

Social Science Talent Search Examination

Social science from the news and the world around us

History

Geography

Economics

Political Science

Civics


Infinity Masterclasses

Vasundhara, Ghaziabad
Built around your child.



What is inside

CLASS 5–6

One Country, One Clock

GEOGRAPHY · HISTORY

Why the Sun rises two hours earlier in Arunachal than in Gujarat, though India keeps one time.

New idea: longitude and time, and India's old city clocks.

CLASS 7–8

The Tax Hidden in Your Toothpaste

ECONOMICS · CIVICS

What the 2025 GST cuts did to prices, and who decides India's taxes.

New idea: how GST is split, and the GST Council vote.

CLASS 9–10

Fewest Votes, Most Seats

POLITICAL SCIENCE · HISTORY

How a party can win an election with fewer votes, and why the 2027 census worries some states.

New idea: first-past-the-post and delimitation.

Why SSTSE?

Social science is not a list of dates and definitions to memorise. It is the story of how people live, work, vote, trade and share a planet. SSTSE brings that story to life through case studies drawn from the news and from a child's own surroundings.

Each case study teaches one new idea, with the map, table or diagram needed to use it, and then asks questions that reward careful reading and clear thinking. A student who has never met the topic before can still solve it. That is the point: SSTSE celebrates curious minds who can think, not just recall.

SSTSE 2027 at a glance

Session 2026–27

Academic session

Class 5 to 10

Three class groups: 5–6, 7–8, 9–10

2 hours

40 questions, 200 marks

No negative marking

Every question is MCQ

5 subjects

History, Geography, Economics, Political Science, Civics

Case-study based

Learn it in the paper, then apply it

Try it yourself: pick your class group, read the case study, answer the five questions, then check your answers on the back page.

CASE STUDY 1

One Country, One Clock

GEOGRAPHY · HISTORY



QUESTIONS

1-5

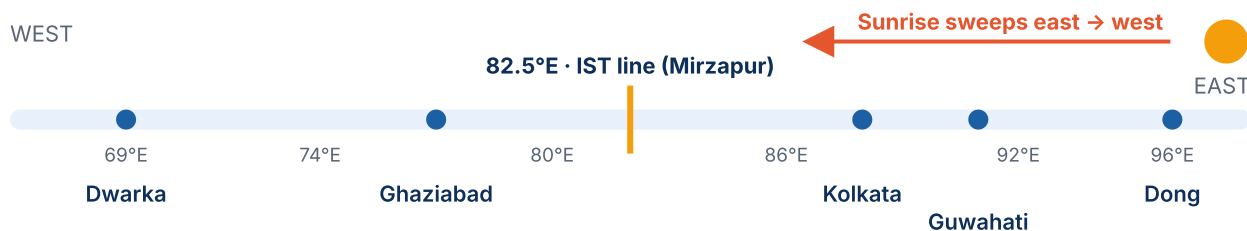
5 × 5 = 25 marks

IN THE NEWS In 2025, the government released draft rules to make Indian Standard Time (IST) compulsory for all official and business work. People in the north-east have long asked for a clock of their own.

India is a wide country, yet every clock from Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh shows the same time. The Sun does not follow our clocks, though. So when it is 6 am everywhere, it is already bright in some places and still dark in others.

The key ideas

- The Earth spins from **west to east**, once every 24 hours. So places further **east** see the Sun rise **earlier**.
- Places are marked east or west by **longitude**, measured in degrees (°E). The Earth turns 360° in 24 hours, which is **1° every 4 minutes**. So 1° further east means sunrise about 4 minutes earlier.
- India stretches from about 68°E in Gujarat to about 97°E in Arunachal Pradesh.
- IST is set by the Sun at the **82.5°E** line, which passes near Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh, close to the middle of the country.
- From history:** before IST, big cities kept their own clocks, set by their own Sun. **Calcutta Time** ran **24 minutes ahead** of IST and was used until 1948. **Bombay Time** ran **39 minutes behind** IST and was used until 1955.
- Tea gardens in Assam have used **chai bagan time** for over 150 years. Their clocks run **one hour ahead** of IST, so work can start and end with the early daylight.



Places across India by longitude. The Sun reaches the east first and moves west, about 1° every 4 minutes.

Sunrise on one day in March (shown on IST clocks)

Place	State	Longitude	Sunrise (IST)
Dong	Arunachal Pradesh	about 97°E	5:02 am
Guwahati	Assam	about 91.5°E	5:24 am
Kolkata	West Bengal	about 88.5°E	5:36 am
Mirzapur	Uttar Pradesh	82.5°E	6:00 am
Ghaziabad	Uttar Pradesh	about 77.5°E	6:20 am
Dwarka	Gujarat	about 69°E	6:54 am

Simplified: on this day the Sun rises at about 6:00 am at 82.5°E, and other small effects are ignored.

Questions

- 1 Ahmedabad is at about 72.5°E . On the same day in March, at what time does the Sun rise there by an IST clock?

A. 6:00 am	B. 6:40 am
C. 6:20 am	D. 7:00 am

- 2 Port Blair, in the Andaman Islands, is at about 92.5°E . At what time does the Sun rise there on that day by an IST clock?

A. 5:20 am	B. 6:40 am
C. 5:50 am	D. 5:10 am

- 3 A tea garden near Guwahati runs on chai bagan time. On the day in the table, what does the tea garden clock show when the Sun rises?

A. 4:24 am	B. 5:24 am
C. 6:24 am	D. 6:00 am

- 4 A railway timetable from 1940 says a train leaves Bombay at 10:00 am **Bombay Time**. At that very moment, what did a clock in Calcutta show on **Calcutta Time**?

A. 9:21 am	B. 10:39 am
C. 10:24 am	D. 11:03 am

- 5 Suppose India had chosen to set IST by the Sun at Ghaziabad (77.5°E) instead of at 82.5°E . What would change most?

A. In the north-east, the Sun would rise even earlier on the clock, at about 4:40 am in Dong.
B. In the north-east, the Sun would rise later on the clock, at about 5:22 am in Dong.
C. Nothing, because the Sun rises at the same moment whatever the clocks say.
D. Gujarat would get sunrise before Arunachal Pradesh.

CASE STUDY 1

The Tax Hidden in Your Toothpaste

ECONOMICS · CIVICS

QUESTIONS

1–5

5 × 5 = 25 marks



IN THE NEWS On 22 September 2025, India cut GST on hundreds of everyday items, from toothpaste and bicycles to small cars, just before the festival season.

Almost everything you buy carries a tax called GST, the Goods and Services Tax. You rarely see it, because it is already inside the price. So who collects it, where does the money go, and who decides how much it should be?

The key ideas

- GST is added on top of the shop's **base price**. Price you pay = base price + GST. With 18% GST, a ₹100 item costs ₹118.
- When you buy something in your own state, the GST is split into **two equal halves**: **CGST** goes to the Union government, and **SGST** goes to the state government.
- GST rates are decided by the **GST Council**: the Union Finance Minister and the finance ministers of the states. The Union government's vote counts for **one-third** of the total, and all the states together count for **two-thirds**.
- A decision passes only with **at least three-quarters** of the total vote. Neither side can decide alone, so the Union and the states must agree. This is called **cooperative federalism**.
- In September 2025, the Council replaced four main rates (5%, 12%, 18% and 28%) with mainly two: **5%** and **18%**.



Where the GST on one bicycle goes, and how the GST Council's votes are weighted.

Some GST changes on 22 September 2025

Item	GST before	GST after
Toothpaste	18%	5%
Bicycle	12%	5%
Exercise book	12%	0%
Small car	28%	18%

Small cars sold by one dealer in Ghaziabad

Year	August	October (Diwali month)	GST on small cars in October
2024	100	130	28%
2025	100	170	18%

Questions

- 1 A tube of toothpaste has a base price of ₹100, and the shop does not change it. After 22 September 2025, how much less does a customer pay for the tube?

A. ₹5	B. ₹18
C. ₹13	D. ₹23

- 2 The bicycle on the bill was sold in Ghaziabad. Compared with the same ₹4,000 bicycle sold before 22 September 2025, how much less does the Uttar Pradesh government now receive from this sale?

A. ₹100	B. ₹140
C. ₹280	D. ₹240

- 3 Imagine the states all had equal votes. Which group, voting together, could pass a GST decision in the Council?

A. The Union government on its own	B. All the states, without the Union government
C. The Union government with half of the states	D. The Union government with three-quarters of the states

- 4 A newspaper headline says: "In 2025, the dealer sold 70 more cars in October than in August, all because of the GST cut." What does the dealer's table actually support?

A. About 30 of the extra cars are sold every Diwali anyway; the GST cut can explain at most about 40 more.	B. The GST cut caused all 70 of the extra cars to be sold.
C. Diwali alone explains the jump, so the GST cut made no difference.	D. Lower tax made people buy fewer cars in August.

- 5 After 22 September 2025, one shopkeeper keeps selling the toothpaste at ₹118, the old price, and correctly adds the new 5% GST on the bill. About what base price is the shopkeeper now charging?

A. ₹100	B. ₹112
C. ₹113	D. ₹118

SECTION A · CASE STUDY

Fewest Votes, Most Seats

POLITICAL SCIENCE · HISTORY

QUESTIONS

1–5

5 × 5 = 25 marks



IN THE NEWS India's next census, the first since 2011, will count the population in 2027. After it, Lok Sabha seats may be shared out again for the first time in over 50 years, and several states are already worried about losing seats.

In an election, the party with the most votes usually wins. Usually, but not always. The rules that turn votes into seats matter as much as the votes themselves.

The key ideas

- Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections use **first-past-the-post** (FPTP). Each constituency elects one member. The candidate with the **most** votes wins, even if that is far less than half.
- So a party's share of **seats** can be very different from its share of **votes**. Votes piled up beyond what is needed to win a seat, or spread thinly in seats a party loses, do not add seats.
- Many countries use **proportional representation** instead: each party gets seats in proportion to its share of the total votes.
- Seats are shared among states by population. **From history:** in 1976 the number of Lok Sabha seats for each state was **frozen** at the 1971 census figures, so that states which slowed their population growth would not lose seats. In 2001 the freeze was extended until the first census after 2026.
- Redrawing seats by population is called **delimitation**. The new Lok Sabha hall has room for 888 members, against 543 seats today.

How FPTP decides one constituency (example: 100 voters)

Candidate 1 · 40 votes

Candidate 2 · 35

Candidate 3 · 25

→ Candidate 1 wins

The winner only needs more votes than each rival. Here 60 of the 100 voters chose someone else.

Election in the imaginary state of Navrashtra (votes in thousands)

Constituency	Party P	Party Q	Party R	Total
C1	40	35	25	100
C2	38	36	26	100
C3	34	33	33	100
C4	10	70	20	100
C5	20	30	50	100

Two imaginary states and their Lok Sabha seats

State	Population in 1971	Seats (frozen since 1976)	Population today
State X	4 crore	40	6 crore
State Y	4 crore	40	10 crore

Questions

- 1 In Navrashtra, which party won the most seats while getting the fewest votes in the state as a whole?

A. Party Q

C. Party R

B. Party P

D. No party; seats matched votes

- 2 In constituency C3, about what fraction of voters chose a candidate other than the winner?

A. About one-third

B. About half

C. None, because a winner must get more than half

D. About two-thirds

- 3 If Navrashtra's 5 seats were shared by proportional representation, using each party's share of the state's total votes and rounding to the nearest whole seat, the result would be

A. P 1, Q 2, R 2

C. P 2, Q 2, R 1

B. P 3, Q 1, R 1

D. P 1, Q 3, R 1

- 4 Party Q says its voters were "packed into C4". Suppose 6 thousand of Q's voters in C4 had lived in C1 instead, and 3 thousand in C2 instead, with everyone voting the same way. How many seats would Q win?

A. 1

C. 3

B. 2

D. 4

- 5 After the census, the 80 seats of States X and Y are shared again by today's population, keeping the total at 80. What is the new split?

A. X 40, Y 40

C. X 20, Y 60

B. X 30, Y 50

D. X 60, Y 100

Check your answers

Each correct answer earns 5 marks, so each case study is worth 25 marks. The full paper has 40 questions for 200 marks. There is no negative marking.

Class group	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Class 5–6 · One Country, One Clock	B	A	C	D	A
Class 7–8 · The Tax Hidden in Your Toothpaste	C	B	D	A	B
Class 9–10 · Fewest Votes, Most Seats	B	D	A	C	B

What these case studies reward

- **Reading closely:** every answer comes from the passage, the map or the table, not from memory.
- **Telling cause from coincidence:** did the tax cut sell the cars, or was it Diwali?
- **Reading data with care:** sunrise times, tax bills and vote counts all hide the answer in the numbers.
- **Thinking beyond the textbook:** from India's old city clocks to how votes turn into seats.

The tables in these case studies use simplified data for learning.

Think it through at SSTSE 2027

The Social Science Talent Search Examination, for Class 5 to Class 10. Ask your school about registration, or get in touch with Infinity Masterclasses.



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