



Foundation For Competitive Exams

Elimination Techniques

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Introduction

Most objective type tests can be hacked if you observe the examiner carefully and outsmart her/his way of thinking. Those who attempt more and more UPSC papers somehow start noticing these hacks and tend to score a little better than others with that much-needed difference in the final exam.

A peculiar trend is observed across most UPSC papers, that is the key to our hack.

We have observed that the examiners at UPSC are, arguably, generalists, rather than specialists or experts; not all, but a significant number.

This means that, often, they might not know a subject matter as well as experts do, and therefore, rely heavily on published sources such as official websites, books and articles on the internet.

When this is the case, framing a question becomes tricky because statements can be devised only based on the available information in the sources rather than the complete subject knowledge of the examiner. The major difficulty experienced by an examiner is, therefore, in devising wrong statements that somehow appear deceptively correct.

For an examiner to declare a statement as wrong requires him to know several concepts/theories/ facts related to the question. It is not that he may not know these, but at times this is very difficult when for instance, statements of historical relevance are to be refuted, one needs to know all the historical grounds associated with that issue (explained in the Vijayanagara tax example below).

This makes their questions vulnerable to intelligent guessing and leads us to the key principle of our intelligent guess – “it is difficult to devise wrong statements”.

Below, we take some of the past year's questions of CSP that may seem difficult in first go, but are a cakewalk if you apply this principle consistently.

Corollaries and Lessons

Corollary A: Technology-intensive questions

This is where this principle applies the best because few examiners can declare themselves experts in the domain of emerging technology where there are a lot of gaps or grey areas.

Take this for example.

CSP 2015

With reference to the use of nanotechnology in health sector, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1) Targeted drug delivery is made possible by nanotechnology
- 2) Nanotechnology can largely contribute to gene therapy

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: c)

Observation: Examine both the statements; both should be correct.

Both indicate a possibility (use the word 'can'); the possibility of a technological feat. No arm-chair examiner can refute a futuristic technological possibility that requires years and years of research by some of the most qualified scientists in this field.

If the examiner had to make a statement that: 'nano-technology cannot be used for drug delivery', **he would have really needed a very strong argument to refute this possibility.** You can easily mark both statements as correct because it is really hard for an examiner to design a statement otherwise.

CSP 2017

With reference to agriculture in India, how can the technique of 'genome sequencing', often seen in the news, be used in the immediate future?

- 1) Genome sequencing can be used to identify genetic markers for disease resistance and drought tolerance in various crop plants.
- 2) This technique helps in reducing the time required to develop new varieties of crop plants.
- 3) It can be used to decipher the host-pathogen relationships in crops.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Solution: D

Observation: Same applies to this question. The argument that genome sequencing can do 'something' (identify genetic markers here – Statement 1) can hardly be refuted other than by some very strong research, and that too a mainstream research widely accepted by the academia/industry; else this statement would generally be correct.

But, the same analysis may not be applied to the other two statements – the technological sophistication in them is not so high, and common sense says that these statements might be right or wrong. But, then you see the word 'can' and it makes things simpler. In most cases, such a statement would be correct, as is the case here. Why?

Because to refute a possibility indicated by 'can' again needs strong backing, for e.g. here "It can be used to decipher the host-pathogen relationships in crops". You never know that a Nature Journal article might talk about this possibility the next day this question appeared in the exam.

CSP 2017

Organic Light Emitting Diodes (OLEDs) are used to create digital display in many devices. What are the advantages of OLED displays over Liquid Crystal displays?

- 1) OLED displays can be fabricated on flexible plastic substrates.
- 2) Roll-up displays embedded in clothing can be made using OLEDs.
- 3) Transparent displays are possible using OLEDs.

Select the correct answer using the code given below

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) None of the above statements is correct

Solution: C

Observation: The same analysis applies. The futuristic possibilities and the sophistication indicated by all three statements may not be refuted and there is always a possibility that future research would vindicate them.

Lesson A: So, the examiners are wary and any technological intensive question that is associated with the word 'can' should be true in most cases. Mark statements with futuristic possibilities involving some technological sophistication as correct.

Corollary B: Hard to verify facts

CSP 2016

Regarding the taxation system of Krishna Deva, the ruler of Vijayanagar, consider the following statements:

- 1) The tax rate on land was fixed depending on the quality of the land.
- 2) Private owners of workshops paid an industries tax.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: C

Observation: We had referred to this example in the introduction of this article.

If you were the examiner, what would it take you to make a statement that negates statement 2? A lot of research into the financial system of the Vijayanagara Empire!

History is vast, it is easy to assert a fact with confidence, but it is quite difficult to negate a certain fact because history is an evolving subject. If you keep digging, you will keep finding something new. In fact, that is what keeps the research departments in History alive where new University courses in history (e.g. tracing the tribal roots of Vedas) are being designed each day.

So, for the examiner to claim that there were no workshop taxes in the Vijayanagara empire, it would really take a lot. He can make his life simpler by asserting the affirmative and move to the next question. From this, you know that such statements that assert a minute historical fact are likely to be correct.

CSP 2016

What is/are unique about 'Kharai Camel', a breed found in India?

- 1) It is capable of swimming up to three kilometres in seawater.
- 2) It survives by grazing on mangroves.
- 3) It lives in the wild and cannot be domesticated.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Solution: A

Observation: The statement that Kharai camel cannot be domesticated needs solid academic research or needs to be grounded in the experience of conservation officers working across India.

The examiner is not likely to go through all the research into Kharai camels because it is time consuming and belongs to the domain of wildlife experts.

You can safely mark this statement as incorrect. There are exceptions to this approach such as the Indus Valley question in 2017 that talked about Horses, but these are marginal occurrences and do not qualify as the trend.

Lesson B: Examiner is unlikely to refute statements that dig hard into facts, especially when it is a specialized fact and a matter of research. In most cases, mark such statements as correct.

Corollary C: Statements with 'Financial Aid' or 'Free' stuff

CSP 2015

With reference to 'Forest Carbon Partnership Facility', which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1) it is global partnership of governments, businesses, civil society and indigenous peoples
- 2) it provides financial aid to universities, individual scientists and institutions involved in scientific forestry research to develop eco-friendly and climate adaptation technologies for sustainable forest management.
- 3) It assists the countries in their 'REDD+ (Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation+)' efforts by providing them with financial and technical assistance.

Select the correct answer using the code given below

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Solution: c)

Observation: Statement 2 was framed to deviate you from the right answer. You would notice that UPSC will often design wrong statements by exploiting the term “financial aid”. While a number of schemes have a financial component, but when a scheme declares such a financial commitment to be applicable to a large domain, it is likely to be incorrect.

In all three statements, this assistance is being offered to a large number of stakeholders – governments, businesses, universities, individuals, civil society, indigenous people and scientists. It is highly unlikely that such a focussed scheme (on Forest Carbon Partnership) will give aid to almost all such stakeholders.

Lesson C: Too generous and widely applicable financial aid associated with a focussed scheme is unlikely to be true. Mark them as incorrect.

Corollary D: For this and ‘NOT’ for this

This is a relatively simpler hack which is again based on our core principle that it is hard to design wrong statements. One of the simplest ways in which you can design a wrong statement is to pick up a list of things (A, B, C etc.) that a scheme/device/body does and then state that it does “A”, but does not do “B”.

CSP 2015

With reference to ‘fuel cells’ in which hydrogen-rich fuel and oxygen are used to generate electricity, consider the following statements :

- 1) If pure hydrogen is used as a fuel, the fuel cell emits heat and water as by-products.
- 2) Fuel cells can be used for powering buildings and not for small devices like laptop computers.
- 3) Fuel cells produce electricity in the form of Alternating Current (AC).

Which of the statements given above is / are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Solution: a)

CSP 2016

With reference to the 'Gram Nyayalaya Act', which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1) As per the Act, Gram Nyayalayas can hear only civil cases and not criminal cases.
- 2) The Act allows local social activists as mediators/reconciliators.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: B

Observation: As stated above, S2 in the first question, and S1 in the second question are more likely to be incorrect because they employ the corollary of "this, but NOT this".

Lesson D: Unless you have really compelling reasons, do NOT fall for "this, but NOT this" kind of statements. Mark them incorrect.

Elimination Techniques

Elimination Techniques – 1

Statements consisting of Extreme words are generally wrong. Example: All/none, Only, steadily, Always, Never, Drastically, Entirely, Drastically, Entirely, enormously, completely, Mandatory, compulsorily, continuously.

Illustration:1

What is/are the most likely advantages of implementing 'Goods and Services Tax (GST)'?

[UPSC (Pre) 2017]

- 1) It will replace multiple taxes collected by multiple authorities and will thus create a single market in India.
- 2) It will drastically reduce the 'Current Account Deficit' of India and will enable it to increase its foreign exchange reserves.
- 3) It will enormously increase the growth and size of economy of India and will enable it to overtake China in the near future.

Select the correct answer using the code given

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 2 consists of an extreme word "Drastically" which makes the statement less likely to be correct so, options (b) and (d) can be eliminated.

Again, in statement 3 extreme word is "Enormously" making it incorrect.

Therefore, options with statement 3 can be eliminated.

Illustration:2

With reference to Chausath Yogini Temple situated near Morena, consider the following statements

1. It is a circular temple built during the reign of Kachchhapaghata Dynasty.
2. It is the only circular temple built in India
3. It was meant to promote the Vaishnava cult in the region.
4. Its design has given rise to a popular belief that it was the inspiration behind the Indian Parliament building.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 4
- d) 2, 3 and 4

Description

Statement 2 consists of an extreme word - "only" which makes the statement less likely to be correct.

Hence, after eliminating statement 2 from the given options, we easily get (c) as the answer

Illustration: 3

Due to some reasons, if there is a huge fall in the population of species of butterflies, what could be its likely consequence/consequences?

1. Pollination of some plants could be adversely affected
2. There could be a drastic increase in the fungal infections of some cultivated plants.
3. It could lead to a fall in the population of some species of wasps, spiders and birds.

Select the correct using the code given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 2 consists of extreme word - “Drastic” making the complete statement less likely to be correct. This implies (b), (d) can be discarded. Statement 3 consists of a probable word - ‘could lead to’ making statements generally right.

Illustration: 4

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2018]

1. The Parliament of India can place a particular law in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution of India.
2. The validity of a law placed in the Ninth Schedule cannot be examined by any court and no judgement can be made on it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Description

Statement 2 consists of two extreme words - ‘any’ and ‘no’ Which make the statement generally incorrect. So, option (b) and (d) can be eliminated.

Illustration: 5

Consider the following statements: (UPSC (Pre) 2019)

1. Under Ramsar Convention, it is mandatory on the part of the Government of India to protect and conserve all the wetlands in the territory of India.
2. The Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2010 were framed by the Government of India based on recommendation of Ramsar Convention.
3. The Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2010 also encompass the drainage area or catchment regions of the wetlands as determined by the authority.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

In statement 1, ‘mandatory’ and ‘all’ are two extreme words which makes the statement incorrect. Thus, we can eliminate statement 1 from the given answer option.

Illustration: 6

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2020]

1. In the case of all cereals, pulses and oil- seeds, the procurement at Minimum Support Price (MSP) is unlimited in any State/UT of India.
2. In the case of cereals and pulses, the MSP is fixed in any State/UT at a level to which the market price will never rise.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Description

Statement 1 has three extreme words - 'all' 'unlimited' and 'any' which makes it wrong. Statement 2 has word 'never' which makes it incorrect. Both statements can be marked as incorrect.

Illustration: 7

What are the significances of a practical approach to sugarcane production known as Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative? [UPSC (Pre) 2014]

1. Seed cost is very low in this compared to the conventional method of cultivation.
2. Drip irrigation can be practiced very effectively in this.
3. There is no application of chemical/inorganic fertilizers at all in this.
4. The scope for intercropping is more in this compared to the conventional method of cultivation.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Description

In statement 3 extreme words are 'no' and 'at all making it incorrect'. Hence, statement 3 can be eliminated to reach the desired result.

Illustration: 8

In the context of solving pollution problems, what is/are the advantage/advantages of bioremediation technique? [UPSC (Pre) 2017]

1. It is a technique for cleaning up pollution by enhancing the same biodegradation process that occurs in nature.
2. Any contaminant with heavy metals such as cadmium and lead can be readily and completely treated by bioremediation using microorganisms.
3. Genetic engineering can be used to create microorganisms specifically designed for bioremediation

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only**
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 2 consists of three extreme words - 'any', 'readily' and 'completely' which is generally not possible to be true. Thus, it can be eliminated.

Illustration: 9

Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding Smart India Hackathon 2017 ? [UPSC (pre)2017]

1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme for developing every city of our country into Smart Cities in a decade.
2. It is an initiative to identify new digital technology innovations for solving the many problems faced by our country.
3. It is a programme aimed at making all the financial transactions in our country completely digital in a decade.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only**
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 2 and 3 only

Description

Statement 3 consists of extreme words - 'all' and 'completely' making it incorrect. Thus, statement 3 can be eliminated from (a), (C) and (d).

Illustration: 10

What would happen if phytoplankton of an ocean is completely destroyed for some reason? [UPSC (Pre) 2012]

1. The ocean as a carbon sink would be adversely affected.
2. The food chains in the ocean would be adversely affected.
3. The density of ocean water would drastically decrease.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 only

(c) 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 3 consists of an extreme word - 'Drastically' which makes it less likely to be true. Hence, it can be eliminated from the options (c) and (d).

Elimination Techniques – 2

Moderate or Probable type of statements are generally right

Example: can be, may be, seems to be, likely to be. May lead to, might be, expected to improve or decline.

Illustration: 1

It is possible to produce algae-based biofuels, but what is/are the likely limitation(s) of developing countries in promoting this industry? [UPSC (Pre) 2017]

1. Production of algae based biofuels is possible in seas only and not on continents.
2. Setting up and engineering the algae based biofuels production requires high level of AI expertise/technology until the construction is complete.
3. Economically viable production necessitates the setting up of large scale facilities which may raise ecological and social concerns.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 3 consists of a probable word - 'may' which makes the statement right. Also statement 1 has an extreme word 'only' making it incorrect. Thus options (a) and (d) can be excluded from the given options.

Illustration: 2

With reference to agricultural soils, consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2018]

1. A high content of organic matter in soil drastically reduces its water holding capacity.
2. Soil does not play any role in the Sulphur cycle.
3. Irrigation over a period of time can contribute to the salinization of some agricultural lands. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statements 1 and 2 have extreme words - 'Drastically' and 'any' making it less likely to be correct. Statement 3 has a probable word 'can' making it more likely to be correct. Hence, (b) is the correct answer.

Illustration: 3

Which of the following statements is/are correct? [UPSC (Pre) 2016]

Proper design and effective implementation of UNREDD+ Programme can significantly contribute to:

1. Protection of biodiversity
2. Resilience of forest ecosystems
3. Poverty reduction

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 3 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

All the statements given contribute to fulfilling the demand of the question. Thus, (d) can be the most suitable answer.

Elimination Techniques – 3

Application of Deduced logic.

Although basic logic and common sense, we can mark some statements as correct and incorrect.

ILLUSTRATION: 1

Under the Kisan Credit Card scheme, short-term credit support is given to farmers for which of the following purposes?

[UPSC (Pre) 2020]

1. Working capital for maintenance of farm assets
2. Purchase of combine harvesters, tractors and mini trucks.
3. Consumption requirements of farm households
4. post-harvest expense
5. Construction of family house and setting up of village cold storage facility.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1, 2 and 5 only

(b) 1, 3 and 4 only

(c) 2, 3, 4 and 5 only

(d) 1, 2, 3 and 5

Description

From the given statements statement 5 can be excluded as it is less likely to construct family houses from 'kisan credit card scheme'

kisan credit card is a type of loan given to farmers to buy seeds, fertilizers etc., Hence, from this logic we can eliminate statements 2 and 5 from the given answer option.

ILLUSTRATION: 2

What is the importance of using Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccines in India? [UPSC (Pre) 2020]

1. These vaccines are effective against N pneumonia as well as meningitis and sepsis.
2. Dependence on antibiotics that are not effective against drug resistant bacteria can be reduced.
3. These vaccines have no side effects and cause no allergic reactions.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 only

(b) 1 and 2 only

(c) 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statements 3 can be eliminated from the phase 'No side effects' and 'no allergic reactions' which is not possible from any medicine or vaccine. Headache is the common side effect which is seen from vaccines. Hence, options (C) and (d) can be safely discarded.

ILLUSTRATION: 3

With reference to India's Desert National Park, which of the following statements are correct?

[UPSC (Pre) 2020]

1. It is spread over two districts.
2. There is no human habitation inside the meadow Park.
3. It is one of the natural habitats of Great Indian Bustard.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 2 says 'No human habitation inside the park' which is nearly impossible. Communities like 'Ohanis' exist within the park and are also integral part of this ecosystem. Thus, options (a), (b) and (d) can be eliminated.

ILLUSTRATION: 4

With reference to India, the terms 'Halbi, Ho and Kui' pertain to. [UPSC (Pre) 2021]

- (a) Dance forms of Northwest India
- (b) Musical instruments
- (c) Pre-historic cave paintings
- (d) Tribal languages

Description

Here, Deduced logic can be taken from 'Ho' which is also the name of tribal revolt occurred in Bihar and adjoining regions. Thus, tribal language is the most suitable answer given in the options.

ILLUSTRATION: 5

In India, if a species of tortoise is declared protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, what does it imply? (UPSC (Pre) 2017)

- (a) It enjoys the same level of protection as the tiger.
- (b) It no longer exists in the wild, a few individuals are under captive protection; and now it is impossible to prevent its extinction.
- (c) It is endemic to a particular region of India.

(d) Both (b) and (c) stated above are correct in this context.

Description

Option (b) contains an extreme statement with words like 'no longer exists' 'impossible'. Thus, options (b) and (d) can be eliminated. Question talks about Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 which is concerned with 'protection' and not with endemic status. Thus, option (C) can be eliminated, and option (a) can be marked as answer.

ILLUSTRATION: 6

In the context of proposals to the use of hydrogen - enriched CNG (H -CNG) as fuel for buses in public transport, consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2019]

1. The main advantage of the use of H -CNG is the elimination of carbon monoxide emissions.
2. H -CNG as fuel reduces carbon dioxide and hydrocarbon emissions.
3. Hydrogen up to one -fifth by volume can be blended with CNG as fuel for buses.
4. H -CNG makes the fuel less expensive than CNG.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Description

- 1) In statement 1, H-CNG can reduce carbon monoxide emissions but cannot eliminate it. (Technique 1)

Statement 4 can be rejected by the fact that using hydrogen is costlier than CNG. Also, efficiency in its usage is yet to be achieved. Hence, (a), (C) and (d) can be eliminated.

ILLUSTRATION: 7

What is/are unique about 'Kharai camel', a breed of camel found in India? [UPSC (Pre) 2016]

1. It is capable of swimming up to three kilometres in seawater.
2. It survives by grazing on mangroves.
3. It lives in the wild and cannot be domesticated.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 3 can be rejected by the fact that ever the topmost predator in the ecosystem can be domesticated by various means. Thus, camels can be domesticated too. Options (b), (C) and (d) can be eliminated

ILLUSTRATION: 8

With reference to India, consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2021]

1. There is only one citizenship and one wh domicile.
2. A citizen by birth only can become the Head of St State.
3. A foreigner once granted the citizenship cannot be deprived of it under any circumstances.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) 1 and 3

(d) 2 and 3

Description

Statement 3 consists of extreme words - 'Any' which make it incorrect (Technique - 1)

Statement 2 can be rejected from the fact that Naturalized citizen can also become the president of India (which is not the case with USA)

ILLUSTRATION: 9

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2019]

1. Coal sector was nationalized by Government of India under Indira Gandhi.
2. Now, coal blocks are allocated on lottery the basis
3. Till recently, India imported coal to meet the shortages of domestic supply, but now India is self-sufficient in coal product.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 3 can be easily eliminated from the logic that India is Still one of the largest importers of coal so, cannot be self-sufficient. Option (a) can be marked answer.

ILLUSTRATION: 10

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2020]

1. Jet streams occur in the Northern Hemisphere only.
2. Only some cyclones develop an eye.
3. The temperature inside the eye of a cyclone is nearly 10°C lesser than that of the surroundings.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 2 only
- (d) 1 and 3 only

Description

Statement 1 can be marked as incorrect from the basic knowledge of cyclones. Statement 3 consists of precise Temperature value which in reality is difficult to determine. Also, as per Köppen, Nowhere between the tropics, average temperature falls below 18°C.

ILLUSTRATION: 11

With reference to the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS), consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2018]

1. IRNSS has three satellites in geostationary and four satellites in geosynchronous orbits.
2. IRNSS covers entire India and about 5500 sq. km beyond its borders.
3. India will have its own satellite navigation system with full global coverage by the middle of 2019.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) None

Description

In statement 2, the extreme wing word 'Entire' is used and the numerical value is also absurd. can be eliminated. Statement 3 talks about 'global coverage' whereas IRNSS comprises of the word 'Regional'. By it can common sense, be eliminated.

ILLUSTRATION: 12

With reference to India's biodiversity, Ceylon frogmouth, Coppersmith barbet, Gray -chinned minivet and White-throated redstart are [UPSC (Pre) 2020]

- (a) Birds
- (b) Primates

(c) Reptiles

(d) Amphibians

Description

Birds are generally named after colour of their neck, colour and type of beak. Thus, white throated make it a bird and option (a) can be marked as answer.

ELIMINATION Technique No.: 4

Progressive statements are generally light whereas Restrictive statements! are generally wrong in science and Technology questions.

ILLUSTRATION: 1

With reference to "Blockchain Technology "consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2020]

1. It is a public ledger that everyone we inspect, but which no single user controls
2. The structure and design of blockchain is such that all the data in it are about crypto currency only.
3. Applications that depend on basic features of blockchain can be developed without anybody's permission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (c) 2 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (d) 1 and 3 only

Description

Statement 2 is somewhat restrictive in nature as it is limiting Blockchain technology to cryptocurrency only. Thus, statement 2 can be eliminated from option (b) and (c). Statement 3 has a probable word 'can be' which makes it right. (Technique 2) Hence, (d) is the correct answer.

ILLUSTRATION: 2

With reference to agriculture in India, how can the technique of 'genome sequencing', often seen in the news, be used in the immediate future? [UPSC (Pre) 2017]

1. Genome sequencing can be used to identify genetic markers for disease resistance and a drought tolerance in various crop plants.
2. This technique helps in reducing the time ap required to develop new varieties of crop plants.
3. It can be used to decipher the host pathogen Th relationships in crops.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

All three statements are progressive in nature. Also, statement 1, 2 and 3 are the applications of genome Sequencing. Thus, option (d) can be marked as an answer.

ILLUSTRATION: 3

In which of the following areas technology be used? [UPSC (Pre) 2018]

1. Mobile phone operations
2. Banking operations
3. Controlling the power grids

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

GPS applications fall into 5 major categories :-

- . Location
- . Navigation
- . Tracking
- . Mapping
- . Timing

All the statements given lie in the above categories. Hence, answer be (d). option can

ILLUSTRATION: 4

With reference to the use of Nano technology in the health sector, which of the following statements is/are correct? [UPSC (Pre) 2015]

1. Targeted drug delivery is made possible by nanotechnology.
2. Nanotechnology can largely contribute to gene therapy.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2**
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Description

Nanotechnology is an emerging technology useful in various fields. Here, both the statements are futuristic and progressive in nature. Thus, option (c) can be marked as answer.

ILLUSTRATION: 5

Organic Light Emitting Diodes (OLEDs) are used to create digital display in many devices. What are the advantage of OLED displays over Liquid Crystal displays? [UPSC (Pre) 2017]

1. OLED displays can be fabricated on flexible plastic substrates
2. Roll-up displays embedded in clothing can be made using OLEDs.
3. Transparent displays are possible using OLEDs.

Select the correct answer using the code given below

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3**
- (d) None of the above statements is correct

Description

All the statements regarding OLEDs are correct. Also, it is more advanced technology and expected to overcome the disadvantages of LCDs.

ELIMINATION Technique No: 5

Positive initiative or a process have positive impact or outcome Negative process will have negative impact/outcome

ILLUSTRATION: 1

There is some concern regarding the nanoparticles of some chemical elements that are used by the industry in the manufacture of various products. Why? [UPSC (Pre) 2014]

1. They can accumulate in the environment and contaminate water and soil.
2. They can enter the food chains.
3. They can trigger the production of free radicals.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Question deals with concerns regarding 'nano particles'.

All the given statements are negative impact of the same. Thus, we can safely mark (d) as the answer.

ILLUSTRATION: 2

What can be the impact of excessive/inappropriate use of nitrogenous fertilizers in agriculture?

1. Proliferation of nitrogen fixing microorganisms in soil can occur.
2. Increase in the acidity of soil can take place.
3. Leaching nitrate to the ground water can occur.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

(a) 1 and 3 only

(b) 2 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

The question deals with inappropriate use of nitrogenous fertilizers. Statement 1 talks about positive impact, can be discarded.

Statement 2 and 3 are the negative impacts which coincides with nature of question. Thus, option (c) is the desired answer.

ELIMINATION Technique No: 6

Opposite or contradictory statements are generally seen as part of the answer option in both single statement and multiple statement MCQ. Also, Both opposite option cannot come together. (concluded after analysing last 10 years prelims paper).

ILLUSTRATION: 1

In rural road construction, the use of which of the following is preferred for ensuring environmental sustainability or to reduce carbon footprint? [UPSC (Pre) 2020]

1. Copper slag
2. Cold mix asphalt technology
3. Geotextiles
4. Hot mix asphalt technology
5. Portland cement

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1, 2 and 3 only

(b) 2, 3 and 4 only

- (c) 4 and 5 only
- (d) 1 and 5 only

Description

Statement 2 and 4 are opposite to each other. Thus, generally they should not come together in the answer option. This implies option (b) can be eliminated. Also, one of them generally Seen in the answer. option (a) can be discarded. Now, a mindful choice should be made between (a) and (c) to mark the correct answer.

ILLUSTRATION: 2

An increase in the Bank Rate generally indicates that the [UPSC (Pre) 2013]

- (a) Market rate of interest is likely to fall
- (b) Central Bank is no longer making loans to commercial banks
- (c) Central Bank is following an easy money policy
- (d) Central Bank is following a tight money policy

DESCRIPTION

options (c) and (d) are 20131 opposites of each other. Hence, (a) and (b) can't be the answer. money Now, the working mechanism of RBI should be properly employed to reach answer options from (c) and (d).

ILLUSTRATION: 3

Supply of money remaining the same when there is an increase in demand for money, there will be [UPSC (Pre) 2013]

- (a) A fall in the level of prices
- (b) An increase in the rate of interest
- (c) A decrease in the rate of interest
- (d) An increase in the level of income and employment.

DESCRIPTION

Options (b) and (c) are contrary to each other. One of these must be the answer. With basic knowledge of inflation and interest rate, we can reach the correct answer option

ILLUSTRATION: 4

The increasing amount of carbon dioxide in the air is slowly raising the temperature of the atmosphere, because it absorbs [UPSC (Pre) 2012]

- (a) The water vapour of the air and retains its heat.
- (b) The ultraviolet part of the solar radiation.
- (c) All the solar radiation.
- (d) The infrared part of the solar radiation.

Description

Option (b) and (d) are diverse yet similar options. Plus, basic readings from NCERT class xll- Bio, correct answer options can be chosen

ILLUSTRATION: 5

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2019]

1. According to the Indian Patents Act, a biological process to create a seed can be patented in India.
2. In India, there is no Intellectual Property Appellate Board.
3. Plant varieties are not eligible in the patented in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 1 and 3 are opposite. Thus, both of them may not come together. Thus, (a) and (d) can be eliminated. Statement 2 can be negated by the general knowledge that India has an intellectual property appellate board.

ILLUSTRATION: 6

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2018]

Human capital formation as a concept is better explained in terms of a process, which enables

1. Individuals of a country to accumulate more capital.
2. Increasing the knowledge, skill levels and capacities of the people of the country.
3. Accumulation of tangible wealth.
4. Accumulation of intangible wealth.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 4
- (d) 1, 3 and 4

Description

Statement 3 and 4 are opposite of each other i.e., Tangible and intangible.

Option (d) can be discarded. One of them should be in answer

Option (a) can be eliminated and option (b)

Thus, we can mark (c) as the answer

ILLUSTRATION: 7

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2018]

1. The Barren Island volcano is an active volcano located in the Indian Territory.

2. Barren Island lies about 140 km east of Great This Nicobar
3. The last time the Barren Island volcano toge erupted was in 1991 and it has remained inactive since then.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1only
- (b) 2 and 3
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1 and 3

Description

In statement 1, it is said to be an active volcano and in statement 3, it is said to be inactive. Thus, are opposite of each other and cannot come together. Hence, (d) can be discarded. In statement 2, place has been tweaked. The Island lies in the Andaman Islands group.

ILLUSTRATION: 8

The Parliament can make any law for whole or any part of India for implementing international are treaties [UPSC (Pre) 2013]

- (a) With the consent of all the States
- (b) With the consent of the majority of States
- (c) With the consent of the States concerned
- (d) Without the consent of any State

Description

Statement (a) and (d) are contrary of each other. With basic knowledge of powers of union government and 7th schedule. Correct answer can be marked.

ILLUSTRATION: 9

The most important fishing grounds of the world are found in the regions where. [UPSC (Pre) 2013]

- (a) Warm and cold atmospheric currents meet
- (b) Rivers drain out large amounts of fresh water
- (c) Warm and cold oceanic currents meet
- (d) Continental shelf is undulating

Description

Options (a) and (a) are opposite of each other. Hence, one of them has to be answer. Though basic concept of ocean currents is required to make the answer.

ILLUSTRATION: 10

Why are dewdrops not formed on a cloudy night? [UPSC (Pre) 2019]

- (a) Clouds absorb the radiation released from the Earth's surface.
- (b) Clouds reflect back the Earth's radiation.
- (c) The Earth's surface would have low temperature on cloudy nights.
- (d) Clouds deflect the blowing wind to ground level.

Description

Options (a) and (b) are contrary of each other. Though, the general mechanism of formation of dew drops should be known to mark the correct answer.

ELIMINATION Technique No: 7

If a statement has a mention of any organization, Department or ministry, it is mostly false. (Generally tweaked to make statement incorrect).

ILLUSTRATION: 10

With reference to organic farming in India consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2018]

1. The National Programme for Organic Production(NPOP) is operated under the guidelines and directions of the Union Ministry of Rural Development.
2. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) functions as the Secretariat for the Thus, implementation of NPOP.
3. Sikkim has become India's first fully organic State.

Which of the statements given above is/correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

In statement 1, the Ministry name is incorrect. The Minister of commerce has implemented a national programme for organic production since 2001. Thus, statement 1 can be eliminated. Option (a) and (d) can be discarded.

ILLUSTRATION: 2

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2018]

1. The definition of "Critical Wildlife Habitat" is incorporated in the Forest Rights Act, 2006.
2. For the first time in India, Baigas have been given Habitat Rights.
3. Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change officially decides and declares Habitat Rights for Primitive and Vulnerable Tribal Groups in any part of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

District level committee ensures habitat rights of all PVTGs as declared under the forest rights Act, 2006 not the union ministry of environment forest and climate change. Therefore, statement 3 can be eliminated.

ILLUSTRATION: 3

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2018]clu

1. The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 replaced the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954.
2. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is under the charge of Director General of Health Services in the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Description

Statement 2 can be eliminated as FSSAI is not under Director General rather an independent (autonomous body).

ILLUSTRATION: 4

Consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2017]

1. The Election Commission of India is a five-member body.
2. Union Ministry of Home Affairs decides the election schedule for the conduct of both general elections and bye-elections.
3. Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognized political parties.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 3 only

Description

Election commission of Indian (ECI) decides the election schedule for the conduct of general and bye-elections, not the union Ministry of Home Affairs. Hence, statement 2 can be eliminated to reach (d) as the answer option.

ILLUSTRATION: 5

Consider the following in respect of National Career Services': [UPSC (Pre) 2017]

1. National Career Service is an initiative of the Department of Personnel and Training, Government of India.
2. The National Career Service has been launched in a Mission Mode to improve the employment opportunities to uneducated youth of the country.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Description

Nation career services is an initiative of labour and employment Ministry. Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.

ILLUSTRATION: 6

With reference to Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, consider the following statements: [UPSC (Pre) 2018]

1. It is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
2. It, among other things, will also impart training in soft skills, entrepreneurship, financial and digital literacy.
3. It aims to align the competencies of the unregulated workforce of the country to the National Skill Qualification Framework.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

Statement 1 can be eliminated as PM - Kaushal Vikas Yojana is flagship scheme of ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship. Thus, options (a) and (d) can be discarded.

ILLUSTRATION: 7

With reference to the Genetically Modified GM mustard (GM mustard) developed in India, consider the following statements:[UPSC (Pre) 2018]

1. GM mustard has the genes of a soil bacterium that give the plant the property of pest-resistance to a wide variety of pests.
2. GM mustard has the genes that allow the plant cross pollination and hybridization
3. GM mustard has been developed jointly by the IARI and Punjab Agricultural University.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Description

'GM Mustard' was developed by Delhi university-based centre for genetic manipulation of crop plants under the leadership of Deepak Pant. Hence, statement 3 can be discarded.