CUET 2026 May 11 Shift 2 History

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. Mirabai defied her husband and did not submit to which traditional role?

(a) Wife

(b) Mother

(c) Both (a) and (b)

(d) None of the above

Correct Answer: (c) Both (a) and (b)

Solution:

Concept: Mirabai (c. 1498–c. 1546) was a Rajput princess and a legendary devotee of Lord Krishna. Her life is a significant example of the Bhakti movement's challenge to social and gender hierarchies. Key historical context:

- **Defiance of Norms:** Mirabai refused to perform the traditional duties expected of a royal wife and daughter-in-law.
- **Spiritual Path:** She considered Lord Krishna to be her true husband, leading her to renounce her worldly marriage and maternal expectations.

Step 1: Understanding the defiance of the role of 'Wife'.

Mirabai was married to Bhoj Raj, the crown prince of Mewar. However, she refused to

acknowledge him as her husband in a spiritual sense, neglecting her royal duties and refusing to participate in the traditional rituals of the palace, such as the worship of the family deity.

Step 2: Understanding the defiance of the role of 'Mother'.

By abandoning the palace to become a wandering saint (bhakt), she rejected the conventional household path which centered on child-rearing and domesticity. She did not fulfill the traditional expectation of providing an heir to the throne, choosing instead a life of asceticism and devotion.

Quick Tip: Mirabai's rebellion was not just personal but social; by choosing the path of a *sanyassin* (ascetic), she challenged the patriarchal structures of 16th-century Rajput society.

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2. What was the primary focus of activities in Chanhudaro?

(a) Agriculture and farming

(b) Religious ceremonies

(c) Educational activities

(d) Craft production

Correct Answer: (d) Craft production

Solution:

Concept: Chanhudaro is a significant archaeological site of the Indus Valley Civilization (Harappan Culture), located in present-day Sindh, Pakistan. Unlike larger administrative centers like Mohenjo-daro, Chanhudaro was a specialized settlement. Key characteristics include:

- **Industrial Hub:** It was almost exclusively devoted to craft production.
- **Specialization:** It is famous for being a major center for bead-making, shell-cutting, metal-working, seal-making, and weight-making.

Step 1: Identifying the Nature of the Settlement.

Archaeological evidence, such as the discovery of unfinished beads, drills, and raw materials (like carnelian, jasper, crystal, and steatite), proves that the entire settlement was a manufacturing unit. It was much smaller than Mohenjo-daro but essential for trade within the Harappan network.

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Step 2: Evaluating Other Options.

While agriculture was the backbone of the entire Indus Valley economy (Option a), Chanhudaro's *primary focus* as a specific urban site was industrial. There is no significant evidence of large-scale religious structures (Option b) or formal educational institutions (Option c) that would define the site's primary activity.

Quick Tip: To identify craft centers in Harappan sites, look for "waste" or "rejects." Chanhudaro is often called the "Sheffield of India" (in an ancient context) due to its vast industrial output.

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3. Consider the following statements about 'Ain-i-Akbari' and choose the correct statements.

(A) The Ain is made up of three books.

(B) Ain was officially sponsored to record detailed information.

(C) The data in the Ain has been carefully collected.

(D) Historians have detected no errors in totaling.

Choose the correct answer from the options given below:

(a) (A), (B), (C) only

(b) (A), (B), (D) only

(c) (A), (C), (D) only

(d) (B), (C) only

Correct Answer: (d) (B), (C) only

Solution:

Concept: The *Ain-i-Akbari* (Administration of Akbar) is a 16th-century detailed document recording the administration of the Mughal Empire under Emperor Akbar, written by his court historian, Abu'l Fazl. Key structural and historical facts:

- **Structure:** The *Akbarnama* is divided into three books. The *Ain-i-Akbari* is actually the **third volume** of the *Akbarnama*, and the *Ain* itself is divided into **five** books (daftars).
- **Purpose:** It was an official imperial project to provide a snapshot of the empire—its administration, army, revenues, and the traditions of the people.

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- **Accuracy:** While Abu'l Fazl was meticulous, modern historians have found several arithmetic slips and errors in totaling in the numerical data.

Step 1: Evaluating Statement (A).

Statement (A) says the *Ain* is made up of three books. This is a common point of confusion. The *Akbarnama* consists of three books, but the *Ain-i-Akbari* (the 3rd book of Akbarnama) is subdivided into **five** books. Thus, (A) is incorrect in this specific context.

Step 2: Evaluating Statements (B), (C), and (D).

- **(B) is correct:** It was commissioned by Akbar to create a quantitative record of the empire.
- **(C) is correct:** Abu'l Fazl revised the draft five times and collected data from various local levels (qanungos) to ensure accuracy.
- **(D) is incorrect:** Historians like Irfan Habib have noted that despite the care taken, there are numerous errors in the addition/totaling of figures in the tables.

Quick Tip: Remember the hierarchy: **Akbarnama** = 3 Parts. Part 3 = **Ain-i-Akbari**. **Ain-i-Akbari** = 5 Daftars (Books). This distinction is crucial for exams!

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4. In what language did the Alvars and Nayanars compose their hymns?

(a) Tamil

(b) Hindi

(c) Telugu

(d) Sanskrit

Correct Answer: (a) Tamil

Solution:

Concept: The Alvars and Nayanars were instrumental in the early Bhakti movement in South India (roughly between the 6th and 9th centuries CE). Key historical details:

- **Alvars:** Devotees of Lord Vishnu. There were 12 Alvars who composed the *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*.

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- **Nayanars:** Devotees of Lord Shiva. There were 63 Nayanars whose hymns were later compiled into the *Tevaram* and *Tirumurai*.

Step 1: Identifying the Linguistic Context.

The Bhakti movement in the South was characterized by a shift from elite Sanskrit to regional vernaculars to make spiritual teachings accessible to the common masses, regardless of caste. The Alvars and Nayanars originated in the Tamil-speaking regions of South India.

Step 2: Literary Significance.

Their compositions are regarded as the "Tamil Veda." By using the **Tamil** language, they were able to spread their message of personal devotion (bhakti) to people from all walks of life, including artisans and cultivators who did not know Sanskrit.

Quick Tip: To remember this, associate the "Tamil Veda" (*Nalayira Divya Prabandham*) with the Alvars. Since they are the pioneers of South Indian Bhakti, the language is naturally Tamil.

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5. Match List - I with List - II:

List – I (Monuments)	**List – II (Symbolism)**
(A) Stupas	(I) Mounds containing relics of Buddha
(B) Chaityas	(II) Buddhist shrines
(C) Railing	(III) Separating sacred space from secular world
(D) Harmika	(IV) Abode of gods

Choose the correct answer from the options given below:

(a) (A)-(I), (B)-(II), (C)-(III), (D)-(IV)

(b) (A)-(III), (B)-(I), (C)-(II), (D)-(IV)

(c) (A)-(II), (B)-(I), (C)-(IV), (D)-(III)

(d) (A)-(IV), (B)-(II), (C)-(I), (D)-(III)

Correct Answer: (a) (A)-(I), (B)-(II), (C)-(III), (D)-(IV)

Solution:

Concept: Buddhist architecture evolved to represent the cosmos and the path to enlightenment. Each architectural element of a Stupa holds specific symbolic meaning.

- **Stupa:** Derived from a Sanskrit word meaning heap, it originated as a semi-circular mound of earth (anda).

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- **Harmika:** A balcony-like structure atop the mound that represents the dwelling place of the gods.
- **Yashti:** A mast arising from the harmika, often surmounted by a *chhatri* or umbrella.

Step 1: Matching Stupas and Chaityas.

- **(A) Stupas → (I):** Traditionally, Stupas were burial mounds where relics of the Buddha (his bodily remains or objects he used) were inscribed.
- **(B) Chaityas → (II):** While "Stupa" refers to the mound, "Chaitya" refers to the prayer hall or shrine that often contains a stupa, used for congregational worship.

Step 2: Matching Railing and Harmika.

- **(C) Railing → (III):** The *vedika* (railing) surrounded the stupa, serving as a boundary to separate the sacred inner space from the secular outer world.
- **(D) Harmika → (IV):** Positioned at the very top of the dome, the harmika symbolized the heavenly abode of the deities.

Quick Tip: To remember the Harmika, think of it as the "balcony of the gods." For the Railing, remember it acts as a physical and spiritual fence (*vedika*) protecting the sacred mound.

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6. Identify the correct statements:

A. The ruins at Hampi were brought to light in 1800.

B. Colonel Colin prepared the first survey map of the Hampi.

C. Much of the initial information Colin received was based on the memories of priests of the Virupaksha temple and the shrine of Pampadevi.

D. From 1900, photographers began to record the monuments which enabled scholars to study them.

E. As early as 1936 epigraphists began collecting several dozen inscriptions.

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Choose the correct answer from the options given below:

(a) A, B, C only

(b) B, C, D only

(c) A, B, D only

(d) A, B, C, D, E only

Correct Answer: (a) A, B, C only

Solution:

Concept: The rediscovery of Hampi (the capital of the Vijayanagara Empire) is a major chapter in Indian archaeology. The process involved early surveying, oral traditions, and later, systematic documentation. Key historical timeline:

- **1800:** Colonel Colin Mackenzie, an engineer and antiquarian, visited the site.
- **Oral History:** Mackenzie relied on the local knowledge of priests at the active religious centers of the site.
- **Photography:** Documentation by photographers actually began in the **1850s** (not 1900).
- **Epigraphy:** The collection of inscriptions by epigraphists started much earlier, around the **1830s** (not 1936).

Step 1: Verifying Statements A, B, and C.

- **(A) is correct:** The ruins were indeed brought to light in 1800 by Colin Mackenzie.
- **(B) is correct:** Colin Mackenzie, as an employee of the English East India Company, prepared the first survey map of the site.
- **(C) is correct:** To supplement his maps, he interviewed priests of the Virupaksha and Pampadevi temples to reconstruct the city's history.

Step 2: Evaluating the Timeline in Statements D and E.

- **(D) is incorrect:** Photography became a tool for recording Hampi's monuments starting in **1856** (Alexander Greenlaw is a notable early photographer of the site), not 1900.
- **(E) is incorrect:** Epigraphists began collecting inscriptions at Hampi in the **1830s**. By 1936, the site was already well-documented and undergoing major conservation efforts.

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Quick Tip: Remember the "Three Pillars" of Hampi's rediscovery: **Colin Mackenzie (1800)**, **Oral Traditions (Priests)**, and **Photography/Epigraphy (Mid-19th Century)**. Most errors in this topic revolve around these specific dates!

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7. Which lake did Rudradaman, the Shaka ruler, rebuild?

(a) Ganges

(b) Yamuna

(c) Indus

(d) Sudarshana

Correct Answer: (d) Sudarshana

Solution:

Concept: The Sudarshana Lake was an artificial reservoir located in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat. Its history is documented through various inscriptions, most notably the Junagadh Rock Inscription. Key historical milestones of the lake:

- **Origin:** Built during the reign of the Mauryan Emperor Chandragupta Maurya by his provincial governor, Pushyagupta.
- **Mauryan Period:** Later improved and provided with conduits during the reign of Emperor Ashoka by his governor, Tushaspha.
- **Shaka Period:** Repaired by the Shaka ruler Rudradaman I after a severe storm destroyed its embankment.

Step 1: Rudradaman's Contribution.

Around 150 CE, a massive storm caused the lake's embankment to burst, and the water drained away. Rudradaman I, the most famous Shaka ruler of the Western Kshatrapas, decided to rebuild the lake. The significance of this act lies in the fact that he used his **own resources** (personal treasury) rather than taxing the people for the repairs.

Step 2: Evaluating Other Options.

Options (a), (b), and (c)—the Ganges, Yamuna, and Indus—are major perennial river systems, not artificial lakes. While rulers often built canals or structures related to these rivers, the specific "rebuilding" of a lake attributed to Rudradaman in historical texts refers exclusively to Sudarshana.

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Quick Tip: The Junagadh Inscription is the first ever long inscription in **chaste Sanskrit**. It serves as a primary source for both the history of Sudarshana Lake and the lineage of the Shaka rulers.

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8. He founded a suburban township near Vijayanagara called Nagalapuram after his mother. Some of the most detailed descriptions of Vijayanagara come from his time or just after.

Identify the "he" mentioned in the above lines.

(a) Rama Raya

(b) Krishnadevaraya

(c) Saluva Narasimha

(d) Achyuta Deva Raya

Correct Answer: (b) Krishnadevaraya

Solution:

Concept: Krishnadevaraya (reigned 1509–1529) was the most famous ruler of the Vijayanagara Empire, belonging to the Tuluva dynasty. His reign is characterized by expansion, consolidation, and unparalleled architectural and literary patronage. Key historical markers of his reign:

- **Urban Planning:** He developed the city of Vijayanagara and its suburbs, including the construction of fine temples and gopurams.
- **Foreign Accounts:** His reign coincided with the arrival of Portuguese travelers like Domingo Paes and Duarte Barbosa, whose journals provide the detailed descriptions mentioned in the question.

Step 1: Founder of Nagalapuram.

Krishnadevaraya founded the suburban township of **Nagalapuram** in honor of his mother, **Nagaladevi**. This township was strategically located near the capital to accommodate the growing population and visiting dignitaries.

Step 2: Evaluating Other Options.

- **Rama Raya (a):** He was a later de facto ruler whose policies led to the Battle of Talikota (1565).
- **Saluva Narasimha (c):** He was the founder of the Saluva dynasty but did not oversee the "golden age" peak described.

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- **Achyuta Deva Raya (d):** He was the successor of Krishnadevaraya; while he maintained the empire, the specific founding of Nagalapuram is credited to his predecessor.

Quick Tip: To remember this, link "Nagalapuram" to "Nagaladevi." Krishnadevaraya is also credited with building the famous Vitthala and Virupaksha temple expansions.

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9. _____ stated that as a Congressman and a follower of Mahatma Gandhi he had accepted Hindustani as a language of the nation, but he warned: "if you want my wholehearted support (for Hindi) you must not do now anything which may raise my suspicions and which will strengthen my fears."

(a) Shri Shankarrao Deo

(b) Jawaharlal Nehru

(c) Sir A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar

(d) T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar

Correct Answer: (a) Shri Shankarrao Deo

Solution:

Concept: The debate over the "National Language" was one of the most contentious issues in the Constituent Assembly of India. While Mahatma Gandhi promoted **Hindustani** (a blend of Hindi and Urdu) as a bridge between communities, many proponents of "Hindi in Devanagari script" pushed for a more Sanskritized version of the language. Key historical context:

- **The Compromise:** Leaders from non-Hindi speaking areas were concerned that the imposition of Hindi would lead to cultural and linguistic marginalization.
- **Shri Shankarrao Deo:** A member from Bombay (now Maharashtra), he was a staunch follower of Gandhi and a supporter of the linguistic harmony Gandhi envisioned.

Step 1: Understanding the Speaker's Position.

Shri Shankarrao Deo expressed the sentiments of many Congressmen who were willing to accept Hindustani/Hindi for the sake of national unity but were wary of the aggressive manner in which it was being advocated by Hindi enthusiasts. He emphasized that for Hindi to be accepted, its proponents must act in a way that inspires confidence rather than fear in non-Hindi

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speakers.

Step 2: Evaluating Other Options.

- **Jawaharlal Nehru (b):** While he supported Hindustani, he generally acted as a mediator between the opposing factions.
- **T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar (d):** He was a member from Madras who also voiced similar fears, but the specific quote regarding being a "follower of Mahatma Gandhi" who "accepted Hindustani" is historically attributed to Shankarrao Deo during the assembly debates.

Quick Tip: To remember this, associate **Shankarrao Deo** with the "middle ground." He represents the Gandhian perspective in the Constituent Assembly that favored a multi-cultural linguistic approach rather than strict "Hindi imposition."

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10. Which of the following option is the most probable new feature of temples that must have been a mark of imperial authority?

(a) Gopurams

(b) Shrines

(c) Kalyan Mandapa

(d) Mandapas

Correct Answer: (a) Gopurams

Solution:

Concept: In the context of the Vijayanagara Empire, temple architecture was used as a powerful tool to express the king's divine right to rule and his immense power. While traditional elements like shrines and mandapas existed, the rulers introduced monumental new features. Key imperial features:

- **Raya Gopurams:** Massive royal gateways that often dwarfed the towers (shikharas) of the central shrines.
- **Symbolism:** These structures signaled the presence of the temple from a great distance

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and served as a reminder of the power of the king who could command the resources to build them.

Step 1: The Role of Gopurams.

The *Raya Gopurams* or royal gateways were the most visible marks of imperial authority. By building these towering structures, the Vijayanagara kings demonstrated their control over craftsmen, resources, and technology. These gateways became more prominent than the actual shrine where the deity was housed, shifting the visual focus toward the king's architectural contribution.

Step 2: Evaluating Other Options.

- **Shrines (b):** These were the core part of temples since ancient times and were not a "new" feature unique to imperial authority in this era.
- **Kalyan Mandapa (c):** While these "marriage halls" were a distinct feature of Vijayanagara temples used for divine ceremonies, they were functional ritual spaces rather than the primary visual symbol of royal power.
- **Mandapas (d):** Pillared halls were common features in Dravidian architecture long before the Vijayanagara period.

Quick Tip: When you see the word "Imperial Authority" in Vijayanagara history, think of the **Raya Gopurams**. They were designed specifically to "overshadow" existing structures as a display of the king's dominance.

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