

Print Culture and the Modern World | Case Based Questions

These case-based questions from ***Print Culture and the Modern World*** are designed to test your understanding and application skills. Regular practice will make you confident, improve your speed and accuracy, and help you score full marks in the board exams.

Case Based Questions:

Q.1 Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow:

From the early nineteenth century, as you know, there were intense debates around religious issues. Different groups confronted the changes happening within colonial society in different ways, and offered a variety of new interpretations of the beliefs of different religions. Some criticised existing practices and campaigned for reform, while others countered the arguments of reformers. These debates were carried out in public and in print. Printed tracts and newspapers not only spread the new ideas, but they shaped the nature of the debate. A wider public could now participate in these public discussions and express their views. New ideas emerged through these clashes of opinions. This was a time of intense controversies between social and religious reformers and the Hindu orthodoxy over matters like widow immolation, monotheism, Brahmanical priesthood and idolatry. In Bengal, as the debate developed, tracts and newspapers proliferated, circulating a variety of arguments. To reach a wider audience, the ideas were printed in the everyday, spoken language of ordinary people. Rammohun Roy published the *Sambad Kaumudi* from 1821 and the Hindu orthodoxy commissioned the *Samachar Chandrika* to oppose his opinions. From 1822, two Persian newspapers were published, *Jam-i-Jahan*

Nama and *Shamsul Akhbar*. In the same year, a Gujarati newspaper, the *Bombay Samachar*, made its appearance.

(i) What were the main topics of debates from early 19th Century? (1)

Answer: Widow immolation (sati), monotheism, Brahmanical priesthood, and idolatry.

(ii) How the debates were being carried out? (1)

Answer: Debates were carried out through printed tracts and newspapers and by using everyday spoken language to reach a wider audience.

(iii) Name some newspaper published in the 19th Century. (2)

Answer: *Sambad Kaumudi* (1821), *Samachar Chandrika*, *Jam-i-Jahan Nama* (1822), *Shamsul Akhbar* (1822), *Bombay Samachar* (1822).

Q.2 Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow: (previous year question)

The power of the printed word is most often seen in the way governments seek to regulate and suppress print. The colonial government kept continuous track of all books and newspapers published in India and passed numerous laws to control the press. During the First World War, under the Defence of India Rules, 22 newspapers had to furnish securities. Of these, 18 shut down rather than comply with government orders. The Sedition Committee Report under Rowlatt in 1919 further strengthened controls that led to imposition of penalties on various newspapers. At the outbreak of the Second World War, the Defence of India Act was passed, allowing censoring of reports of war-related topics. All reports about the Quit India movement came under its purview. In August 1942, about 90 newspapers were suppressed.

i) Explain the meaning of 'censor' (1)

Answer: 'Censor' means to officially examine newspapers, books or films and remove or ban any parts the authorities find objectionable before publication.

ii) Why did the colonial administration keep an eye on books and newspapers? (1)

Answer: Colonial administration kept an eye on books and newspapers to control the press and stop the spread of writings that could criticise or mobilise people against the colonial government.

iii) Why did Gandhiji start a nationwide Satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act? Explain any two reasons. (2)

Answer: The Rowlatt Act was harsh and violated civil rights. It allowed arrest without trial and secret courts. People across India were uniting against colonial rule, so Gandhi called a peaceful, countrywide Satyagraha to bring everyone together and oppose this repression.

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