

Model Question Paper 1
Half-Yearly Examination 2026-27
SOCIAL SCIENCE

Time Allowed: 3 Hours

Maximum Marks: 80

General Instructions:

1. This question paper has 38 questions divided into 6 Sections: A, B, C, D, E and F.
2. Section A: Question numbers 1 to 20 are multiple choice/Assertion-Reason questions of 1 mark each.
3. Section B: Question numbers 21 to 25 are very short answer questions of 2 marks each. Answers should not exceed 40 words.
4. Section C: Question numbers 26 to 30 are short answer questions of 3 marks each. Answers should not exceed 60 words.
5. Section D: Question numbers 31 to 34 are long answer questions of 5 marks each. Answers should not exceed 120 words.
6. Section E: Question numbers 35 to 37 are source-based/case-based questions with four sub-parts each, carrying 4 marks each.
7. Section F: Question number 38 is a map-based question of 3 marks, based on physical and historical geography.
8. This paper covers Chapters 1-5 of the new integrated Social Science textbook (Introduction to Social Science; Earth's Surface: Interior and Landforms; Atmosphere and Climate; Early Humans and the Rise of Civilisation; State and Society in Early India up to c. 1000 CE).
9. There is no overall choice, but internal choices have been provided in a few questions. Attempt only one option wherever an internal choice is given.

SECTION A

Question numbers 1 to 20 carry 1 mark each.

1. Social Science, as a field of study, is best described as the systematic study of: [1]

- (a) Rocks, minerals and the physical composition of the Earth
- (b) Human beings, their societies, and the relationships they form with one another
- (c) Chemical reactions between different substances
- (d) The mathematical properties of numbers

Answer: (b) — Social Science studies human society and the relationships among people.

2. A stone inscription issued by a ruler during his own reign, describing his victories, is an example of a: [1]

- (a) Secondary source
- (b) Primary source
- (c) Oral tradition
- (d) Modern historical textbook

Answer: (b) — It is a primary source, created during the period being studied.

3. Reading from the surface towards the centre, the correct order of the Earth's interior layers is: [1]

- (a) Core, mantle, crust
- (b) Mantle, crust, core
- (c) Crust, mantle, core
- (d) Crust, core, mantle

Answer: (c) — Crust, then mantle, then core.

4. The theory that the Earth's outer shell is broken into several large, slowly moving rigid segments is known as the theory of: [1]

- (a) Continental cooling
- (b) Plate tectonics
- (c) Soil erosion
- (d) Monsoon circulation

Answer: (b) — Plate tectonics.

5. By volume, the gas present in the largest proportion in the Earth's atmosphere is: [1]

- (a) Oxygen
- (b) Carbon dioxide
- (c) Nitrogen
- (d) Argon

Answer: (c) — Nitrogen, at about 78% of the atmosphere.

6. The day-to-day condition of the atmosphere at a place, including its temperature, rainfall and humidity over a short period, is called: [1]

- (a) Climate
- (b) Weather
- (c) Season
- (d) Latitude

Answer: (b) — Weather (climate is the average condition over a long period).

7. The shift from hunting-gathering to a settled life based on farming and the domestication of animals is known as the: [1]

- (a) Industrial Revolution
- (b) Neolithic (Agricultural) Revolution
- (c) Bronze Age collapse
- (d) Renaissance

Answer: (b) — The Neolithic/Agricultural Revolution.

8. Early Indian texts often describe 'janapadas' as: [1]

- (a) Large modern cities
- (b) Territorial units/settlements associated with a particular clan or tribe in early India
- (c) Sea-going trade ships
- (d) A type of ancient coin

Answer: (b) — Territorial settlements associated with a clan/tribe.

9. A bronze dancing-girl figurine and terracotta toys recovered from an archaeological site are examples of which type of historical source? [1]

- (a) Literary source
- (b) Archaeological/material source
- (c) Epigraphic source alone
- (d) Genealogical record

Answer: (b) — Archaeological/material source.

10. The Himalayan mountain range was formed mainly as a result of: [1]

- (a) The collision of the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates, causing sea-bed sediments between them to fold upward
- (b) Volcanic eruptions along a mid-ocean ridge
- (c) Wind erosion over millions of years
- (d) The sinking of a continental plate into the sea

Answer: (a) — Collision of the Indian and Eurasian plates folded sediments upward into fold mountains.

11. Which of the following best distinguishes a plateau from a plain? [1]

- (a) A plateau is a flat, low-lying area, while a plain has a wavy surface
- (b) A plateau is an elevated, flat-topped landform rising sharply above the surrounding area, while a plain is a low, relatively level stretch of land
- (c) A plateau is always found near a river mouth, while a plain is never near a river
- (d) There is no real difference between the two landforms

Answer: (b) — A plateau is elevated with a flat top; a plain is low-lying and level.

12. Which factor mainly explains why places at higher altitudes are generally cooler than places at sea level in the same latitude? [1]

- (a) Temperature decreases with increasing height as the air becomes thinner
- (b) Higher places receive less sunlight in total
- (c) Higher places are always farther from the equator
- (d) Air pressure increases with altitude, cooling the air

Answer: (a) — Temperature falls with altitude due to the thinning of air.

13. India's rainy season is caused mainly by: [1]

- (a) Cold winds blowing from the Himalayas towards the sea
- (b) Moisture-laden monsoon winds blowing from the sea towards the land during summer
- (c) Cyclones that occur only in winter
- (d) The movement of tectonic plates beneath the Indian Ocean

Answer: (b) — Summer monsoon winds carrying moisture from the sea onto land.

14. The carefully planned street layout and covered drainage system found at Harappan sites such as Mohenjodaro chiefly indicate: [1]

- (a) A lack of any civic organisation
- (b) An advanced level of urban planning and civic administration
- (c) That the cities were built by a foreign colonial power
- (d) That the Harappans had no knowledge of construction techniques

Answer: (b) — An advanced level of urban planning and civic administration.

15. Harappan seals bearing animal motifs and a yet-undeciphered script are believed to have been used mainly for: [1]

- (a) Decorating temple walls
- (b) Identifying ownership of goods and possibly in trade transactions
- (c) Worshipping a single supreme deity exclusively
- (d) Recording personal income tax

Answer: (b) — Identifying ownership of goods, possibly used in trade.

16. Early Indian kingdoms of the period after the Vedic age, such as Magadha, grew powerful mainly because of: [1]

- (a) Their location amid fertile land, access to iron ore, and control over trade routes
- (b) Their location in a desert with no resources
- (c) The complete absence of any army
- (d) Reliance solely on maritime trade with distant lands

Answer: (a) — Fertile land, iron resources and control of trade routes.

17. At a convergent plate boundary where two continental plates collide, the most likely result is: [1]

- (a) Formation of a deep ocean trench with no landform change
- (b) Folding of rock layers to form new fold mountains, as neither plate can be easily pushed under the other
- (c) A rift valley with new ocean floor forming between the plates
- (d) No geological activity of any kind

Answer: (b) — Folding of rock layers into fold mountains.

18. Coastal regions generally experience a smaller difference between summer and winter temperatures than places located deep in the interior of a continent at a similar latitude. This is best explained by the fact that: [1]

- (a) The sea heats up and cools down faster than land, keeping coastal temperatures unstable
- (b) Water heats up and cools down more slowly than land, so the sea moderates the temperature of nearby coastal areas
- (c) Coastal areas always receive less sunlight

(d) Interior regions are always closer to the equator

Answer: (b) — The sea heats and cools slowly, moderating nearby coastal temperatures.

19. This question consists of two statements — Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Choose the correct option: [1]

Assertion (A): The Indus/Harappan civilisation is thought to have declined gradually rather than through a single sudden event.

Reason (R): Historians have found evidence such as shifting river courses, possible climate change, and disruption of trade networks across different Harappan sites, rather than proof of one catastrophic invasion.

(a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A

(b) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A

(c) A is true, but R is false

(d) A is false, but R is true

Answer: (a) — Both true; R correctly explains the gradual-decline view.

20. This question consists of two statements — Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Choose the correct option: [1]

Assertion (A): Early Indian society in this period was often organised on the basis of varna and jati, which could influence a person's occupation and social position.

Reason (R): This form of social organisation ensured complete equality of opportunity for every individual, regardless of birth.

(a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A

(b) Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A

(c) A is true, but R is false

(d) A is false, but R is true

Answer: (c) — A is true, but R is false — varna/jati actually restricted mobility rather than ensuring equality.

SECTION B

Question numbers 21 to 25 carry 2 marks each.

21. State two ways in which studying the past helps us understand the present-day world. [2]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- It helps explain the origins of present-day institutions, customs and identities — 1 mark
- It helps societies learn from past successes and mistakes when making decisions today (any other valid point) — 1 mark

22. Differentiate between weather and climate, using one example each. [2]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- Weather is the short-term, day-to-day condition of the atmosphere, e.g. 'it rained heavily today' — 1 mark
- Climate is the average atmospheric condition of a place over a long period (30 years or more), e.g. 'Rajasthan has a hot, dry climate' — 1 mark

23. Give two pieces of evidence found at Harappan sites that suggest the Harappans carried on trade with other regions. [2]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- Harappan seals and beads have been found at sites in Mesopotamia, suggesting long-distance trade contact — 1 mark
- Standardised weights and measures found across widely separated Harappan sites indicate organised trade — 1 mark

24. Mention two features that distinguish a mountain from a plateau. [2]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- A mountain has a high elevation with steep slopes rising sharply to a narrow peak — 1 mark
- A plateau is also elevated, but has a broad, relatively flat top instead of a narrow peak — 1 mark

25. Explain why the Deccan Plateau is described as one of the oldest and most stable landmasses of India. [2]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- It is formed of ancient igneous/metamorphic rock, part of the old Gondwana landmass, largely unaffected by later mountain-building movements — 1 mark
- Because it has not undergone major tectonic upheaval since, it lacks young fold mountains and shows a relatively flat, table-land-like surface with worn-down hills — 1 mark

SECTION C

Question numbers 26 to 30 carry 3 marks each.

26. Explain any three functions performed by the atmosphere that make life possible on Earth. [3]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- It absorbs most of the Sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation through its ozone layer — 1 mark
- It maintains a suitable temperature range near the surface by trapping some outgoing heat (the greenhouse effect) — 1 mark
- It supplies oxygen for respiration and carbon dioxide for photosynthesis, and enables weather phenomena such as rainfall — 1 mark

27. Explain, with an example, how the physical remains of buildings and town-planning at an archaeological site can help historians understand the society that built them. [3]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- A planned layout, e.g. the gridiron street pattern and uniform brick sizes at Harappan sites, suggests some form of centralised planning/authority — 1 mark
- The size and nature of buildings can indicate social hierarchy — e.g. a large public structure like the Great Bath at Mohenjodaro suggests an important shared/ceremonial function — 1 mark
- The presence of granaries/store-houses can indicate surplus production and its storage or management by some authority — 1 mark

28. Explain any three factors that influence the climate of a place. [3]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- Latitude — places near the equator are generally warmer, while those near the poles are colder — 1 mark
- Altitude — temperature decreases with height, so hill stations are cooler than nearby plains — 1 mark
- Distance from the sea — coastal areas have a more moderate climate, while interior areas experience greater extremes (any other valid factor, e.g. direction of winds) — 1 mark

29. "The decline of the Harappan civilisation was probably caused by a combination of factors rather than a single cause." Explain this statement with any three possible reasons suggested by historians. [3]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- Changes in the course, or drying up, of rivers such as the Ghaggar-Hakra may have disrupted agriculture and water supply — 1 mark
- Possible climatic change leading to reduced rainfall and increasing aridity, affecting farming — 1 mark
- Decline of long-distance trade networks with regions like Mesopotamia, weakening the economy that supported the cities (any other valid reason, e.g. overuse of resources) — 1 mark

30. Explain any three ways in which the movement of tectonic plates affects human life and settlement patterns. [3]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- Regions near plate boundaries are prone to earthquakes, requiring special building designs and disaster preparedness — 1 mark
- Volcanic activity along certain boundaries can create fertile soil that attracts farming settlements, but also poses eruption hazards — 1 mark

- The slow uplift of land, e.g. the formation of fold mountains, affects the type of economic activity possible in a region, such as terrace farming or tourism — 1 mark

SECTION D

Question numbers 31 to 34 carry 5 marks each.

31. Explain any five ways in which historians and archaeologists use different types of sources — such as inscriptions, coins, manuscripts and excavated remains — to reconstruct the story of the past. [5]

OR

Explain the meaning of 'primary source' and 'secondary source' in the study of history, and illustrate each with one example. Also explain why historians consider it important to use multiple sources together rather than relying on just one.

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- Inscriptions engraved on stone/metal by rulers record events, grants and achievements, providing dated, reliable primary evidence — 1 mark
- Coins carry rulers' names, titles, dates and sometimes images, helping establish chronology and the extent of a kingdom — 1 mark
- Manuscripts/literary texts, though sometimes copied and modified over time, provide details of religious beliefs, social customs and events — 1 mark
- Excavated remains such as tools, pottery, seals and buildings reveal the technology, art, trade and daily life of a period, especially where writing has not survived — 1 mark
- Historians cross-check different types of sources against one another to arrive at more reliable conclusions, since any single source may be incomplete or biased — 1 mark

OR (value points):

- Primary source: an original source produced during the period being studied, e.g. a Harappan seal or an Ashokan edict — 1 mark
- Secondary source: a later account or interpretation created after the period, based on primary sources, e.g. a modern textbook — 1 mark
- Using multiple sources helps cross-verify facts and reduces the risk of being misled by an incomplete, biased or damaged source — 1 mark
- Combining archaeological and literary evidence often gives a fuller picture than either alone, e.g. seals plus excavated town-planning at Harappan sites — 1 mark
- Historians remain cautious and revise their conclusions as new sources/evidence are discovered — 1 mark

32. With reference to the interior of the Earth, explain (a) the three main layers of the Earth, and (b) how the movement of tectonic plates leads to the formation of major landforms. (Any five relevant points) [5]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- Crust — the thin, outermost solid layer on which we live, made of relatively lighter rocks — 1 mark
- Mantle — the thick middle layer of hot, semi-solid rock beneath the crust, whose slow convective movement drives plate motion — 1 mark
- Core — the innermost layer, divided into a liquid outer core and a solid inner core, made mostly of iron and nickel — 1 mark
- When two plates move towards each other (convergent boundary), the crust folds and rises to form fold mountains, e.g. the Himalayas — 1 mark
- When two plates move apart (divergent boundary) or slide past each other (transform boundary), rift valleys, ocean ridges or fault lines form, often with earthquakes and volcanic activity — 1 mark

33. Explain any five effects of the monsoon on life, agriculture and the economy of India. [5]

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- Monsoon rains support Kharif crops such as rice, providing water during the crucial early growth stage — 1 mark
- Adequate monsoon rainfall recharges groundwater, rivers and reservoirs used for irrigation and drinking water through the year — 1 mark

- A delayed or weak monsoon can lead to drought-like conditions and reduced crop yields, showing the deep link between the monsoon and the economy — 1 mark
- Very heavy or erratic monsoon rainfall can cause flooding, damaging crops, property and infrastructure in low-lying areas — 1 mark
- Because a large section of India's population depends on agriculture, the overall performance of the monsoon influences rural incomes and demand for goods across the economy — 1 mark

34. Explain any five features of the way society and administration were organised in early Indian kingdoms/states up to about 1000 CE. [5]

OR

Discuss any five reasons why early Indian kingdoms invested resources in building temples, irrigation tanks and issuing land grants to individuals or institutions.

Marking Scheme / Value Points:

- Kings were generally regarded as the supreme political authority, often assisted by ministers/councils in administration — 1 mark
- Society was commonly organised along varna/jati lines, which influenced occupation, marriage practices and social status, though the degree of rigidity varied by region and period — 1 mark
- Land revenue collected from agriculture formed the main source of income for the state, supporting the army and administration — 1 mark
- Village-level assemblies or local bodies often managed local affairs such as irrigation, land records and minor disputes, alongside the central administration — 1 mark
- Trade guilds (shrenis) of merchants and craftspeople organised production and commerce in towns, and sometimes exercised significant local influence — 1 mark

OR (value points):

- Temples doubled as centres of religious authority and helped rulers project legitimacy and divine sanction for their rule — 1 mark
- Temples and monasteries often received land grants, which brought new land under cultivation and extended the state's control into new areas — 1 mark
- Irrigation tanks and canals increased agricultural production, which in turn increased the land revenue available to the state — 1 mark
- Land grants to Brahmanas and religious institutions helped rulers build alliances with influential social groups — 1 mark
- Such grants and construction activity are recorded in inscriptions, which serve today as valuable sources for reconstructing the political and economic history of the period — 1 mark

SECTION E

Question numbers 35 to 37 are source-based/case-based questions carrying 4 marks each.

Case Study 1 — Question 35 [4 Marks]

Devgram lies close to a zone where two tectonic plates meet. Older residents recall that the region has experienced several mild earthquakes over the decades, and new government guidelines now require all buildings to follow earthquake-resistant designs. A geography teacher visiting the village explained to students how the shifting plates beneath the surface were responsible for such tremors.

(i) What name is given to the boundary where two tectonic plates meet? [1]

Answer: A plate boundary (plate margin).

(ii) Why do regions located near plate boundaries experience frequent earthquakes? [1]

Answer: The plates are constantly moving very slowly against, towards or away from each other, and the stress built up at their boundary is released suddenly as seismic waves, causing the ground to shake.

(iii) Suggest one reason why building codes in earthquake-prone regions require special earthquake-resistant designs. [1]

Answer: To reduce the risk of buildings collapsing and causing loss of life/property when the ground shakes, by allowing structures to flex or absorb the shock.

(iv) Name one major mountain range in India formed due to the collision of tectonic plates, and identify the two plates involved. [1]

OR Apart from earthquakes, name one other geological phenomenon commonly associated with plate boundaries.

Answer: The Himalayas, formed by the collision of the Indian Plate and the Eurasian Plate.

OR Answer: Volcanic activity/eruptions (or the formation of ocean trenches/mid-ocean ridges), which commonly occur along certain types of plate boundaries.

Case Study 2 — Question 36 [4 Marks]

During excavation at an ancient mound, archaeologists uncovered neatly baked bricks arranged in a grid-like pattern of streets, a covered drainage system running along the lanes, and a large rectangular tank lined with bricks and coated with a natural waterproofing material. Nearby, they also found small stone seals engraved with animal figures and a few undeciphered signs.

(i) Which ancient civilisation is most likely being described here, based on the features mentioned? [1]

Answer: The Indus Valley/Harappan civilisation.

(ii) What does the presence of a planned grid of streets and a covered drainage system suggest about this civilisation? [1]

Answer: It suggests a high level of urban planning and an organised civic administration capable of designing and maintaining public infrastructure for the whole settlement.

(iii) Historians are still unable to fully explain the purpose and meaning of the seals mentioned in the passage. Suggest one reason why this uncertainty exists. [1]

Answer: The script found on the seals has not yet been deciphered, so historians cannot read what is written on them and must rely on the images and archaeological context alone.

(iv) What was the large brick-lined tank mentioned in the passage most likely used for, based on similar structures found at Harappan sites? [1]

OR Suggest one piece of additional evidence archaeologists could look for at this site to confirm trade contact with other regions.

Answer: It was most likely a structure such as the Great Bath at Mohenjodaro, probably used for ritual bathing or another public/ceremonial purpose.

OR Answer: Evidence such as Harappan seals or beads found in distant regions (e.g. Mesopotamia), or foreign objects found at the site itself, would help confirm long-distance trade contacts.

Case Study 3 — Question 37 [4 Marks]

In an early Indian kingdom, an inscription found on a copper plate records that the king granted a piece of agricultural land, along with the right to collect its revenue, to a group of learned Brahmanas so that they could perform religious rituals for the welfare of the kingdom. The inscription also mentions the boundaries of the granted land and instructs local officials not to interfere with it.

(i) What term is generally used for a formal grant of land made by a king, especially to a religious individual/institution? [1]

Answer: A land grant (often called a copper-plate grant when recorded on copper).

(ii) Name the material on which this particular land grant was inscribed. [1]

Answer: Copper (a copper plate).

(iii) Why are such inscriptions considered valuable sources for historians studying early Indian society and administration? [1]

Answer: They are original, dated documents providing direct evidence of land ownership, administrative practice, and the relationship between kings and religious institutions, unlike later texts which may be copied or altered.

(iv) Suggest one way in which such land grants to religious institutions could have helped an early Indian king strengthen his rule. [1]

OR State one way in which local officials mentioned in such inscriptions were expected to respect the terms of a land grant.

Answer: By granting land to influential religious groups, the king could win their support and blessing, adding legitimacy to his rule, while also extending cultivation and the state's presence into new areas.

OR Answer: They were expected not to interfere with the granted land or its revenue, respecting the rights given to the grantee as recorded in the inscription.

SECTION F

Question number 38 is a map-based question of 3 marks.

38. Map-Based Question [3 Marks]

On an outline map of India, mark and label: (i) the Himalayan mountain range, formed due to the collision of the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates [1 mark]; (ii) the approximate location of the Harappan site of Mohenjodaro [1 mark]; (iii) the approximate location of Pataliputra, an important early Indian city and capital of the Magadha kingdom/empire [1 mark].

Answer: (i) The Himalayas — a fold mountain range along India's northern border, formed by the collision of the Indian and Eurasian plates. (ii) Mohenjodaro — a major Harappan site, on the bank of the Indus river (in present-day Pakistan). (iii) Pataliputra — near present-day Patna, Bihar, on the bank of the river Ganga, capital of the Magadha kingdom. (For visually impaired candidates, a list of related places may be provided in lieu of the map exercise, as per CBSE guidelines.)

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