

OPTIONAL TEST SERIES PROGRAM 2026



We don't just test you We train you to succeed



























As an aspirant, you are investing everything into mastering your optional subject. You are reading the books, building your notes and understanding the content. But knowing the content is only the first step for mastering Mains. The ultimate challenge lies in the exam hall: transforming that knowledge into high-scoring answers under intense pressure.

For over a decade, VisionIAS has been the trusted partner of India's top rankers, not for merely imparting knowledge, but also helping them perfect its application through answer writing.

"From concepts to ranks, a complete journey in History Optional"

HISTORY OPTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE TEST SERIES + PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS (PYQ) SESSIONS

Program Content: 16 Tests + 20 Previous Year Questions (PYQs) Discussion & Strategy Sessions.

PROGRAM FEATURES

PYQ Sessions



20 Faculty-Led PYQ Analysis & Strategy Sessions

Previous Year Questions Discussion and Strategy Sessions

- Sessions to Understand Important Themes and Trends through PYQs and Discussions on Solving Maps.
- Build Effective Answer Structures to Bridge the Gap between UPSC Demand and Aspirants Understanding of Questions.
- Enhance Quality of Answers with Faculty Inputs and Improve precision in solving Mapping Question.





Unit Tests (8) 2
Mini-tests per section
of the syllabus Nature
of Questions: Easy to
Medium focusing on
coverage of the
syllabus



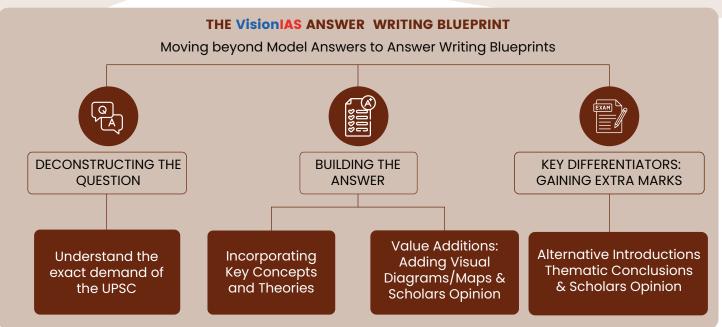
Sectional Tests (4)
1 Part test per
subject of the Syllabus
Nature of Questions:
Medium to Difficult
testing analytical
understanding of
Aspirants to tackle
uncertainty of UPSC
Mains



Full-Length Tests (4)

2 Full Length Test per Paper of History Optional Nature of Questions: Simulation of the real UPSC exam for comprehensive performance assessment









HISTORY OPTIONAL TEST SERIES

Program One: 16 Tests

Program Features:

- 8 Unit Tests: Mini Tests to cover History Optional syllabus in parts.
- 4 Sectional Tests: Part Tests covering the full syllabus Subjectwise for History Optional.
- 4 Full-Length Tests: FLTs simulating UPSC Mains experience, to be conducted after Prelims 2026.

Program Two: 8 Tests

Program Features:

- 4 Sectional Tests: Part Tests covering the full syllabus Subjectwise for History Optional.
- 4 Full-Length Tests: FLTs simulating UPSC Mains experience, to be conducted after Prelims 2026.

Program	Fee	Module Number	Starting Date
History Optional Comprehensive Test Series 2026 (16 Tests + 20 Previous Year Questions (PYQ) Sessions)	₹20,000	3529	26 October 2025
History Optional Test Series 2026 (16 Tests)	₹14,000	3530	26 October 2025
History Optional Test Series 2026 (8 Tests)	₹10,000	3531	16 November 2025

THE OPTIONAL PAPER DILEMMA: YOU KNOW THE SYLLABUS, SO WHY AREN'T YOU SCORING MORE?

OTHER HISTORY OPTIONAL TEST SERIES	VISION IAS HISTORY OPTIONAL TEST SERIES		
GENERIC FEEDBACK	CONCEPT CLARITY THROUGH PYQS PERSONALIZED EVALUATION		
VAGUE MODEL ANSWERS	SYSTEMATIC ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE		
OUTDATED QUESTION PAPER PATTERN	SCORE IMPROVEMENT THROUGH MENTORSHIP		

Thus, whether you are:

- · Just starting out and unsure of how to even begin writing a good answer,
- Already writing tests, but receiving vague feedback that doesn't show you how to improve, or An experienced aspirant whose scores are no longer improving despite knowing the content inside-out.

You need to utilize The **VisionIAS Advantage** and think like a topper. Success in UPSC comes with high scores in Mains examination and writing a high quality **toppers trusted** test series will surely lead to success in **UPSC Civil Service Exam.**



HOW OUR TEST SERIES FARED IN MAINS 2025

At VisionIAS, we don't just cover the syllabus but decode the very DNA of the UPSC examination. Our research-driven approach identifies emerging trends, recurring themes, and shifts in question patterns, ensuring that our test series doesn't just cover the syllabus—it anticipates the exam.

Here's how closely our test series reflected the UPSC Mains 2025:

UPSC CSE Mains 2025 Question		Our Test Series Question (2025)		
History Optional Paper 1				
Q 5(c). Critically assess the role of imperial Karkhanas in Mughal India. How did they reflect the ideological and functional imperatives of the Mughal State?	Q. Discuss the role of royal patronage in shaping craft production during the Mughal era and its impact on the cultural prestige of the empire. (Test Code: 3413) Q. Discuss how the royal karkhanas in Mughal period functioned as instruments of both state power and political patronage. (Test Code:3418)			
Q 6(b): Barani's "Fatwa-i-Jahandari" was not a proper account of the Delhi Sultanate, rather a lament. Elucidate.	personal (ABHYAA Q. "The in led histor statement	ar is Barani's criticism of Alauddin Khalji shaped by his values and the context of a later period. AS-4515) nage Barani creates of Muhammad bin Tughlaq has rians to call him 'the wisest fool." In the light of this nt, evaluate the policies and actions of Muhammad hlaq. (Test Code: 3413)		
Q7(a) Portuguese maritime power disrupted the character of trade in the Indian Ocean in the 16th century. Review.	a crucial	artaz system implemented by the Portuguese played role in establishing their monopoly over the Indian Test Code: 3414)		
History Optional Paper 2				
Q 2(a) Do you agree that the idea of permanent fixation of land revenue of 1793 in Bengal was highly influenced by the Physiocratic school of thinking? Discuss.	solution t How far o	ate how the Ryotwari system was introduced as a to the inefficiencies of the Permanent Settlement. did it attempt to balance the interests of the British tration with those of the local agrarian society? (Test		
Q 2(c) "The movement for linguistic States generated deep apprehensions among the nationalist elite. They feared it would lead to the Balkanization of India." Examine.		ze the political anxieties generated by the question of language in Independent India. (Test Code: 3417)		
Q 3(a) "During the Carnatic Wars, the French position, which at one time dazzled the Indian world by its political successes, was destined to end in humiliation and failure." Explain.	two year	pleix had been able to continue in India for another s, the rich heritage of Bengal would have fallen to estead of his rivals". Comment (ABHYAAS- 4516)		



TEST SCHEDULE & REFERENCE

Test No.	Date	Topics covered	References
Unit Test 1 [5169]	26 Oct 2025	 1. Sources: Archaeological sources: Exploration, excavation, epigraphy, numismatics, monuments. Literary sources: Indigenous: Primary and secondary; poetry, scientific literature, literature, literature in regional languages, religious literature. Foreign account: Greek, Chinese and Arab writers. 2. Pre-history and Proto-history: Geographical factors; hunting and gathering (paleolithic and mesolithic); Beginning of agriculture (Neolithic and chalcolithic). 3. Indus Valley Civilization: Origin, date, extent, characteristics-decline, survival and significance, art and architecture. 4. Megalithic Cultures: Distribution of pastoral and farming cultures outside the Indus, Development of community life, Settlements, Development of agriculture, Crafts, Pottery, and Iron industry. 5. Aryans and Vedic Period: Expansions of Aryans in India: Vedic Period: Religious and philosophic literature; Transformation from Rig Vedic period to the later Vedic period; Political, social and economical life; Significance of the Vedic Age; Evolution of Monarchy and Varna system. 6. Period of Mahajanapadas: Formation of States (Mahajanapada): Republics and monarchies; Rise of urban centres; Trade routes; Economic growth; Introduction of coinage; Spread of Jainism and Buddhism; Rise of Magadha and Nandas. Iranian and Macedonian invasions and their impact. 	1. A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India by Upinder Singh 2. The Wonder That Was India by AL Basham 3. INDIA'S ANCIENT PAST by RS Sharma 4. IGNOU Notes for Ancient History 5. Ancient India by DN Jha 6. History Mapping Document by Vision IAS



7. Mauryan Empire:

- Foundation of the Mauryan Empire, Chandragupta, Kautilya and Arthashastra; Ashoka; Concept of
- Dharma; Edicts; Polity, Administration, Economy; Art, architecture and sculpture; External contacts;
- Religion; Spread of religion; Literature.
- Disintegration of the empire; sungas and Kanvas.

8. Post-Mauryan Period (Indo-Greeks, Sakas, Kushanas, Western Kshatrapas):

- Contact with outside world; growth of urban centres, economy, coinage, development of religions,
- Mahayana, social conditions, art, architecture, culture, literature and science.

9. Early State and Society in Eastern India, Deccan and South India:

- Kharavela, The Satavahanas,
- Tamil States of the Sangam Age;
 Administration, Economy, land grants,
 coinage, trade guilds and urban
 centres;
- Buddhist centres; Sangam literature and culture; Art and architecture.

10. Guptas, Vakatakas and Vardhanas:

- Polity and administration, Economic conditions, Coinage of the Guptas, Land grants, Decline of urban centres, Indian feudalism, Caste system, Position of women,
- Education and educational institutions;
 Nalanda, Vikramshila and Vallabhi,
 Literature, scientific literature, art and architecture.

11. Regional States during Gupta Era:

- The Kadambas, Pallavas, Chalukyas of Badami;
- Polity and Administration, Trade guilds, Literature; growth of Vaishnava and Saiva religions.
- Tamil Bhakti movement, Shankaracharya; Vedanta; Institutions of temple and temple architecture; Palas, Senas, Rashtrakutas, Paramaras, Polity and administration; Cultural aspects.
- Arab conquest of Sind; Alberuni, The Chalukyas of Kalyana, Cholas, Hoysalas, Pandyas; Polity and Administration; Local Government; Growth of art and architecture, religious sects, Institution of temple and Mathas, Agraharas, education and literature, economy and society.

- 1. A History of Ancient and Early Medieval
- India by Upinder Singh
- 2. The Wonder That Was India by AL Basham
- 3. INDIA'S ANCIENT PAST by RS Sharma
- 4. IGNOU Notes for Ancient History
- 5. Ancient India by DN Jha
- 6. History Mapping Document by Vision IAS

Unit 9 Test 2 2

9 Nov 2025



Sectional Test 1 [5171]	16 Nov 2025	Syllabus of UNIT TEST 1 and UNIT TEST 2	
Unit Test 3 [5172]	30 Nov 2025	12. Themes in Early Indian Cultural History: Languages and texts, major stages in the evolution of art and architecture, major philosophical thinkers and schools, ideas in Science and Mathematics. 13. Early Medieval India, 750-1200: Polity: Major political developments in Northern India and the peninsula, origin and the rise of Rajputs. The Cholas: administration, village economy and society "Indian Feudalism". Agrarian economy and urban settlements. Trade and commerce. Society: the status of the Brahman and the new social order. Condition of women. Indian science and technology. 14. Cultural Traditions in India, 750-1200: Philosophy: Skankaracharya and Vedanta, Ramanuja and Vishishtadvaita, Madhva and Brahma Mimansa. Religion: Forms and features of religion, Tamil devotional cult, growth of Bhakti, Islam and its arrival in India, Sufism. Literature: Literature in Sanskrit, growth of Tamil literature, literature in the newly developing languages, Kalhan's Rajtarangini, Alberuni's India. Art and Architecture: Temple architecture, sculpture, painting. 15. The Thirteenth Century: Establishment of the Delhi Sultanate: The Ghurian invasions – factors behind Ghurian success. Economic, Social and cultural consequences. Foundation of Delhi Sultanate and early Turkish Sultans. Consolidation: The rule of Iltutmish and Balban. 16. The Fourteenth Century: "The Khalji Revolution". Alauddin Khalji: Conquests and territorial expansion, agrarian and economic measures. Muhammad Tughluq: Major projects, agrarian measures, achievements in civil engineering and public works, decline of	1. A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India by Upinder Singh 2. History Of Medieval India by Satish Chandra 3. IGNOU Notes for Medieval History of Medieval India JL Mehta 5. The Agrarian System of Mughal India 1556–1707 by Irfan Habib 6. A Comprehensive History of India in Twelve Volumes Mohammed Habib and K.A Nizami



the Sultanate, foreign contacts and Ibn Battuta's account.

17. Society, Culture and Economy in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries:

- Society: composition of rural society, ruling classes, town dwellers, women, religious classes, caste and slavery under the Sultanate, Bhakti movement, Sufi movement.
- Culture: Persian literature, literature in the regional languages of North India, literature in the languages of South India, Sultanate architecture and new structural forms, painting, evolution of a composite culture.
- Economy: Agricultural Production, rise of urban economy and non-agricultural production, trade and commerce.

18. The Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Century-Political Developments and Economy:

- Rise of Provincial Dynasties: Bengal, Kashmir (Zainul Abedin), Gujarat.
- · Malwa, Bahmanids.
- The Vijayanagara Empire.
- · Lodis.
- Mughal Empire, first phase: Babur, Humayun.
- The Sur Empire: Sher Shah's administration.
- Portuguese colonial enterprise, Bhakti and Sufi Movements.

19. The Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Century- Society and culture:

- Regional cultures specificities.
- · Literary traditions.
- Provincial architecture.
- Society, culture, literature and the arts in Vijayanagara Empire.

20. Akbar:

- · Conquests and consolidation of empire.
- Establishment of jagir and mansab systems.
- · Rajput policy.
- Evolution of religious and social outlook.
 Theory of Sulh-i-kul and religious policy.
- Court patronage of art and technology.

21. Mughal Empire in the Seventeenth Century:

- Major administrative policies of Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb.
- · The Empire and the Zamindars.
- Religious policies of Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb.
- Nature of the Mughal State.
- Late Seventeenth Century crisis and the revolts.

1. A History of Ancient and Early Medieval

India by Upinder Singh

- 2. History Of Medieval India by Satish Chandra
- 3. IGNOU Notes for Medieval History
- 4. Advance Study in the History of Medieval

India JL Mehta

5. The Agrarian System of Mughal India 1556-

1707 by Irfan Habib

6. A Comprehensive History of India in Twelve Volumes Mohammed Habib and K.A Nizami

Unit Test 4 [5173]

14 Dec 2025



		TI AI I' I	
		The Ahom kingdom. Chiratii and the approximate a Kingadaga.	
		 Shivaji and the early Maratha Kingdom. 22. Economy and society, in the 16th and 17th 	
		Centuries:	
		Population Agricultural and craft production.	
		Towns, commerce with Europe through Dutch,	
		English and French companies : a trade	
	revolution.		
	 Indian mercantile classes. Banking, insurance and credit systems. 		
	Conditions of peasants, Conditions of		
	Women.		
	Evolution of the Sikh community and the		
	Khalsa Panth.		
	23. Culture during Mughal Empire:		
		Persian histories and other literature.Hindi and religious literature.	
		Mughal architecture.	
		Mughal painting.	
		Provincial architecture and painting.	
		Classical music.	
		Science and technology.	
		24. The Eighteenth Century:	
		• Factors for the decline of the Mughal Empire.	
		 The regional principalities: Nizam's Deccan, Bengal, Awadh. 	
		Maratha ascendancy under the Peshwas.	
		The Maratha fiscal and financial system.	
		• Emergence of Afghan power Battle of Panipat,	
		1761.	
		State of, political, cultural and economic, on over of the Pritish conquest.	
		eve of the British conquest.	
Sectional	21 Dec	Syllabus of Unit Test 3 and Unit Test 4	
Test 2 [5174]	2025		
[01, 4]		T. Francisco December 1 to 1 t	
		1. European Penetration into India:The Early European Settlements; The Portuguese	
		and the Dutch; The English and the French East	1. From PLASSEY TO PARTITION
		• India Companies; Their struggle for supremacy;	AND AFTER by Sekhar Bandyopadhyay
		Carnatic Wars; Bengal-The conflict between the	2. India's Struggle for Indepen-
		English and the Nawabs of Bengal; Siraj and the English; The Battle of Plassey; Significance of	dence by Bipan
		Plassey.	Chandra
		2. British Expansion in India:	3. IGNOU Notes for Modern
Unit	4 Jan	Bengal-Mir Jafar and Mir Kasim;	Indian History 4. A New Look at Modern Indian
Test 5 [5175]	2026	The Battle of Buxar; Mysore; The Marathas;	History by BL
[31/3]		The three Anglo-Maratha Wars; The Punjab.	GROVER
		3. Early Structure of the British Raj:The Early administrative structure; From diarchy	5. Modern India by Sumit Sarkar
		to direct control; The Regulating Act (1773); The	6. India After Gandhi by Ram-
		Pitt's	chandra Guha
		• India Act (1784); The Charter Act (1833); The	
		Voice of free trade and the changing character of British colonial rule; The English utilitarian and	
		India.	



4. Economic Impact of British Colonial Rule:

- Land revenue settlements in British India; The Permanent Settlement; Ryotwari Settlement; Mahalwari Settlement; Economic impact of the revenue arrangements; Commercialization of agriculture; Rise of landless agrarian labourers; Impoverishment of the rural society.
- Dislocation of traditional trade and commerce; De-industrialisation;
 Decline of traditional crafts; Drain of wealth; Economic transformation of India; Railroad and communication network including telegraph and postal services; Famine and poverty in the rural interior; European business enterprise and its limitations.

5. Social and Cultural Developments:

- The state of indigenous education, its dislocation; Orientalist-Anglicist controversy, The introduction of western education in India;
- The rise of press, literature and public opinion; The rise of modern vernacular literature; Progress of Science; Christian missionary activities in India

6. Social and Religious Reform Movements in Bengal and Other Areas:

- Ram Mohan Roy, The Brahmo Movement; Devendranath Tagore; Iswarchandra Vidyasagar;
- The Young Bengal Movement;
 Dayanada Saraswati; The social reform movements in India including Sati, widow remarriage, child marriage etc.;
 The contribution of Indian renaissance to the growth of modern India; Islamic revivalism-the Feraizi and Wahabi Movements.

7. Indian Response to British Rule:

- Peasant movement and tribal uprisings in the 18th and 19th centuries including the Rangpur Dhing (1783), the Kol Rebellion (1832), the Mopla Rebellion in Malabar (1841-1920), the Santal Hul (1855), Indigo Rebellion (1859-60), Deccan Uprising (1875) and the Munda Ulgulan (1899-1900);
- The Great Revolt of 1857 Origin, character, causes of failure, the consequences; The shift in the character of peasant uprisings in the post-1857 period; the peasant movements of the 1920s and 1930s.



8. Factors leading to the birth of Indian Nationalism:

- Politics of Association; The Foundation of the Indian National Congress; The Safety-valve thesis relating to the birth of the Congress;
- Programme and objectives of Early Congress; the social composition of early Congress leadership; the Moderates and Extremists; The Partition of Bengal (1905);
- The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal; the economic and political aspects of Swadeshi Movement; The beginning of revolutionary extremism in India.

9. Rise of Gandhi:

- Character of Gandhian nationalism;
 Gandhi's popular appeal; Rowlatt
 Satyagraha; the Khilafat Movement;
- The Non-cooperation Movement; National politics from the end of the Non-cooperation movement to the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement; the two phases of the Civil Disobedience Movement; Simon Commission; The Nehru Report; the Round Table Conferences;
- Nationalism and the Peasant Movements; Nationalism and Working class movements; Women and Indian youth and students in Indian politics (1885-1947); the election of 1937 and the formation of ministries; Cripps Mission; the Quit India Movement; the Wavell Plan; The Cabinet Mission.
- 10. Constitutional Developments in Colonial India between 1858 and 1935.

11. Other strands in the National Movement.

- The Revolutionaries: Bengal, the Punjab, Maharashtra, U.P. the Madras Presidency, Outside India.
- The Left; The Left within the Congress:
 Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose, the
 Congress Socialist Party; the Communist
 Party of India, other left parties.

12. Politics of Separatism;

- The Muslim League; the Hindu Mahasabha;
 Communalism and the politics of partition;
- Transfer of power; Independence.

13. Consolidation as a Nation

- Nehru's Foreign Policy; India and her neighbours (1947-1964);
- The linguistic reorganisation of States (1935-1947); Regionalism and regional inequality;

From PLASSEY TO PARTITION AND AFTER by Sekhar Bandyopadhyay India's Struggle for Independence by Bipan Chandra

- 3. IGNOU Notes for Modern Indian History
- 4. A New Look at Modern Indian History by BL GROVER
- 5. Modern India by Sumit Sarkar
- 6. India After Gandhi by Ramchandra Guha

Unit Test 6 [5176]

18 Jan 2026



he Modern an odern World for World Civilization, Part odern World by



		 The Russian Revolution of 1917-1921. Fascist Counter-Revolution, Italy and Germany. The Chinese Revolution of 1949 	
Unit Test 8 [5179]	22 Feb 2026	 22. World War: 1st and 2nd World Wars as Total Wars: Societal implications. World War I: Causes and Consequences. World War II: Causes and Consequences. 23. The World after World War II: Emergence of Two power blocs. Emergence of Third World and non-alignment. UNO and the global disputes. 24. Liberation from Colonial Rule: Latin America-Bolivar. Arab World-Egypt. Africa-Apartheid to Democracy. South-East Asia-Vietnam. 25. Decolonization and Underdevelopment: Factors constraining Development; Latin America, Africa. 26. Unification of Europe: Post War Foundations; NATO and European Community. Consolidation and Expansion of European Community European Union. 27. Disintegration of Soviet Union and the Rise of the Unipolar World: Factors leading to the collapse of Soviet Communism and Soviet Union, 1985-1991. Political Changes in East Europe 1989-2001. End of the Cold War and US Ascendancy in the World as the lone superpower. 	1. A History Of The Modern World by Ranjan Chakraborty 2. Mastering Modern World History by Norman Lowe 3. IGNOU Notes for World History 4. The Story of Civilization, Part 2 by Arjun Dev, NCERT 5. History of Modern World by Jain and Mathur
Sectional Test 4 [5180]	1 Mar 2026	Syllabus of Unit Test 7 and Unit Test 8	

FLT-1 [5181]	14 Jun 2026	Full Syllabus of History Optional Paper 1
FLT-2 [5182]	28 June 2026	Full Syllabus of History Optional Paper 2
FLT-3 [5183]	12 July 2026	Full Syllabus of History Optional Paper 1
FLT-4 [5184]	26 Jul 2026	Full Syllabus of History Optional Paper 2



NOTE (

- In all of the three programs, Tests can be rescheduled (postponed, but not preponed) based on your convenience.
- Offline test centers are available in multiple cities including Delhi, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Pune, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Chandigarh, and Guwahati. Centers remain closed on Thursdays. Study materials and test booklets are provided in soft copy only and will not be physically dispatched.

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Congratulations TO ALL SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

in TOP 10 Selections in CSE 2024 from various programs of VISION IAS































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