an advertisement for the superficial extroverted self". - Hozier

**Introduction**

- Evolution of media in India and world
- Purpose of media
- Social Media gives voice to general people.
- Today even the traditional media of newspapers, TV channels etc, use social media to reach the masses.

**Body 2 (Pros and cons)**

- Benefits of social media
  - ♦ Create awareness
  - ♦ Empower people
  - ♦ Affordable
  - ♦ Online education
  - ♦ Connects with loved ones
- Harmful effects of social media
  - ♦ Loss of privacy
  - ♦ Irrelevant and false information
  - ♦ Trolling and hate messages
  - ♦ Agitation and social unrest
  - ♦ Dangerous online games

**Conclusion**

- Excess of everything is bad
- Positives of social media are more than negatives
- Tighten cyber security laws and regulations
- Social media sites to be accountable of offensive content
- Punishment for tarnishing images of people without evidence
- Punishment for organised trolling
- Education and awareness about the pros and cons