

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.

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'Destruction breeds creation. If something falls apart that leaves room for a new beginning.'

It was the middle of the 1980's, and a fourteen year old boy from the United States of America found himself homeless. He was evicted by his landlord as he did not have money to pay his rent. Further, he came from a broken family, where his father was an alcoholic who was regularly violent with his mother. It was from this most unlikely of scenarios, that a future wrestling great and Hollywood mega star was born.

This was none other than, famous actor Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson. In several of his speeches, he credits those tough times, for building his character and mental fortitude.

An oft-quoted refrain of his is, 'NEVER FORGET THE HARD TIMES'. Thus, we see how pain and sorrow, push us to achieve great things in life.

Destruction, is often viewed very negatively. It is associated with grief, failure and loss. On the other hand creation is more of a positive and regenerative process. The two processes make for strange bed-fellows, but often go hand in hand. Thus in this essay we will explore the relation between these two polar opposites, through various examples.

Destruction often means the extinction of not just material objects, but also structures of thought, attitudes and entire ways of life. It teaches us to unlearn and relearn and sows seeds of

critical analysis in us. Once we have lost everything, we are often unburdened by the crushing weight of society's expectations, which enables us to think clearly.

Loss of certain opportunities often ~~is~~ open up new opportunities to us in the most ~~is~~ unexpected of ways. All of us know that once we hit rock bottom, the only way forward is up. We can explore these thoughts in the fields of history, politics, economy, Environment and so on.

Historically, it is in ^{the} ashes of fallen empires, that the seeds of innovation and rationality are sown. In Europe, the destruction of the Roman Empire, led to a long period

chaos, known as the 'Dark Ages'. However, it forced Europeans to look beyond their kingdoms, thus leading to a state of explorations and the subsequent discovery of the Americas. Art, culture, philosophy and science, all flourished as part of the 'Renaissance'. None of this would have been possible if not for the unfortunate collapse of 'Rome'.

Closer to home, the demise of the Mughal Empire and India's subsequent conquest by British, heralded a new beginning. Indians began to introspect and analyse their culture. Orthodox practices like sati and untouchability were questioned. New ideas of democracy and nationalism were created. The stronghold of religion on the minds of Indians was

reduced.

Even in the field of politics, every loss need not mean the demise of one's political career. In fact, the post-Emergency electoral loss for Ms Indira Gandhi, ~~it~~ allowed her to reinvent herself. She adopted a much softer approach and claimed a stunning victory in 1984.

Economic Aspect →

Similar to Ms Gandhi's victory but much grander in scale is the economic miracle that is 'Japan'. After being laid waste to by the Allies in World War Two, it faced starvation and food shortages. Yet, this allowed the Japanese to reinvent their manufacturing and

center to the post-war economic boom around the world. Innovation in manufacturing through their philosophy of 'Kaizen', made Japan a world leader in car manufacturing, beating their conqueror, the USA, at its own game.

Environmental aspect →

Often, volcanic eruptions and asteroid strikes, wipe out several existing species such as the dinosaurs. Yet, they modify the environment in such a way, that new species such as mammals begin to thrive. The evolution of humans from the ashes of the dinosaurs, demonstrates how destruction breeds creation.

The Universe - A Tale of Renewal →

Our stars stand as testament to the title of the essay, both in their creation and destruction. The death of a star in a fiery explosion called a 'Supernova', results in eventual creation of a new star and surrounding planets. Thus when something falls apart, there is always room for a new beginning.

Space → the FINAL Frontier →

Human attempts to conquer space show us how resurrection is possible even in the darkest of circumstances. Be it the US Challenger Disaster and Space Shuttle Columbia Disaster, or the destruction of our own 'Chandrayaan' mission, every such incident has been followed by renewal and victory.

We see this through Elon Musk and his designs of reusable launch vehicles and ISRO's relaunch of the Chandrayaan mission.

Individual level →

Every person faces moments of failure in life. For King Ashoka, the destruction of Kalinga, proved to be an eye opener. ~~for him~~. It led him on the path of righteousness, as he resolved to create a moral code for his people.

International level →

The collective will of all the nations on earth is seen to arise through the world order almost falling apart. I am referring to the birth of the United Nations, which rose out of the ashes of World

War Two. The international community chose to learn its lessons from previous mistakes like the League of Nations, a predecessor to the UN. Thus the world has remained free of world wars up till now.

When is destruction counter-productive to creation?

At times, destruction can set into motion a cycle of continuous pain and misery. The efforts of Adolf Hitler, who sought to create a new Germany, through the extermination of so-called 'undesirable races', provide us ample warning.

Countries today are engaged in relentless production of green house gases through destruction of forests. This threatens to disrupt the delicate

temperature balance of the Earth potentially raising temperatures by four to five degrees, as per the 'Hothouse Earth' theory.

How do we move forward?

The question arises on how we do as individuals embrace the very natural phenomena of 'destruction' and 'things falling apart'? We must ~~embrace~~ not be afraid to learn from our mistakes. The scholar, Nassim Nicholas Taleb, speaks of 'Black Swan' events, which are sudden events of destruction, which occur at random. Examples include the 2008 economic crisis or the 9/11 attacks. He asks us to be mentally prepared to face such negative events.

Every innovative process or piece of creativity on earth is the result of a person not being afraid to push their boundaries. Artists refer to this process as 'creative destruction', where we knock down our old ways of thinking and begin seeing things through a new perspective.

This does not mean that we engage in the negative process of self destruction. Rather, it exhorts us to use moments of failure, and rebuild for the good of all. The philosophy of 'UBUNTU', given^{to} us by Nelson Mandela, which stresses the interconnectedness of all human beings, can serve as a guiding light to us, as we seek to rebuild.

'One may snatch a nap amidst raging fire', but cannot sleep a wink in poverty dire!

~~The life of a~~ Twelve year old Jamlo Makdem is a tribal girl from one of the ~~to~~ most backward districts of Jharkhand. She moves with her parents from town to town in search of work, as a family of migrant labourers. Every day is a new struggle to find work, food and sust.

The recent lockdown, induced by the pandemic, sprung another surprise. It forced her parents and her, to begin a long journey on foot, from Mumbai, to their hometown, in Jharkhand. Deprived of food & water, and forced to walk in the scorching summer heat, she tragically passed away, in the midst of her journey.

The above journey, demonstrates the mind numbing and soul crushing effects of poverty, on the human will. A human being, is a resilient creature, equipped to survive the hottest deserts or the coldest mountains, provided he or she has access to basic needs of food, water, ~~leisure~~ and peace.

Yet, poverty is a most dehumanising process. It drains the will of ~~the~~ even the most determined person. This is because, it is not a one time challenge, or obstacle to surmount. It is a lived reality, where one is deprived of the most basic needs, which drives us into a state of hopelessness and negativity.

Thus the capability of humans, who may catch a nap amidst a

raging fire, but lose out on even
that when faced with poverty, needs
to be explored in various dimensions.

An Evolutionary Perspective →

Noted author Yurak Noah Harari,
in his book 'Sapiens', aptly demonstrates
the title of the essay. He notes how
ancient hunter-gatherers, lived a
prosperous life, even if faced with
beasts, droughts, disasters and lightning,
as they always had access to basic
needs of nutrition and leisure.

However, the rise of the farming
economy, with its frequent famines
(food shortage), overcrowding and disease,
led to a hopeless and sleepless life,
for farmers from Iran to China to
America. Ultimately it was abject
poverty, that drained their will to
live.

Closer to home, medieval Indian history offers us a telling example. The emperor, Humayun, son of Babur, ~~for~~ lost ~~to~~ all of his kingdom in India to other claimants like Sher Shah Suri. He wandered from place to place, thinking of ways to regain his empire, and eventually he succeeded.

However, the life of an 'untouchable' of those times, was led in crushing poverty, from which there was no escape. Excluded from knowledge, wealth, clothes and basic amenities, there was no escape from this situation, unlike in the case of Emperor Humayun.

An economic viewpoint →

Analysed, via economic tools, the title, is again seen to be true. A nation can bear any crisis, just as

the United States, fought off the 2008 financial crisis; as it had the resources to do so. Yet, once we add poverty into the mix, as in case of Somalia, the situation tends to spiral out of control. Wars, rapes and famines, have all visited this land as a consequence of poverty. Thus no respite was obtained from ~~the~~ the vicious grip of poverty.

Through the eyes of a woman →

Even while understanding the struggles of women, the title of the essay resonates with us. For example, the Nobel Laureate, Malala Yousufzai, faced violence in her hometown of Swat (in Pakistan) for attempting to spread education.

Yet, being educated herself, and having educated parents, she was able to convey her message on

women's issues, and thus she became a renowned activist.

However the same opportunity may not be afforded, to the ordinary women of Swat Valley in Pakistan. They lack an education, a voice, freedom of movement and are burdened by domestic responsibilities and patriarchal values. In other words, even though Malala herself, could get some respite from her ordeal, the poor women of Swat valley, can't even catch that 'proverbial wink of sleep from poverty'.

A Thinker's methodology →

Renowned economist Amartya Sen's 'capability' approach, offer us a valuable insight, in the essay. He believes that all people can live upto their true potential, provided they have access

to certain basic facilities like education, health and sanitation. This helps build up their capabilities to face any possible challenge.

But, devoid of these basic amenities, poverty begins to drag them into a vicious cycle from which there is no escape. It perpetrates an inter generational cycle of suffering, from neither parents, nor their progeny can escape.

A similar theory, known as 'Broken window theory', believes that as long as people continue to live in poor areas, (i.e.) in places with broken windows, this attracts other issues of crime, violence etc. Thus breaking the cycle of poverty must be our prime aim.

From, an international perspective too, the recent Covid-19 pandemic has

shown us how apt the title of the essay is. While most nations were able to overcome the initial fire of the pandemic, through drugs & timely vaccinations, poorer nations did not have it this easy.

Several African nations like Burundi and Burkina Faso, have ~~to~~ even today, not been able to vaccinate even two to three percent of their population, despite raging ~~to~~ coronavirus pandemics in their territories. Their poverty hasn't let them catch even a wink of sleep.

A subtle counter argument →

Despite, poverty being a hard reality even today, things have begun to change. The sources of this change include technology, international cooperation

and kindness of other individuals -
For example → India ~~is~~ through its
pharmaceutical prowess, helped end the
relentless AIDS epidemic in Africa.
Thus, ~~the~~ the nightmare of poverty
and disease, in those areas was
alleviated to an extent.

Summing up of thoughts, and looking
ahead →

~~Thus~~ Being poor even today represents
a 'sleepless night' for all of humanity.
While humans have faced economic
crises, epidemics and even prevented
impending nuclear war, poverty has
proved to be a 'thorn in our collective
side'.

The realities of 'Jamlo Makdom', the
12 year old tribal girl, and countless
others like her continue to exist. Wandering

migrants continue to roam the city streets of India in search of a decent livelihood. The solutions could be several, such as giving employment, food and cash transfers for the poor. Yet, what is most important, is to rouse the collective conscience of the nation from its slumber, into recognising, the eternal lack of sleep of India's poor.