

Topper's Talk with Kasturi Panda (Rank 67)

17th June, 2023 at 1:00 PM

SOURCES:(1:40 PM):

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Subject	Source
Modern History	Spectrum
World History	Pratik Nayak sir's videos
Geography	11th & 12th NCERTs, Rajtanil Mam's videos
Polity	Laxmikanth
Economy	Mrunal Patel sir materials and videos G Subba Rao book for definitions. Rest to be done by self as per the analysis of previous years' questions
Ethics	
Miscellaneous(Governance, International Relations, etc)	Value addition materials, PT 365, Mains 365, etc.
Sociology Optional	Ignou material, Haralambos sociology themes, and perspectives.

Choosing Optional Subject:

- Every optional subject demands hard work.
- UPSC has no favorite optional, and we see toppers of almost every subject every year.
- The student himself/herself must take the final choice.
- Just like all other subjects, even optional subjects will have different strategies for different students.
- Though an optional subject is very important, we must balance our efforts given to optional along with those for General Studies and Essay papers.

Time Management:

- There are no good or bad strategies as such.
- Students must have flexible means for an inflexible target of clearing the exam.

Mock Tests:

- The analysis of the mock tests is as important as giving them.
- We must not be disheartened by low marks on initial tests.
- All the mistakes that we will commit in the mock test, will not be repeated again.
- The mistakes that we commit in mock tests will be remembered in a better way rather than what we get correct.

Language:

- We are not expected to write at a very high level of English.
- Going through the introductions of Chapters of Economic Surveys would be enough.

Conditioning for the exam:

- As the exam halls will most probably not have air conditioning, we can try to practice attempting tests without the AC.
- This will save much time and attention while giving the exam.
- Students must try to have a good sleep and diet before the exam.
- All the aspirants have the same materials for the preparation so the paper would be as difficult or as easy as anyone else.

Making notes:

- Note-making is an art and just like other arts, it will get better with practice.
- Students must expect that initially, their notes could get very bulky.
- After practice, and guidance through PYQs and syllabus, our notes will get precise.
- Making notes of the books/sources that we have in physical form can be avoided.
- Underlining important points would be enough.
- Making notes of newspapers can be avoided as it will take up too much time.
- We can prefer compilations of newspapers prepared by coaching institutions.
- For Geography, International Relations, etc. we can make short notes on the map itself.
- We can do the same with the books and materials that we have.
- Only adding certain additions to the already made notes/books through current affairs and tests will save much time.
- This will save us time both while reading and revision.

Mindset while giving the test/Actual exam:

- Our main purpose must be only and only to give one's best.
- We must not indulge in judging our capacity or preparation while giving the test, on the basis of the questions before us.

Mains examinations:

- Students must prioritize covering more and more questions, rather than getting into scholarly depths in some questions we think we know too much about.
- Conveying more information/opinion/dimensions in fewer words must be practiced rather than using too many words.

ANSWER WRITING BASICS (2:10 PM):**Introduction:**

- The introduction must be brief and informative.
- We can use data for adding value.
- **For example**, we can quote the recent indices of global indexes or reports for questions on hunger/malnutrition.

Main Body/Content:

- We must try to read the common sources with the motive to pick up value addition points for our answers.
- We must try to link the topics that we have read.
- **For example**- We can link government schemes with related Sustainable Development Goals.
- Value addition through diagrams/ maps is important, but diagrams can only improve our content, and not replace the content.
- Our efforts, time, and space must be allocated more to the actual content and not to maps/diagrams.

Conclusion:

- Maintaining a list of generic conclusions could be helpful.

MEMORIZING THINGS (2:40 PM):

- We cannot memorize every word of the huge syllabus, so we can avoid aiming for that.
- Due to the demands of the exam, word limits, time limits, etc. we are not expected to memorize each and every word of what we have read and we will read
- We will remember important things only after multiple readings and revisions.
- Revision does not mean going through each and every word of what we have read.
- While revision, we only need to focus on those things that we have problems with or the things that are new additions.

Ethics:

- Thinkers, examples, and cases are important, but we must not forget that we are writing a General Studies paper after all.
- The answer must not be overloaded by technical jargon, examples, etc.

Essay:

- Practicing is important.
- We can combine essay writing practice with the language paper.

CSAT PAPER 2 (3:20 PM):

- Regardless of the academic background, the practice of CSAT paper 2 must be done.
- We must know what question to attempt and when to leave a question.

Interview:

- Personality development is a continuous process that must happen including and beyond the preparation.
- Preparation beginners must initially focus on strengthening their basics of the subjects and current affairs.

Students must remember:

- Students must be **process-oriented** rather than **outcome-oriented**.
- Students must believe that there is no single standard sure-shot strategy of preparation, revision, practicing, note-making, etc for the exam.
- Students can take inspiration from topper talks, and classrooms, but in no case must they ignore their own ground realities, time available, inclinations toward subjects, etc.
- The Civil Services Examination is just another examination and not a matter of life & death.
- The exam provides a level of playing field for everyone.
- We just need to be better prepared, composed, and confident than others.