

UPSC

Answer Questions in NOT MORE THAN the Word Limit specified for each in the Parenthesis.
(Specimen Answer Booklet - For Practice Purpose Only)

उम्मीदवारों को इस हाशिए में नहीं लिखना चाहिए
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Q4.

Competition is the law of the jungle, but Cooperation is the law of civilisation.

The ancient treatise on statecraft and governance Aethashashtra speaks about Matanyanya in nature. The natural order is that the big fish eat the small fish because might is right. Kautilya warns that creates anarchy & unstabality in the society.

To escape this dangerous fate he outlines Raj Dharma for the king. The king is entrusted with the duty to change the society from jungle to civilisation by establishing order and enabling cooperation.

In a jungle every being behaves selfishly and seeks to ensure its own self interest. No one is concerned about the long term, and all efforts are made to maximise pleasure and minimise pain immediately. This self serving behaviour breeds high levels of

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mutual competition often creating anarchy.

On the other hand in a civilisation people act to advance collective interest rather than selfish interest. They have a long term vision for the society. This collectivism and selflessness enables prosperity in civilisations.

To better understand these two polar worlds, in this essay we shall try to uncover answers to complex questions like why competition is the norm in jungles? What problems does this create? Why do we need cooperation in a civilisation? And how do we cultivate cooperative habits?

The Race to the Top

A jungle's beauty is due to its diversity. But with a multitude of beings, this diversity in itself creates conditions for competition. In today's globalised era with rising nationalism we are seeing the advent of multilateralism in geopolitics.

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Increasing number of power centres at the global stage have increased conflicts and power struggle as a side effect.

While diversity continues to increase in jungles, resources often don't increase at the same pace. This scarcity of resources further adds fuel to the fire of competition.

One of the major reasons why several states in India are competing against one another is the scarcity of fresh water resources in our rivers. This tussle doesn't auger well for intergovernmental relations.

Another factor enabling competition is mutual animosity and a deep trust deficit between members of the jungle. This results in a 'Me vs You' mindset. The recurrent confrontations between Governors & state governments is a manifestation of soured relationships. This negativity not only dampens constitutional morality but also retards development.

Competition is also generated by the universal truth of the jungle, i.e. "Survival of the

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fittest". One has to be the best or perish. ~~due~~
Because complacency on your end will result in someone else not only outshining you, but will become the reason for your inevitable doom. This is probably why many youngsters find themselves in corporate rat races. What they don't realise is that it's a race that cannot be won.

But the single most important reason for fueling competition in a jungle is the selfish nature of all beings. The "I-Me-Myself" ideology limits the cognitive capacity to think about others, forcing us to prioritise the self. The vaccine nationalism by developed countries during covid was one such selfish act, which costed humanity dearly.

United we stand divided we fall

Competition in the jungle thus has many side effects, to escape these there is a need to evolve to a state of civilisation. This can be achieved only via cooperation.

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Cooperation is the first step towards dispute resolution and problem solving. It enables us to resolve our differences and find solutions together. This is extremely significant for contemporary reality which is dotted with problems like climate change, global inequality, terrorism, cyber security and what not. Cooperation is the key for rising above these challenges.

Additionally if such challenges, differences, disputes etc are not timely resolved they may lead to violence and destruction. A lack of cooperation towards the "2 state solution" is a major reason behind the ongoing violence in Israel.

Cooperation is the basis of social organisations. It allows people to tap into their numeric & collective strength to achieve difficult and even unimaginable goals. When hordes of people collectively demanded urgent steps to address safety of women in Delhi

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नहीं लिखना चाहिए
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post Nirbhaya case, the government had to address their concerns. Cooperation inspires us that with collective strength we can move mountains.

Moreover, cooperation is the secret ingredient for the recipe of human prosperity. In order to thrive and achieve our cherished goals, cooperation is sine quo non. To achieve the Sustainable development goals (SDGs) we need all round cooperation between international institutions, governments, think tanks, corporates, civil society and people only then can we hope to make the world a better place.

Furthermore, cooperation breeds innovation and out of the box thinking. When people from multidisciplinary backgrounds put their minds together and differences aside, magic happens. The success of the Chandrayaan-3 is an example of this synergy between the government and various technical experts at ISRO.

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Beyond the Binary

While competition has many vices and cooperation many virtues, but in reality such black & white categorisation becomes problematic. For competition too has some benefits and cooperation has its problems.

Competition triggers performance orientation. It motivates us to become the best version of our selves and strive for excellence. With the advent of market competition post LPG 1991, Indian economy has boomed and is now the 5th largest in the world.

On the otherhand blind cooperation is deadly. We must never cooperate with the evil because it destroys humanity.

Mahatma Gandhi had warned us that
"Non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with the good"

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Cultivating Cooperation

Nevertheless there is great merit in cultivating cooperation to not only sustain humanity but to also enable its prosperity.

The first step in this regard is to develop the values of selflessness, empathy, generosity and a sense of service. This can be done by focusing on value based education right from the childhood.

The second step would be to develop tolerance. ~~Learn~~ Learning to 'agree to disagree' can go a long way in inculcating ~~to~~ mutual respect. Akbar's idea of Din-i-Ilahi was rooted in similar ideas of appreciating unity in diversity.

As a logical extension, thirdly we should learn to focus more on commonalities rather than differences. This will help in channelisation of collective energies. We as Indians must learn how to rise above



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Our caste, class, creed, religion & linguistic ~~ideas~~ identities to embrace our 'Indianness' to realise goals of a 'Viksit Bharat'

Thus, we have seen how competition in jungles creates conditions for hostility, violence and anarchy. On the otherhand cooperation is the cornerstone for the sustenance of civilisations. It is a positive force ushering prosperity, peace and harmony.

What we must do is to strategically use competition to our advantage and whole heartedly take steps to increase cooperation in the society. Cooperation is the master key to solve all the problems which torment us.

We must always remember the idea of 'Vasudeva Kutumbakam' (the whole world is one family) which is anchored in

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cooperation to ensure that our actions
never let the sun set on our civilisation

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Rough work

Competition is law of the jungle, cooper is law of civilisation

intro : matsyanyaya, kautilya; rajdharma / social contract
big fish > small anarchy for thriving civilis
might is right

Jungle vs civilis

Why competition?

- ① → too many players multilateralism
- scarcity of resources limited
- ② → animosity & trust state river water
- ③ → deficit gov vs you gov vs com
- survival of the fittest
→ corporate rate race
- every body → self interest
only → could vaccine
nationalism

Problems created by too much competition
or need for cooperation

② differences / disputes

→ India-Bangl
LEA ①

→ avoid violent outburst

⑤ ethics + development

→ SDG → int th
→ govt
→ state
→ people
→ market

⑥ Innovation & creating thinking / out of the box
multi disc talent →

Competition in civilis also

→ good

→ be better

→ poverty
→ terrorism

cooper (evil)

→ AI
→ climate change

→ german society anti semelie

→ tap into
→ collective strength

→ united we stand divided we fall

→ freedom struggle

→ perhaps

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Rough work

<u>Jungle</u>	vs	<u>Civilis</u>
<u>atomistic</u>		<u>collective behaviour</u>
<u>short term</u>		<u>long term</u>
<u>selfish</u>		<u>selfless</u>
<u>anarchy</u>		<u>prosperity</u>

how to ensure cooperation

- holistic approach
- systems approach
 - ↓ entropy
 - ↑ synergy
- agreeing to disagree
- focusing on commonalities rather than differences
- EU post WW2.
- carrot sticks

com) varudena kutumbakam shared goals

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Q7

To be or not to be that is the question.

National leaders passionately debate over the nature of states as monarchies, democracies or ~~stratocracies~~. Young professionals try to navigate across the many career options in say Engineering, medicine, law etc available to them. Children scratch their heads thinking about what subjects to choose science, commerce or humanities. The

The common thread binding them all is their exercise of free will and making a choice. In life we have to make choices 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. And what choices we make shape our character and determine our destiny.

Shakespeare had rightly posed 'To be or not to be' as the question. A question whose answer we all seek. A question whose answer often eludes us. ~~and~~ a question which has no straight answer.

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And a question which if solved correctly can alleviate most of our problems.

In this essay we shall explore the nuances associated with making the choice, Uncover how to make the right choice and how to ensure adherence to our choices in life.

Picking the right side

Life presents us with myriad situations. Each situation demands us to deliberate whether to be or not to be. But this being in itself has many meanings.

One can choose to be virtuous and preserve one's integrity. Such a choice prevents any cognitive dissonance and gives mental peace. Socrates during his trial, chose to drink hemlock and die rather than compromise on his values. He chose to be virtuous rather than being a hypocrite.



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One can also choose to be change maker rather than a passive spectator to enable social transformation. Rosa Parks chose to not give up her seat and become a voice against racism rather than being just a victim.

One can also become a source of light onto others, guiding their path and expelling all forms of darkness. India trying to place itself as a leader of the global south is reflective of the choice to ensure Sabka Saath. Sabka Vikas of the developing world.

One can dare to be the mirror, forcing evil to acknowledge their darkness. In Ramayana, Vibhishana tries to be the voice of reason to Raavana even at the cost of his own safety.

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One can also choose to be a life raft for others during a crisis. Such a choice reflects great courage and selflessness of character. Oscar Schindler's bravery in saving Jews against Nazi repression underlines a selfless choice to be a hero.

④ The Dark Side

Thus there are a multitude of ways wherein we can choose to be of value to ourselves, the society and larger humanity. But at the same time, there are many ways by which our choices can lead to decay & destruction.

One can choose to be a misogynist by harbouring patriarchal values. This leads to discrimination against women and increases case of femicide. As per NCRB data, one in three women reported physical or sexual abuse in India.

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One can also choose to be hateful. Such hate often breeds conditions for violence and destabilise social harmony. Cases of terrorism like 9/11 and 26/11 exemplify such hate.

Similarly one can choose to be selfish rather than selfless. Prioritising the self over the wellbeing of others. The misappropriation of public funds for personal gains is one such selfish act by public officials.

mirage

Choice : mirage

Ultimately it all comes down to our choice. Whose side do we take and who do we choose to be in a situation. But for some people, this choice remains illusory as they lack the agency to decide ~~their~~ for themselves.

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Disadvantaged groups of people like the dalits suffer from multiple socio-economic deprivations. Life often does not present them a choice to be what they desire. This why they are often forced into inhumane activities like mannual scavenging.

Free will and the liberty to decide to be or not to be is thus precious. When we do have the choice we must make sure, we make the right decision.

Decoding the Puzzle

To identify right & wrong, we need not look far, the answer is within us. Gandhiji had once said,

"The human voice can never reach the distance that is covered by the still voice of conscience". We must develop the ability

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to pay heed to our voice of conscience. It acts as our moral compass and always ensures that we stay true to our values.

We can also turn to external agencies for guidances. Our parents have a huge influence on us and always have our best interest in their hearts. Discussing our dilemmas with them can not only solve our problems, but also offer us solace.

Educational institutions like schools, colleges can also help ease our confusion. By encouraging us to develop critical thinking abilities and a scientific temper they empower us to deal with situation rationally.

To be good and do good we can also refer to our fundamental duties enshrined in Part IVA of the constitution. They guide us

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not only to be responsible citizens but also towards personal excellence.

Finally, to find the ultimate answer to life's biggest question we should remember Lord Buddha's eight fold path. It guides us to have the right speech, right thought, right mindfulness, right livelihood, right effort, right concentration, right view and right action. It provides us a roadmap to make the right choice.
Therefore

Thus, in life everything comes down to our choices. How do we answer the question to be or not to be not only decides our fate but also the fate of the larger society. But this is no easy choice to make.

While some of us pick the right side, some make less than wise decisions. Either way, these choices of ours



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have consequences. Right choices usher in peace & prosperity. Bad choices bring us despair & distress.

Therefore it becomes extremely important to learn the art of making the right choice. Luckily, there are many ways in which we can wisely choose to be or not to be. Both our internal faculties and external sources of wisdom assist us in this regard.

But ultimately, it is up to us. Who do we choose to be or not be is the real question and whoever is able to crack this question is able to win at life. Just like Robert Frost said,

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
I took the one less travelled by
and that has made all the
difference"

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Leighwork

INTRO

(To be or not to be) that is the Qⁿ

What to be

good person
→ good
→ selfless
→ empathetic
→ disciplined
→ professional
→ ambitious
→ productive members of society
→ responsible citizens

What not to be

→ selfish
→ egoistic
→ proud
→ lazy
→ vengeful
→ insensitive
→ corruption

Why not to be

how to be

choice

→ parenting
→ dressing
→ intellectual curiosity
→ education
→ 8 fold path
→ fundamental duties
→ voice of conscience
→ courage
→ Reason for Dilemma
→ Qⁿ

For whom to be?

→ Self? Socrates/Kemlock
→ Society
→ nation
→ world?
→ India
→ Global South
→ social reform movement
→ freedom fighters
→ RRR

INTRO

What to be?

country
→ sou
→ comm or
→ Capitalistic
→ Presidential dem
→ monarchy
→ aristocracy

company
→ Crony capitalism
→ ethical capitalism

person
→ career options

woman
→ home maker
→ working professional

decoding many choices
great & confu
how we — estimate Qⁿ
answ that Qⁿ → destiny

Concl: Orijuna @ battlefield

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Rough work

To be ②

change maker: Raza parake.

To be ③

→ Role model + inspiration:

To be ③ light onto others: Sus nee hinduism
Spiritu + (west + east)

To be ③ shield against injustice

→ BR Am dalit rights

To be ③ able to withstand challenges

on the goodness

Vibhishan

wall against evil forces adversity

Oskar schindler

not to be

source of darkness

4 titles