

CUET 2026 May 21 Shift 1 Geography

Question Paper (Memory-Based) with Solutions

Conducted by National Testing Agency (NTA)



General Instructions

- (i) The examination will be conducted in Computer-Based Test (CBT) mode.
- (ii) Each question carries +5 marks for correct answer and -1 mark for wrong answer.
- (iii) The total number of questions are 50.
- (iv) Duration of the exam is 1 hour (60 minutes).

1. Which of the following varieties of iron ore is known as the best quality ore with very high iron content?

- (A) Magnetite
- (B) Hematite
- (C) Limonite
- (D) Siderite

Correct Answer: (A) Magnetite

Solution:

Concept: Iron ores are naturally occurring rocks from which iron is extracted. Different varieties of iron ore contain different percentages of iron. The quality of iron ore depends upon the amount of iron content present in it.

- **Magnetite** contains the highest iron content.
- **Hematite** is the most widely used iron ore in India.
- **Limonite** contains lower iron percentage.
- **Siderite** has impurities and comparatively less iron.

Thus, the ore with the best quality and highest iron content is Magnetite.

Step 1: Identify the iron ore having maximum iron content.

Magnetite is considered the finest quality iron ore because it contains nearly 70% iron content.

Magnetite $\approx$ 70% iron

Step 2: Compare with other iron ores.

- Hematite contains lower iron content than Magnetite.
- Limonite is a hydrated iron oxide with lower purity.
- Siderite contains carbonate impurities.

Therefore, Magnetite is regarded as the best quality iron ore.

Magnetite is the best quality iron ore with very high iron content.

Quick Tip: Remember:

- **Magnetite** → Highest iron content
- **Hematite** → Most abundantly used in India

2. Consider the following statements regarding the phases of population growth in India:

1. The period between 1901 and 1921 is referred to as a period of stagnant or stationary phase of growth.
2. The period between 1921 and 1951 is referred to as the period of steady population growth.
3. The period between 1951 and 1981 is referred to as the period of population explosion in India.
4. After 1981 till present, the crude birth rate has started increasing rapidly.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (A) 1 and 3 only
(B) 1, 2 and 3 only

(C) 2, 3 and 4 only

(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Correct Answer: (B) 1, 2 and 3 only

Solution:

Concept: India's population growth is divided into different phases based on birth rate, death rate, and growth trends.

- **1901–1921** → Period of stagnant or stationary population growth
- **1921–1951** → Period of steady population growth
- **1951–1981** → Period of population explosion
- **After 1981** → Growth rate started declining due to better education, healthcare, and family planning

Step 1: Examine Statement 1.

The period from 1901 to 1921 is known as the **stationary or stagnant phase** because population growth remained very low due to high birth and death rates.

Hence, Statement 1 is correct.

Step 2: Examine Statement 2.

Between 1921 and 1951, India experienced a gradual decline in death rate while birth rate remained high, leading to **steady population growth**.

Hence, Statement 2 is correct.

Step 3: Examine Statement 3.

From 1951 to 1981, rapid improvements in healthcare and food supply reduced death rates significantly, causing a **population explosion**.

Hence, Statement 3 is correct.

Step 4: Examine Statement 4.

After 1981, the crude birth rate did **not increase rapidly**. Instead, it started **declining** because of awareness, literacy, and family planning measures.

Hence, Statement 4 is incorrect.

Therefore, only Statements 1, 2, and 3 are correct.

Statements 1, 2 and 3 only are correct.

Quick Tip: Remember the phases of population growth in India:

- 1901–1921 → Stagnant phase
- 1921–1951 → Steady growth
- 1951–1981 → Population explosion
- After 1981 → Growth rate declining

3. The Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) in Bharmour region belongs to which state?

- (A) Himachal Pradesh
- (B) Uttarakhand
- (C) Jammu and Kashmir
- (D) Arunachal Pradesh

Correct Answer: (A) Himachal Pradesh

Solution:

Concept: The Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) is a government initiative launched for the socio-economic development of tribal populations in India. Bharmour is a tribal region known for the Gaddi tribal community.

Step 1: Identify the location of Bharmour region.

Bharmour is located in the **Chamba district** of the state of **Himachal Pradesh**.

Step 2: Understand the purpose of ITDP

The Integrated Tribal Development Project was implemented in tribal-dominated regions to improve:

- Education

- Healthcare
- Employment opportunities
- Infrastructure and living conditions

Bharmour was selected under this project because of its significant tribal population. Therefore, the ITDP in Bharmour region belongs to Himachal Pradesh.

Bharmour ITDP belongs to Himachal Pradesh.

Quick Tip: Remember:

- **Bharmour** → Chamba district
- **State** → Himachal Pradesh
- Known for the **Gaddi tribal community**

4. Consider the following statements regarding Human Settlements in India:

1. Clustered settlements are distinctively found in the fertile alluvial plains and the northeastern states.
2. Semi-clustered settlements may result from the segregation or fragmentation of a large compact village.
3. Hamleted settlements are locally called Panna, Para, Palli, Nagla, or Dhani in different parts of the country.
4. Dispersed settlements appear in the form of isolated huts in remote jungles or hills.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (A) 1 and 4 only
- (B) 2 and 3 only
- (C) 1, 3 and 4 only
- (D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Correct Answer: (D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Solution:

Concept: Human settlements are classified on the basis of spacing, arrangement, and distribution of houses. The major rural settlement patterns are:

- Clustered or compact settlements
- Semi-clustered settlements
- Hamleted settlements
- Dispersed or isolated settlements

Each type develops according to physical, social, and economic conditions.

Step 1: Examine Statement 1.

Clustered settlements are commonly found in fertile alluvial plains because flat land and fertile soil support agriculture and dense population. Such settlements are also found in some northeastern regions.

Hence, Statement 1 is correct.

Step 2: Examine Statement 2.

Semi-clustered settlements often develop when a large compact village gets fragmented due to social segregation or expansion of population.

Hence, Statement 2 is correct.

Step 3: Examine Statement 3.

Hamleted settlements consist of small clusters of houses separated from each other. These are locally known by names such as:

- Panna
- Para
- Palli
- Nagla
- Dhani

Hence, Statement 3 is correct.

Step 4: Examine Statement 4.

Dispersed settlements are isolated settlements generally found in remote forests, hills, or sparsely populated regions where houses are scattered far apart.

Hence, Statement 4 is correct.

Therefore, all four statements are correct.

Statements 1, 2, 3 and 4 are correct.

Quick Tip: Remember the settlement types:

- **Clustered** → Compact villages in fertile plains
- **Semi-clustered** → Fragmented compact settlements
- **Hamleted** → Small groups of houses
- **Dispersed** → Isolated huts in hills and forests

5. Which sector utilizes the highest share of both surface and groundwater in India?

- (A) Industrial Sector
- (B) Domestic Sector
- (C) Agricultural Sector
- (D) Power Generation

Correct Answer: (C) Agricultural Sector

Solution:

Concept: Water resources in India are utilized by different sectors such as agriculture, industries, domestic households, and power generation. Among these sectors, agriculture requires the maximum amount of water mainly for irrigation purposes.

- Surface water includes rivers, lakes, canals, and reservoirs.

- Groundwater is obtained through wells and tube wells.
- Irrigation activities consume the largest share of both sources.

Step 1: Understand the water requirement of agriculture.

Agriculture depends heavily on irrigation for crop production, especially in regions with irregular rainfall.

Large quantities of water are required for:

- Crop cultivation
- Irrigation systems
- Multiple cropping practices

Step 2: Compare with other sectors.

- Industrial sector uses comparatively less water than agriculture.
- Domestic sector mainly uses water for household purposes.
- Power generation consumes water but not as extensively as irrigation.

Thus, agriculture utilizes the highest share of both surface and groundwater in India.

Agricultural sector utilizes the highest share of water in India.

Quick Tip: Remember:

- **Agriculture** → Highest water consumption
- Major use of water → Irrigation
- India heavily depends on groundwater for farming

6. Match the Watershed Programmes in List I with their States/Agencies in List II:

List I (Programme)		List II (State/Agency)	
Sr.No.	Programme	Sr.No.	State/Agency
a.	Hariyali	1.	Andhra Pradesh
b.	Neeru-Meeru	2.	Rajasthan (Alwar)
c.	Arvari Pani Sansad	3.	Central Government

Which of the following options represents the correct match?

- (A) a-3, b-2, c-1
- (B) a-1, b-3, c-2
- (C) a-3, b-1, c-2
- (D) a-2, b-1, c-3

Correct Answer: (C) a-3, b-1, c-2

Solution:

Concept: Watershed development programmes are launched to conserve water resources, improve groundwater recharge, and support sustainable development in drought-prone regions. Different watershed programmes are associated with different states or agencies.

Step 1: Identify the programme Hariyali.

The **Hariyali Programme** was launched by the **Central Government** to strengthen watershed development through community participation.

Therefore,

$$a \rightarrow 3$$

Step 2: Identify the programme Neeru-Meeru.

Neeru-Meeru is a water conservation and watershed programme started in **Andhra Pradesh**. Therefore,

$$b \rightarrow 1$$

Step 3: Identify Arvari Pani Sansad.

Arvari Pani Sansad is associated with **Alwar district of Rajasthan**. It is a community-based

water management initiative.

Therefore,

$$c \rightarrow 2$$

Step 4: Determine the correct matching option.

The correct matching is:

$$a - 3, b - 1, c - 2$$

Hence, the correct option is (C).

$a - 3, b - 1, c - 2$

Quick Tip: Remember these important watershed programmes:

- Hariyali → Central Government
- Neeru-Meeru → Andhra Pradesh
- Arvari Pani Sansad → Rajasthan (Alwar)

7. In which year was the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) established in India to develop infrastructure along borders?

- (A) 1950
- (B) 1960
- (C) 1970
- (D) 1980

Correct Answer: (B) 1960

Solution:

Concept: The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is an important agency of the Government of India responsible for developing and maintaining road infrastructure in border areas and remote regions.

The organisation plays a crucial role in:

- Border connectivity
- National security
- Strategic transportation
- Infrastructure development in difficult terrains

Step 1: Identify the year of establishment of BRO.

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) was established in the year:

1960

Step 2: Understand the purpose of BRO.

BRO was created to improve transportation and communication facilities in:

- Border regions
- Mountainous areas
- Remote and strategically important locations

It has significantly contributed to road construction in regions such as the Himalayas and northeastern states.

Therefore, the correct answer is 1960.

BRO was established in 1960.

Quick Tip: Remember:

- **BRO** → Border Roads Organisation
- **Established** → 1960
- **Main objective** → Development of border infrastructure

8. Arrange the following Railway Zones of India from North to South based on the location of

their respective headquarters:

1. South Central Railway
2. Northern Railway
3. Southern Railway
4. Western Railway

Which of the following options is correct?

- (A) 2 - 4 - 1 - 3
(B) 2 - 1 - 4 - 3
(C) 4 - 2 - 1 - 3
(D) 2 - 4 - 3 - 1

Correct Answer: (A) 2 - 4 - 1 - 3

Solution:

Concept: Railway zones in India are arranged according to the geographical location of their headquarters. To determine the order from north to south, we identify the headquarters of each railway zone.

- Northern Railway → New Delhi
- Western Railway → Mumbai
- South Central Railway → Secunderabad
- Southern Railway → Chennai

Step 1: Identify the northernmost headquarters.

Northern Railway has its headquarters in **New Delhi**, which lies furthest north among the given options.

Therefore,

2 comes first

Step 2: Locate the next headquarters towards the south.

Western Railway headquarters is in **Mumbai**, which is south of Delhi.

Therefore,

4 comes next

Step 3: Compare Secunderabad and Chennai.

- South Central Railway → Secunderabad
- Southern Railway → Chennai

Secunderabad lies north of Chennai.

Therefore,

1 comes before 3

Step 4: Write the final arrangement from North to South.

The correct sequence is:

2 – 4 – 1 – 3

Hence, option (A) is correct.

2 – 4 – 1 – 3

Quick Tip: Remember the headquarters:

- Northern Railway → New Delhi
- Western Railway → Mumbai
- South Central Railway → Secunderabad
- Southern Railway → Chennai

Arrange them geographically from north to south.

9. What type of agriculture is characterized by the burning of cleared vegetation to add nutrients back into the soil before sowing?

- (A) Intensive Subsistence Agriculture
- (B) Shifting Cultivation (Slash and Burn)
- (C) Plantation Agriculture
- (D) Mediterranean Agriculture

Correct Answer: (B) Shifting Cultivation (Slash and Burn)

Solution:

Concept: Shifting cultivation is a primitive farming method practiced mainly in tropical forest regions. In this method, vegetation is cut and burned to clear land for cultivation. The ashes produced after burning act as natural manure and increase soil fertility temporarily.

Step 1: Understand the process described in the question.

The question mentions:

- Clearing vegetation
- Burning the vegetation
- Adding nutrients back into the soil

This process is known as the **Slash and Burn** technique.

Step 2: Identify the type of agriculture using this method.

The Slash and Burn method is associated with:

Shifting Cultivation

In this system:

- Farmers cultivate land for a few years
- Soil fertility decreases over time
- Farmers shift to another area and repeat the process

Step 3: Eliminate the incorrect options.

- Intensive subsistence agriculture uses intensive labor and irrigation.
- Plantation agriculture focuses on commercial crops.

- Mediterranean agriculture is practiced in Mediterranean climatic regions.

None of these involve slash-and-burn practices.

Therefore, the correct answer is Shifting Cultivation.

Shifting Cultivation (Slash and Burn)

Quick Tip: Remember:

- **Slash and Burn** → Shifting Cultivation
- Ash from burnt vegetation increases soil fertility temporarily
- Also called **Jhum cultivation** in Northeast India

10. Arrange the following major airports located along the Mediterranean-South Asian air route from West to East as a flight would encounter them:

1. Rome (Italy)
2. Cairo (Egypt)
3. Mumbai (India)
4. Bangkok (Thailand)

Which of the following option is correct?

- (A) 1 - 2 - 3 - 4
(B) 2 - 1 - 3 - 4
(C) 1 - 3 - 2 - 4
(D) 4 - 3 - 2 - 1

Correct Answer: (A) 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

Solution:

Concept: To arrange airports from west to east, we compare their geographical locations based on longitude.

- Places located further west are encountered first.
- Places located further east are encountered later.

The Mediterranean-South Asian air route connects Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Step 1: Identify the westernmost airport.

- Rome (Italy) lies in Southern Europe and is west of Cairo.

Hence, Rome comes first.

1 comes first

Step 2: Locate Cairo relative to Rome and Mumbai.

Cairo (Egypt) lies east of Rome but west of Mumbai.

Therefore,

2 comes after 1

Step 3: Compare Mumbai and Bangkok.

- Mumbai is located in western India.
- Bangkok is located further east in Thailand.

Thus,

3 comes before 4

Step 4: Write the complete west-to-east arrangement.

The correct sequence is:

1 – 2 – 3 – 4

Hence, option (A) is correct.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4

Quick Tip: Remember the west-to-east order:

Rome → Cairo → Mumbai → Bangkok

Use longitude positions to arrange places geographically.