Meghalaya

Mains answer-writing practice

8 original descriptive questions + model answers

State GK and state-linked general studies, in one PDF.

Higher level: eight analytical prompts, each with a roughly 150-word model response and a suggested 10-mark self-assessment guide.

These are original practice questions, not previous-year questions or an official mock. This focused first collection does not replace an exam-specific syllabus.

Language: English. Core focus: history, geography, heritage, governance, development, environment and institutions.

This edition emphasises stable concepts. It is not a current-affairs digest; verify changing schemes, office-holders, district boundaries and budget figures separately.

How to use this book

Write your response before reading the model. Use the marking guide to check coverage, accuracy and structure. Marks and word targets are practice choices.

Research and scope - page 2
Start practice - page 3
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What the exam research tells us

Entry-level exam evidence

The 15 July 2025 LDA advertisement lists English, GK/current affairs, aptitude, reasoning and basic computer in MCQ format. This supports mixed foundation practice for that recruitment, not a universal Group C pattern. Our book supplements Meghalaya GK and selected skills; it does not reproduce the official subject weights. [EX1]

Higher-level exam evidence

The 23 September 2026 MCS notification details essay, GS and a Meghalaya mains paper. State units cover history; polity; society, economy and development; culture, heritage and literature; geography. The official PDF was retrieved and read. This collection samples these areas rather than providing full syllabus coverage. [EX2]

Three editorial levels

Basic uses direct recall and one-step tasks. Advanced adds statements, chronology, evidence and short calculations. Mains includes eight analytical prompts, model answers and suggested 10-mark rubrics. These difficulty labels, timings and word targets are editorial choices. All questions are original; no previous-paper frequency analysis is claimed.

State focus and sources

Coverage links statehood and resistance history with district councils, matriliny, festivals, living root bridges, sacred groves, Nokrek, rivers and rainfall. Official government, district, tourism, biodiversity and UNESCO sources anchor facts. Development proposals and sample datasets are editorial exercises. Biosphere recognition and UNESCO tentative listing are different mechanisms.

Limits and revision

Checked 29 October 2026. Verify changing schemes, office-holders, boundaries and recruitment instructions separately. These books supplement exam-specific study and current affairs. Source titles are clickable; facts are paraphrased. Historical descriptions are not current field surveys or travel advice. Apply actual rules to administrative cases.

Write, compare, improve

01 / Living root bridges

Propose a conservation approach that treats living root bridges as community infrastructure and heritage.

Practice target: about 150 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

Model answer

Meghalaya's living root bridges combine biological growth, local knowledge and practical crossings. The UNESCO tentative-list submission presents them as cultural landscapes. Their care should therefore protect everyday function and the relationships that sustain them, rather than treating them only as visitor attractions.

A condition assessment should examine roots, supporting vegetation, stream behaviour and safe access. Qualified advice and custodians' knowledge should guide maintenance. Proposed tourist facilities need assessment of their effects on the living structure, surrounding habitat and use by residents.

Safeguarding also requires transmission. Experienced practitioners should receive agreed payment for teaching, while documentation needs consent, attribution and clear reproduction terms. Community members should help determine visitor conduct, access arrangements and the distribution of benefits from services.

Monitoring should combine structural and ecological indicators with residents' experience of access. Transparent maintenance funding and a practical complaints route can reveal problems early. Tentative listing is not World Heritage inscription, and international recognition alone cannot replace continuing care, local authority or evidence of safe and sustainable use.

Self-assessment

Integrated heritage argument: 3 | Feasible care: 3 | Community and accountability: 3 | Structure: 1

Evidence / basis: N1, N2; editorial conservation framework. Editorial model answer.

Write, compare, improve

02 / Institutions and governance

Explain why development planning in Meghalaya requires coordination with Autonomous District Councils.

Practice target: about 150 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

Model answer

Meghalaya's Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills and Garo Hills Autonomous District Councils operate within the Sixth Schedule framework. Planning must recognise their institutional roles alongside those of the state and other relevant authorities. A project cannot assume that every body has identical powers or responsibilities.

Officials should begin by identifying the applicable jurisdiction, required permissions and the institution responsible for each task. A shared project record can clarify approvals, funding, implementation and maintenance. Legal questions should be referred for competent advice rather than settled through informal assumptions.

Consultation should include affected residents and relevant customary institutions, with accessible information about alternatives and likely effects. Participation must be meaningful: objections and proposed changes should be recorded and answered. Technical feasibility, inclusion and environmental effects also need independent attention.

Monitoring should identify who is accountable when work stalls or causes harm. Public expenditure summaries and a clear grievance route can reduce confusion. Coordination should strengthen lawful autonomy and effective services together, avoiding both institutional bypass and the use of overlapping responsibilities as an excuse for inaction.

Self-assessment

Institutional context: 3 | Coordination measures: 3 | Participation and accountability: 3 | Structure: 1

Evidence / basis: P1; editorial planning analysis, subject to actual law. Editorial model answer.

Write, compare, improve

03 / Matriliny and inclusion

Why should matrilineal descent and gender equality be assessed as related but distinct questions?

Practice target: about 150 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

Model answer

Matriliny concerns the tracing of descent through the maternal line. Meghalaya's social traditions make it an important subject of study, but lineage alone cannot establish equal power, opportunity or security in every sphere. Analysis should distinguish customary arrangements from measured outcomes.

An assessment should examine education, health, income, control over resources and participation in decision making. Household responsibilities and access to public institutions also matter. Evidence must recognise differences among communities and individuals instead of treating all women or all customary practices as identical.

Policy should be developed through informed consultation, including people who face practical barriers to participation. Accessible services, legal awareness, safe complaints procedures and support for livelihoods may help address identified disadvantages. Changes affecting rights require careful attention to the applicable constitutional and legal framework.

Evaluation should combine reliable indicators with confidential qualitative feedback. Data should be collected and shared with privacy safeguards. Respect for cultural institutions and scrutiny of unequal outcomes can coexist; the objective is to understand actual experience and improve opportunity through evidence and fair procedures.

Self-assessment

Conceptual distinction: 3 | Evidence and measures: 3 | Nuance, rights and privacy: 3 | Structure: 1

Evidence / basis: P2; editorial social-policy analysis. Editorial model answer.

Write, compare, improve

04 / Sacred groves

Suggest a framework that supports community stewardship of Mawphlang without assuming customs alone guarantee conservation.

Practice target: about 150 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

Model answer

Mawphlang's sacred grove illustrates how cultural values and community stewardship can support forest protection. Such institutions deserve respect, but effective conservation also needs evidence about ecological condition and changing pressures. A celebrated example should not be used to assume that every grove has identical rules.

The framework should record habitat condition, visitor pressure and nearby land-use changes with the agreement of custodians. Local knowledge can guide research questions and appropriate conduct. Scientific monitoring should complement this knowledge through clear methods and findings that communities can understand.

Visitor management needs agreed routes, suitable interpretation, waste arrangements and limits where evidence supports them. New facilities should avoid damage to sensitive areas. Guides and custodians should receive fair compensation, while decisions about cultural information and photography require consent.

Accountability should include transparent funding, shared review and an accessible grievance process. Indicators must track forest condition and community benefit rather than publicity alone. This approach sustains local agency while allowing management to adapt when evidence reveals new threats or unintended effects.

Self-assessment

Community and ecological context: 3 | Practical framework: 3 | Consent and evaluation: 3 | Structure: 1

Evidence / basis: N5; editorial conservation framework. Editorial model answer.

Write, compare, improve

05 / Biodiversity and livelihoods

How can a Nokrek conservation programme connect wild-citrus protection with local livelihoods?

Practice target: about 150 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

Model answer

UNESCO's Nokrek profile highlights Indian wild orange and other citrus diversity in the Garo Hills landscape. Protecting such resources matters for biodiversity and genetic variation. A conservation programme should consider habitat condition together with the needs of people living around the reserve.

An initial assessment should map relevant habitats, pressures and existing resource uses. Protection in natural settings should follow appropriate scientific advice, with research permissions and collection practices clearly regulated. Public claims must avoid assuming that wild genetic resources automatically solve every problem faced by cultivated crops.

Livelihood support should be based on consultation and practical feasibility. Suitable training, market access or alternative income activities need fair eligibility, realistic costs and attention to who carries restrictions or unpaid work. Community participation must extend beyond attendance at launch events.

Monitoring should track habitat trends, household outcomes and expenditure. Research and commercial proposals should respect applicable rules, consent requirements and benefit-sharing arrangements. Success combines viable ecosystems with accountable local opportunities, rather than relying on recognition status, plantation counts or promotional targets as sufficient evidence.

Self-assessment

Biodiversity rationale: 3 | Integrated measures: 3 | Fair benefits and evidence: 3 | Structure: 1

Evidence / basis: N3; editorial conservation and livelihoods analysis. Editorial model answer.

Write, compare, improve

06 / Water and tourism

Develop a responsible water-management approach using Umiam and the Umngot region as distinct examples.

Practice target: about 150 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

Model answer

Umiam is a reservoir created by damming the Umiam River, while Umngot is associated with the Dawki and Shnongpdeng river setting. Both support public interest and visitor activity, but their different hydrological contexts require site-specific management. Clear-looking water should never substitute for evidence of safety.

Authorities should map inflows, uses, pollution sources and exposed settlements. Sampling needs consistent locations, methods and timing so that results can support comparison. Catchment activities and proposed tourism facilities should be assessed for runoff, waste and effects on downstream users.

Visitor services need suitable sanitation, waste collection, safe access and arrangements for emergencies. Local operators and residents should participate in decisions about responsibilities and benefits. Restrictions should be explained through evidence and reviewed through accessible procedures.

Performance indicators should include water quality, reliability of services and distribution of costs, alongside economic outcomes. Agencies must identify who acts on failed standards or complaints. A useful plan protects water resources and livelihoods through continuing measurement, maintenance and coordination rather than assuming scenic appearance proves ecological health.

Self-assessment

Accurate distinction: 2 | Water and visitor measures: 4 | Evidence and accountability: 3 | Structure: 1

Evidence / basis: G1, G2; editorial water-planning framework. Editorial model answer.

Write, compare, improve

07 / History and public learning

Design a source-based learning programme linking resistance history with Meghalaya's political formation.

Practice target: about 150 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

Model answer

A learning programme should distinguish resistance to colonial rule from the later constitutional formation of Meghalaya. U Tirot Sing's Nongkhlaw context and U Kiang Nangbah's Jaintia resistance provide historical anchors. The autonomous-state stage in 1970 and full statehood in 1972 belong to a later political timeline.

Students could work with maps, short official accounts and a clearly dated sequence of events. Each item should state its source and explain whether it presents a documented event, interpretation or remembered tradition. Differences between accounts should prompt further inquiry rather than invented certainty.

Activities should ask learners to compare regional settings, identify what evidence supports a claim and explain why distinct movements should not be collapsed into one story. Oral histories may enrich the programme when collected with informed consent and suitable attribution.

Accessible language, translated summaries and varied formats can widen participation. Assessment should reward accurate chronology, explanation and source judgement. The aim is informed public understanding of Meghalaya's diverse histories and institutions, with respect for complexity and a clear separation of historical fact from unsupported inference.

Self-assessment

Historical framework: 3 | Learning design: 3 | Evidence and inclusion: 3 | Structure: 1

Evidence / basis: H1, H2, H3; editorial education programme. Editorial model answer.

Write, compare, improve

08 / Ethics and local grants

An influential sponsor seeks preferential treatment for a tourism grant. What should an officer do?

Practice target: about 150 words | Suggested marks: 10 | Try: 10 minutes

Model answer

A tourism grant should serve its published purpose through fair and lawful procedures. An influential sponsor's recommendation cannot replace evidence of eligibility, need or feasibility. The officer must protect impartiality while treating the applicant respectfully and avoiding unnecessary delay.

First, record the request and examine the governing criteria, required approvals and any conflict of interest. Technical and financial assessments should use the same standards applied to comparable proposals. Missing information should be requested through authorised procedures, without inventing requirements or concealing deficiencies.

The decision should state reasons and explain legitimate review routes. Persistent pressure or suspected misconduct should be reported through designated channels with relevant records preserved. Confidential information must remain protected; transparency does not justify public allegations that have not been established.

The wider process should include published criteria, traceable approvals and checks on delivery, expenditure and community benefit. Independent review can identify patterns of favouritism or exclusion. Integrity requires both resisting improper influence and making a decision that can be explained, reviewed and implemented in the public interest.

Self-assessment

Ethical diagnosis: 2 | Lawful response: 4 | Accountability and safeguards: 3 | Structure: 1

Evidence / basis: Editorial hypothetical case; apply actual governing rules. Editorial model answer.

Source register

Source IDs beside answers map to the links below. Blue source titles are clickable. Research checked 29 October 2026.

EX1 / Meghalaya PSC: LDA advertisement, 15 July 2025, selection subjects

mpsc.meghalaya.gov.in

EX2 / Government: detailed MCS mains syllabus, 23 September 2026

meghalaya.gov.in

H1 / Government portal: autonomous state, statehood and Shillong

www.meghalaya.gov.in

H2 / Eastern West Khasi Hills: U Tirot Sing and Nongkhlaw

easternwestkhasihills.meghalaya.gov.in

H3 / PIB: U Kiang Nangbah and resistance in Jaintia Hills

www.pib.gov.in

P1 / District Council Affairs: three ADCs and their framework

megdca.gov.in

P2 / Government development framework: matrilineal descent

mbda.gov.in

C1 / Government portal: Wangala, Garo harvest festival

meghalaya.gov.in

Source register

Source IDs beside answers map to the links below. Blue source titles are clickable. Research checked 29 October 2026.

C2 / Government portal: Nongkrem dance festival at Smit

meghalaya.gov.in

C3 / Government portal: Behdienkhlam festival at Jowai

meghalaya.gov.in

N1 / UNESCO Tentative List: living root bridge cultural landscapes

whc.unesco.org

N2 / Meghalaya Biodiversity Board: living root bridges

megbiodiversity.nic.in

N3 / UNESCO Man and the Biosphere: Nokrek

www.unesco.org

N4 / Meghalaya Biodiversity Board: protected areas

megbiodiversity.nic.in

N5 / Meghalaya Tourism: Mawphlang sacred grove

www.meghalayatourism.in

G1 / Ri Bhoi district: Umiam reservoir

ribhoi.gov.in

Source register

Source IDs beside answers map to the links below. Blue source titles are clickable. Research checked 29 October 2026.

G2 / Meghalaya Tourism: Umngot River and Dawki region

www.meghalayatourism.in

G3 / Meghalaya House: climate, Sohra and Mawsynram

www.meghalayahousedelhi.nic.in

Read sources in context

EX1 is a dated advertisement for LDA under Heads of Department; later notices and the relevant recruitment rules must also be checked. EX2 is the detailed September 2026 MCS mains syllabus. Questions and marks here are editorial practice.

N1 is a UNESCO tentative-list submission, not evidence of World Heritage inscription. N3 concerns the Man and the Biosphere programme. Recognition under one mechanism does not automatically establish recognition under another.

No rainfall superlative or current ecological statistic is inferred from promotional descriptions. Clear-looking water is not proof of drinking-water safety. Sample figures, calculations, policy proposals and marking rubrics are original practice material.