



Mains Practice Question

Essay Topics

1. We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.
2. Progress is best measured not by speed, but by direction.

01 Mar, 2025 Essay Essay

1. We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.

Quotes to Enrich Your Essay:

- Chief Seattle: "We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."
- Mahatma Gandhi: "The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed."

Theoretical and Philosophical Dimensions:

- **Intergenerational Responsibility and Sustainability:**
 - The concept of **intergenerational justice** emphasizes that the present generation has a moral obligation to safeguard natural resources for future generations.
 - The **Rights of Future Generations Theory (John Rawls)** argues that sustainable development should be prioritized over short-term economic gains.
- **Environmental Ethics and Human Responsibility:**
 - **Deep Ecology (Arne Naess):** Advocates for a shift from anthropocentrism (human-centered) to ecocentrism (nature-centered) thinking.
 - **Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic:** Encourages treating the environment as a community to which we belong, rather than as a resource to exploit.

Policy and Historical Examples:

- **Failures Due to Environmental Neglect:**
 - **Deforestation in the Amazon:** Short-term economic benefits from logging and agriculture have long-term consequences for biodiversity and climate.
 - **Industrial Revolution and Pollution:** Rapid industrialization without environmental safeguards led to issues like the **Great Smog of London (1952)**.
 - **Aral Sea Crisis:** Over-extraction of water for agriculture led to the near disappearance of a once-thriving ecosystem.
- **Sustainable Models of Development:**
 - **The Chipko Movement (India):** A grassroots movement emphasizing ecological conservation through local participation.
 - **Scandinavian Renewable Energy Models:** Nations like Sweden and Denmark have successfully transitioned to green energy while maintaining economic prosperity.

Contemporary Examples:

- **Corporate and Technological Innovations in Sustainability:**
 - **Tesla and Electric Vehicles:** Leading the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy in transportation.
 - **Circular Economy Initiatives:** Companies like Unilever and IKEA are reducing waste by implementing sustainable supply chains.
- **Global Environmental Efforts:**
 - **Paris Agreement (2015):** A global framework for limiting climate change and reducing carbon emissions.
 - **India's Renewable Energy Push:** Ambitious goals to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy by 2030.
 - **Afforestation and Conservation Projects:** Initiatives like the Bonn Challenge aim to restore degraded ecosystems globally.

2. Progress is best measured not by speed, but by direction.

Quotes to Enrich Your Essay:

- **Mahatma Gandhi:** *"There is more to life than increasing its speed."*
- **Peter Drucker:** *"Efficiency is doing things right; effectiveness is doing the right things."*

Theoretical and Philosophical Dimensions:

- **Quality vs. Speed in Development:**
 - **Amartya Sen's Capability Approach:** Progress should be evaluated based on improvements in human well-being, not just economic indicators.
 - **Aristotle's Golden Mean:** Advocates a balanced approach to progress, avoiding extremes of haste or stagnation.
 - **Buddhist Philosophy (Middle Path):** Emphasizes steady, mindful growth rather than reckless speed.
- **Ethical Dimensions of Measured Progress:**
 - **Utilitarianism (John Stuart Mill):** Decisions should focus on maximizing overall well-being rather than short-term gains.
 - **Gandhian Model of Development:** Emphasizes self-sufficiency, sustainability, and equitable growth rather than mere industrialization.

Policy and Historical Examples:

- **Failures Due to Rapid but Misguided Growth:**
 - **The Soviet Union's Industrialization Drive:** Led to environmental degradation and unsustainable economic policies.
 - **2008 Financial Crisis:** Rapid expansion of the financial sector without proper regulation resulted in a global economic collapse.
- **Success Stories of Steady and Purposeful Progress:**
 - **India's Green Revolution:** Prioritized long-term agricultural productivity over short-term economic growth.
 - **Germany's Energiewende (Energy Transition):** A gradual, well-planned shift to renewable energy without destabilizing the economy.
 - **Bhutan's Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index:** Measures progress through holistic well-being rather than GDP alone.

Contemporary Examples:

- **Technology and Business Strategies:**
 - **Slow and Steady Growth of Infosys:** Unlike tech companies chasing rapid valuation, Infosys focused on sustainable business expansion.
 - **Tesla's Long-Term Vision:** Despite initial losses, its strategic focus on sustainable transport has led to long-term industry transformation.
- **Governance and Global Development Trends:**
 - **India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) Initiative:** Emphasizes long-term

- domestic industrial growth rather than import dependency.
- **Universal Basic Income Experiments (Finland):** Focus on long-term economic security rather than short-term job creation

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/mains-practice-question/question-8694/pnt>

