

EVALUATION INDICATORS

1. Contextual Competence
2. Content Competence
3. Language Competence
4. Introduction Competence
5. Structure - Presentation Competence
6. Conclusion Competence

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

→ When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves. (Section A)

Circa - second half of the 19th century; the British were tightening their claws on India. A slew of policy changes made one wonder - are the British helping us modernise, or merely taking advantage of our traditional way of life?

Reducing age of civil servants to 19, the infamous Delhi Durbar during a famine, clampdown on Vernacular Press, deportation of popular leaders w/o trial under Sedition, are only some of the many unfair reforms?

When the Indians felt they could no longer appeal to the conscience of British - via prayer, petition & protests, they decided to change their own way. They demanded 'Swaraj' now, and evolved their methods, even to the extent of 'extremism'. With the arrival of Gandhiji, this evolved into 'Satyagraha' & ultimately we won our freedom.

Thus when situations become rigid, we must change, evolve and try new methods.

In this essay, we will see how situations can become rigid, how

we can adapt, the role of perspective, and how the challenge can help us grow and tackle situations.

ACCEPTANCE IS THE STEPPING STONE TO PROGRESS

The first step to progress in any situation is having a fair idea of the reality. Instead of cribbing, or making excuses as to why we are unable to change the situation, we must admit the fallacies and take forward the learnings.

This was evident in 1960s when India faced food insecurity.

The embarrassment from PL-400 grains triggered a revolutionary change in

Indian agriculture. But this was possible only by accepting that our methods were primitive, subsistence level with low productivity. It helped us in becoming the top producer of food grains today. When we couldn't change the agriculture techniques, we were challenged to change our approach.

CHANGE BEGINS FROM WITHIN

It is often said that when an egg breaks from outside, life ends.

But when it breaks from inside, life begins. Thus the challenge to change ourselves is pertinent in our bid to change external situations.

Martin Luther King Jr. was subject to extreme racism. But his inner voice and motivation not only helped him overcome the brutalities himself but also inspired millions across the world. While the situation of racism persists even today, a significant challenge is put against it w/ movements like 'Black Lives Matter'.

Thus a 'bottom up approach' which begins with us is what brings larger change in society.

NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION

This is a maxim that has been true for centuries. As human wants

have risen, innovative methods have brought about change to a hitherto unchangeable situation.

The dependency on cars is an established fact, and with rising population (especially in cities), this demand is only increasing. Understanding that going back to walking, cycling entirely is not possible, led us to adapt our methods w/ the launch of Electric Vehicles. Elon Musk's Tesla is leading this change with his realisation that cars are sine qua non to modern life, & fossil fuels are non renewable.

This necessity is what forced us to invent and innovate technologies to resolve the situation.

A STITCH IN TIME CAN SAVE NINE

21st century is fast becoming synonymous with the 'Internet Age'. Social media keeps the world interconnected, integrated and interdependent.

While it has benefitted the human race in numerous ways, it is a double edged sword.

Rising cases of cyber bullying (boys locker room on Instagram), fake news (termed 'Infodemic' by Somya Swaminathan, a WHO scientist),

insecurities leading to anxiety & depression in the youth creates a situation where we feel helpless.

But resolving this challenge first begins with self regulation i.e. tracking our time spent online & understanding its impact on our emotions.

Government & Civil Society can also use ICE methods via youth organisations like NYS, NSS, NCC.

Thus rolling back of social media is a far cry, but the challenge for judicious use is a battle that can be won. The same is valid for

Industrial Revolution 4.0 which can
neither be stopped, nor be reversed,
but can be dealt w/ by the
right Skill Development.

COVID-19 ; AN UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGE

The tiny virus led to a lockdowns
across the globe. It was unstoppable
and unfathomable. But we devised
ways by changing our behaviour -
use of masks became the 'new normal'
sanitisers were listed as 'essential
commodities'. Our behavioural change
is what cut the transmission of
the virus. This helped us to tame

the situation.

~~DS~~

Thus, in this essay we have seen how situations may not always be subject to change, but what is in our control, is our response to it. ~~As held by~~ ^{even} Gandhiji held that we must 'be the change we wish to see' as every drop in the ocean counts.

As held by Leonardo Da Vinci

'The thing about great people is that that do not sit back f. let things happen to them, they go out f. happen to things.'

There no matter how rigid a situation
may be, the ability to adapt is
what keeps the wheels of progress
moving.

Section B

Best is the enemy of the good

In 6th century BC, Siddharth Gautam left the comfort of his home to find the meaning of life. He sat under a Bodhi Tree where he finally attained enlightenment after years of wandering in search of the truth.

In his sermons, he preached the 'Madhyam Marg' or the middle path, thereby avoiding the extremes of best and worst. His 'Asthangika Marg' or 8 fold path prescribes 'good conduct' 'right knowledge' etc.

Buddhism is a widely followed religion even today, with its ideas of avoiding austerity, or greed, thereby maintaining balance on while walking the tightrope called life.

Thus Buddha helped us see how 'best can be the enemy of the good'.

In this essay we will further analyse how striving to be the best can sometimes backfire, how in the long term there is always equilibrium & how a balanced approach can bring us more rewards than pursuing extremes.

GOLDEN MEAN IS THE GOLDEN RULE

Ancient Greek Philosopher Aristotle

gave this maxim while refuting

his master Plato who was in search of

an 'ultimate idea' and perfection.

Aristotle held that instead of running

behind what's best, we must see

what's best practicable.

It is easy to sit and theorise

what is best, but in the real world

the situation on ground can have

unexpected conditions.

Like in theory a direct democracy

comes across as the best idea but

in reality, a country like India with a billion plus population will be in paralysis if each citizen governs. Thus while Representative democracy is the 'Second best', it is feasible.

Hence finding the middle ground between our capabilities as well as our shortcomings is what makes 'good' more viable than the 'best'

ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD

Post World War II, the world was divided in two blocs, i.e. Capitalism and Socialism. While both ideas were pitched to be the best, both had internal contradictions.

capitalism promoted an individualism ~~not~~ that could breakdown community values, and socialism led to economic inefficiencies. Thus by avoiding both extremes, India adopted the golden mean ∴ a Mixed economy.

Thus what may be portrayed as the 'best' is a function of both time and space. Either of the two blocs did not suit India, its diversity and at the eve of its independence.

However with time, & the disintegration of USSR, capitalism won

the ideological debate. India, with its flexible position (by avoiding extremes) brought in far reaching economic reforms (UPG 1991). Thus, pursuing the 'good' enabled us to adapt with the changing ideas of 'best'.

DEVELOPMENT VS DEFORESTATION DEBATE

From the perspective of modernisation, development is sine qua non to progress. If deforestation is a by product of this endeavour, it is an acceptable collateral damage to achieve our idea of 'best'.

However, from the perspective

of tribals, whose lives and livelihoods both depend on the forests, development is the evil that snatches away their homes, way of life. Their idea of 'best' would be to preserve the forests.

Thus best is often an extreme that is at loggerheads. If we instead pursue a plan that may not be the best but is 'optimum', we will be able to progress. (Pareto principle)

Piecemeal deforestation, along with rehabilitation of tribals can help us reach consensus. This is not

only 'inclusive' but also fosters better decision making w/ timely results, even if at a smaller scale.

Thus, the 'best' of either parties was ~~an~~ enemy of this 'good'.

This was evident in the 'Chipko Movement' led by Sunderlal Baluguna. A middle path of 'Environment Impact Assessment' was reached. Development went hand in hand with preservation.

TIME AND SPACE

Over time the 'best' practices evolve and change. This is true for industrial processes, education &

social values. For eg, at one point women were at their best if they fulfilled their domestic & familial responsibilities. But ~~in today~~ JS Mill talks about how their slavery was normalised. But in today's world, a woman has infinite possibilities. They are shattering the glass ceiling and emerging on top. Cases in point being Indira Nooyi, Gita Gopinath, Jacinda Ardern & many more. Their 'good' outshines what was once 'best'.

The idea of 'best' also changes with 'space'. What may suit one geographical region may

not be ideal for another. While the West preaches 'liberal values', Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew talks about Asian values. Democracy as a 'best' will hamper the east. Thus we see 'Soft Authoritarianism' an idea that is ^{only} good for West but gives promising economic results in East.

HIT AND TRIAL

This is the foundation of scientific research and technological advances. But if 'best' is only acceptable then the bandwidth for failing examples.

Slow and steady progress by pursuing incremental ~~per~~ development helps in breakthrough of revolutionary ideas.

Thomas Edison failed more than a hundred times before finally ~~discovered~~ inventing the bulb.

Even the recent COVID vaccines are not 100% effective, but they have been good enough to control the community transmission.

Thus, while this essay has shown us how 'best' can be an enemy of 'good', we must remember to give our best on our

own individual scale. Acceptance
towards less than perfect results
with a will to learn helps us
progress.

In the words of Martin Luther
King Jr

'If you can't fly, run
If you can't run, walk
If you can't walk, crawl
By all means, keep moving'

Thus the idea of 'best' must not
deter us from giving our best.
Incremental & consistent 'good' is
often better than the 'best'.

Δ situation , Δ ourself

Story: INM

→ Acceptance

↓

- ✓ 1) A begins from within
- ✓ 2) If an egg breaks from outside...

3) Da Vinci: The thing about great ppl is that they...

4) STITCH INTIME → social media

✓ NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER

GREAT POWER → GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

creative destruction

Best is the enemy of good

Story:

- Story - Buddha
- Ancient: Greek Aristotle Golden Mean
Buddha

- Best Practicable

✓ Pol: Representation, not Direct

✓ Eco: Mixed Economy

Social:

✓ Env: Devt oppo is also imp

Time: CHMP: best keeps Δ

Tech: Ideas need to be nurtured

Intell:

Eg: Social: Food shortage
→ CR
→ Fertile

Pol: Rise of AAP
or protestors
becoming pol parties

Eco: NEP 1991

Env: COP 26

✓ Tech: Skill Devt
IR 4.0

Space: Mass ^{num} colonisation

Sports: 1983

✓ Covid: MASKS, sanitiser

Conclusion: Da Vinci

Aspacy: Best for one
Bad for another

↳ evolution to discover