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AN AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTION

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Precis Writing

'Precis' (pronounced '*Preis*') is an old French word meaning '**Cut short**'. Precis is a **concise summary** or a **miniature version** of a passage, which includes all the essential points, mood, and tone of the author, and the main idea or gist of the passage. In short, Precis is a **condensed version** of a bigger passage.

Steps to Write a Precis

Step 1: Read the given passage carefully. Underline or highlight the important points and keywords or make a note of them (whichever is convenient). If you're making a note of the important points, note them down in the same order as given in the original passage.

Step 2: After reading, make a note of the central theme/main idea/gist and the tone of the author of the passage.

Step 3: Re-read the article and compare it with your notes or check if you have missed underlining any crucial point.

Step 4: Provide your precis with an appropriate title (you can also do this after you finish writing your precis).

Step 5: Draft a precis based on the notes you have taken down or points you have underlined. Keep the following points in mind while writing your precis:

- A Precis isn't simply the abstract of the passage, nor is it a mere selection of important sentences of the passage. A Precis needs to **convey the main idea of the original passage**, including all the *important points, the author's facts,*

opinions, ideas, and thoughts, with absolute clarity, in the precis writer's own words.

- The main idea of the passage needs to be conveyed as accurately and as briefly as possible in the precis. Do not add long sentences or garrulous thoughts in your precis.
- The precis should be *written in the precis writer's own words* (no copy-pasting) and should include all the essential points and the gist of the original passage, so that, the reader will be able to understand the idea behind the original passage without having to go through it.
- The language used to write precis should be **clear, crisp & concise**.
- Include a statement that explains why the research was conducted (in case it's research) or why the piece of writing was written (in case of an article)
- Discard the non-essential parts of the original passage and do not include them in your precis.
- Precis is always written in the third person and in a reported speech. Any history-related fact in a precis is to be written in the past tense.
- A precis needs to be objective. It doesn't offer evaluations or critical analysis. Hence, refrain from including your opinions, subjective interpretations, personal reactions, wishes, remarks, or criticisms in your precis.
- Do not include abbreviations or contractions in your precis.
- A Precis should make logical sense and follow the chronology of events in the same way as the original passage.
- Officials mentioned in the precis need to be provided with designations instead of names or titles. In case the designation is missing, you can use their personal name.
- There are no rigid rules to how lengthy your precis can be, but as a general rule, your precis should be not more than one-third of the total number of words in the original passage.
- The precis needs to make logical sense and have the exact same logical structure, chronology, proportions, order, ideas, facts, and thoughts as that of the original passage.

- The precis needs to read smoothly. Precis is a connected whole. The precis reader needs to be able to sift from one point to another in a smooth manner.

Step 6: Review your precis. It's important to review your precis to confirm that you have included all the essential points, supporting evidence, and the gist from the original passage and to ensure coherence, and correctness with respect to grammar and spelling, and clarity. Post-review, count the number of words of the precis and put them down in a bracket at the end.

A Good Precis Format | Precis Writing Samples with Answers

- Is Clear, Concise, Coherent, and Precise
- Is written in the precis writer's own words
- Contains all the essential points, the author's tone, facts, opinions, thoughts, and the main idea of the original passage
- Is well-knit and makes logical sense and follows a logical order
- Won't contain details not found in the original passage
- Is well-structured has no language errors and makes a meaningful passage

Precis Writing Examples and Questions

A paragraph on any topic may be presented in the question paper and candidates must know that they do not need any extra or general information to write the precis. So, even if the topic of the comprehension is not well known by the candidate, he/she must not panic and must pay attention while reading the passage.

Converting what has been written in the passage into your own words and ensuring the reader understands what the paragraph says, is the only job of an applicant while writing a precis.

Given below is a precis writing example, for your reference.

Comprehension Passage:

Everybody knows what a "good" man means and how he should be. Our definition of a good man is the one who does not smoke, or drink or avoids the

usage of bad language. A good man is ideally expected to converse in front of men as he would in front of women. He is also expected to attend the Church regularly and have correct opinions on all subjects. He has a wholesome horror of wrong-doing and realizes that it is our painful duty to reprimand sin. He is not anticipated to have wrong thinkings and has the authority to protect the young. His duties are not just restricted to the professional front but also needs to spend quality time doing good deeds. He must be patriotic and a keen believer of military training, he should promote industry, must be sober and have virtue among wage earners and their children. He must be a role model for all and it is expected that he leads a way which the younger generation would willingly follow. Above all, of course, his “morals” in the narrow sense must be admirable.

Precis Writing:

- **Title:** Attributes of a Good Man

The characteristics of a good man are known and he is expected to be religiously profound, must not smoke, drink or use bad language. His behaviour must be the same for all genders and he is expected to be a role model for the young ones. He must know his duties and avoid taking up the path of sin. He must be good not only in the professional space but also help people in need. He must be someone who can be admired and is praiseworthy.

Candidates may note that all the information which was mentioned in the comprehension has been precisely covered in the precis in understandable and easy to read language, along with an appropriate title