

CUET PG 2026 Art & Aesthetics Memory Based Question Paper with Solutions

Time Allowed :1 Hour 30 Mins	Maximum Marks :300	Total Questions :75
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General Instructions

1. The exam lasts 90 minutes (1 hour 30 minutes).
2. There are 75 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) to be answered.
3. +4 marks for every correct answer. -1 mark (negative marking) for every incorrect answer. 0 marks for unanswered or un-attempted questions.
4. For any discrepancy in questions, the English version is considered final (except for language-specific papers).
5. Click one of the four options to choose an answer.
6. You must click "Save & Next" to confirm your response. Only saved answers are considered for evaluation.
7. Use "Mark for Review & Next" to flag a question for later. You can unselect or change your answer using the "Clear Response" button.
8. All calculations must be done on the Rough Sheets provided at the centre. These must be returned to the invigilator after the exam.

1. Which ancient Indian text is considered the foundational treatise on performing arts, including dance, music, and drama?

- (A) Arthashastra
- (B) Natyashastra
- (C) Manusmriti
- (D) Shilpa Shastra

Correct Answer: (B) Natyashastra

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The question asks to identify the primary ancient source text that governs the rules and aesthetics of Indian performing arts.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The **Natyashastra** is an encyclopedic ancient Indian treatise on the performing arts, attributed to the sage **Bharata Muni**.

It was likely composed between 200 BCE and 200 CE and covers every aspect of performance,

including drama, dance, music, stagecraft, and the emotional theory of **Rasa**.

Other texts mentioned serve different purposes:

1. **Arthashastra**: A treatise on statecraft, economic policy, and military strategy by Chanakya.
2. **Manusmriti**: An ancient legal text among the many Dharmaśāstras of Hinduism.
3. **Shilpa Shastra**: A collective term for manuals on the mechanical arts, sculpture, and architecture.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The foundational treatise on performing arts is the Natyashastra.

 Quick Tip

The Natyashastra is often referred to as the "**Fifth Veda**" because it was created to be accessible to all people, regardless of caste, to impart moral and spiritual knowledge through art.

2. The "Rasa Theory," essential to Indian aesthetics, was primarily developed by which scholar?

- (A) Bharata Muni
- (B) Kalidasa
- (C) Abhinavagupta
- (D) Panini

Correct Answer: (A) Bharata Muni

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The question refers to the origin of the "Rasa Theory," which is the central concept in Indian aesthetics concerning the emotional essence of a work of art.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The **Rasa Theory** was first formally propounded by **Bharata Muni** in the **Natyashastra**. He introduced the celebrated "Rasa Sutra," which states that Rasa is produced from the combination of **Vibhava** (determinants), **Anubhava** (consequents), and **Vyabhichari Bhava** (transitory states).

While **Abhinavagupta** (Option C) is famous for his 10th-century commentary *Abhinavabhārati* and the addition of the ninth Rasa (**Shanta Rasa**), the **primary development** and foundation belong to Bharata Muni.

Kalidasa was a poet/playwright, and Panini was a Sanskrit grammarian.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The Rasa Theory was primarily developed by Bharata Muni.

💡 Quick Tip

Bharata Muni originally defined **8 Rasas**. Remember that **Shanta Rasa** (Peace) was a later addition by Abhinavagupta to complete the **Navarasa** (Nine Rasas).

3. Which school of miniature painting is famous for the masterpiece "Radha (Bani Thani)"?

- (A) Mughal School
- (B) Kangra School
- (C) Kishangarh School
- (D) Mewar School

Correct Answer: (C) Kishangarh School

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The question identifies a specific sub-school of Rajasthani miniature painting known for a very particular and elegant style of portraiture.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The **Kishangarh School** of painting is renowned for its lyrical grace and highly stylized portrayal of human figures, particularly during the 18th century under **Raja Sawant Singh**.

The masterpiece **Radha (Bani Thani)** was painted by the artist **Nihal Chand**.

Bani Thani was a singer and poet at the court of Sawant Singh; her features—elongated eyes, pointed nose, and thin lips—became the aesthetic standard for depicting Radha in this school. This school is distinct from others like the Mughal (realistic/imperial) or Kangra (Pahari style with softer lines).

Step 3: Final Answer:

The masterpiece "Radha (Bani Thani)" belongs to the Kishangarh School.

💡 Quick Tip

Bani Thani is frequently described as the "**Mona Lisa of India**" due to her refined features and mysterious charm.

4. The "Dancing Girl" figurine, a landmark of ancient Indian sculpture, belongs to which civilization?

- (A) Mauryan Civilization
- (B) Gupta Civilization
- (C) Indus Valley Civilization
- (D) Vedic Civilization

Correct Answer: (C) Indus Valley Civilization

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The "Dancing Girl" is an iconic bronze artifact from pre-historic India that demonstrates high levels of craftsmanship in metal casting.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The **Dancing Girl** figurine was excavated from the city of **Mohenjo-daro**, which belongs to the **Indus Valley Civilization** (c. 2500 BCE).

It is a small bronze statuette created using the **Lost-wax technique** (Cire perdue), which involves making a wax model, coating it in clay, melting the wax, and pouring in molten metal. The figurine is celebrated for its naturalistic pose, with one hand on her hip and arms adorned with bangles, representing a highly sophisticated bronze-age society.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The "Dancing Girl" figurine belongs to the Indus Valley Civilization.

 Quick Tip

While the Indus Valley is famous for the **Bronze** Dancing Girl, the **Bearded Man** (Priest King) found there was made of **Steatite** (Stone).

5. Who is often credited as the father of the Bengal School of Art?

- (A) Raja Ravi Varma
- (B) Abanindranath Tagore
- (C) Nandalal Bose
- (D) Jamini Roy

Correct Answer: (B) Abanindranath Tagore

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The Bengal School was a nationalist art movement that sought to revive traditional Indian styles against the dominance of Western academic realism in the early 20th century.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Abanindranath Tagore is the principal figure and founder of the **Bengal School of Art**. He rejected the oil-on-canvas realism of artists like Raja Ravi Varma and instead promoted indigenous techniques inspired by the murals of Ajanta and Mughal/Rajput miniatures. He is also credited with developing the **Wash Technique**, a unique watercolor method inspired by Japanese art traditions. His famous work *Bharat Mata* became an icon of the Indian independence movement.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Abanindranath Tagore is considered the father of the Bengal School of Art.

💡 Quick Tip

Abanindranath Tagore was the nephew of Rabindranath Tagore and worked closely with **E.B. Havell** to establish an Indian identity in modern art.

6. Which Western art movement is characterized by a focus on light and its changing qualities, featuring artists like Claude Monet?

- (A) Cubism
- (B) Impressionism
- (C) Surrealism
- (D) Expressionism

Correct Answer: (B) Impressionism

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

The question describes a specific 19th-century French movement that broke away from traditional "studio" painting to capture the world as it appears in a fleeting moment.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Impressionism is an art movement that originated in Paris during the late 19th century.

Key characteristics include:

1. Small, thin, yet visible brushstrokes.
2. Emphasis on the **accurate depiction of light** in its changing qualities (often emphasizing the effects of the passage of time).
3. Ordinary subject matter.

Claude Monet is the most iconic figure of this movement; his painting *Impression, Sunrise*

gave the movement its name.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The movement described is Impressionism.

💡 Quick Tip

Impressionists frequently painted "**en plein air**" (outdoors) to directly capture the immediate effects of sunlight on the landscape.

7. In the context of Indian classical dance, what does the term "Abhinaya" refer to?

- (A) Footwork techniques
- (B) Expression and communication of emotions through gestures and facial expressions
- (C) Rhythmic patterns used in dance
- (D) Costumes and ornaments used by dancers

Correct Answer: (B) Expression and communication of emotions through gestures and facial expressions

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Abhinaya is the communicative aspect of Indian classical dance, as opposed to pure rhythmic movement.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The term **Abhinaya** comes from the Sanskrit root "Ni" with the prefix "Abhi," meaning "to carry towards" (i.e., carrying the message to the audience).

It is traditionally divided into four types:

1. **Angika:** Physical movement of the body.
2. **Vachika:** Verbal expression (song or speech).
3. **Aharya:** External elements like costumes and makeup.
4. **Sattvika:** Psychological or internal emotional states.

In general terms, it is the art of storytelling and emotional expression through **Mudras** (hand gestures) and facial expressions.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Abhinaya refers to the expression and communication of emotions through gestures and facial expressions.

💡 Quick Tip

Remember the distinction: **Nritta** is pure rhythmic dance (no Abhinaya), whereas **Nritya** is the combination of rhythm and expression (Abhinaya).

8. Which Mughal Emperor's reign is considered the golden age of Mughal architecture, specifically for the construction of the Taj Mahal?

- (A) Akbar
- (B) Jahangir
- (C) Shah Jahan
- (D) Aurangzeb

Correct Answer: (C) Shah Jahan

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The question seeks to identify the specific period in Mughal history when architectural splendor was at its peak, particularly with the use of white marble.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The reign of **Shah Jahan** (1628–1658) is known as the **Golden Age of Mughal Architecture**.

He moved away from the red sandstone used by his grandfather Akbar to white marble decorated with **Pietra Dura** (inlay of semi-precious stones).

His most famous masterpiece is the **Taj Mahal** in Agra, but he also built the Red Fort (Delhi), the Jama Masjid (Delhi), and the city of Shahjahanabad.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Shah Jahan is the emperor whose reign is the golden age of Mughal architecture.

💡 Quick Tip

While **Shah Jahan** represents the peak of **Architecture**, the reign of **Jahangir** is considered the peak of **Mughal Painting**.

9. What is the primary purpose of a "pyrometric cone" in a ceramic kiln?

- (A) To decorate ceramic surfaces during firing
- (B) To measure the exact temperature inside the kiln
- (C) To indicate the heat work (combined effect of temperature and time) during firing

(D) To regulate airflow within the kiln

Correct Answer: (C) To indicate the heat work (combined effect of temperature and time) during firing

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Ceramic firing is a complex process where the "maturity" of the clay depends on both heat intensity and time.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

A **pyrometric cone** is a slender, pyramid-shaped device made of ceramic materials that soften and bend at specific levels of "heat work."

Heat work is the combined effect of **time and temperature**.

A simple thermometer (pyrometer) only measures the current air temperature. However, ceramic bodies respond to the total amount of energy absorbed.

By observing when a specific cone melts and tips over, a potter knows exactly when the chemical reactions inside the clay or glaze have reached completion.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The purpose of a pyrometric cone is to indicate the heat work during firing.

 Quick Tip

Think of heat work like baking: a cake might burn at high heat in 10 minutes or bake perfectly at medium heat in 30 minutes. The cone tells you when the "baking" is done!

10. The film movement "Dogme 95" originated in which country?

- (A) France
- (B) Italy
- (C) Denmark
- (D) Germany

Correct Answer: (C) Denmark

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Dogme 95 was a radical filmmaking movement created to return to a more "pure" cinema by rejecting special effects and high-budget production techniques.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The **Dogme 95** movement was started in 1995 by Danish directors **Lars von Trier** and **Thomas Vinterberg** in **Denmark**.

They created a "Manifesto" and a "Vow of Chastity," which dictated ten strict rules for film-making, such as:

1. Shooting must be done on location with only existing props.
2. Sound must never be produced apart from the images.
3. The camera must be handheld.
4. The film must be in color and have no special lighting.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The film movement Dogme 95 originated in Denmark.

💡 Quick Tip

Dogme 95 was a reaction against the over-commercialization and artificiality of globalized, high-budget Hollywood cinema.

11. Which Greek philosopher wrote "The Poetics," which discusses the concept of "Catharsis" in tragedy?

- (A) Socrates
- (B) Plato
- (C) Aristotle
- (D) Pythagoras

Correct Answer: (C) Aristotle

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

"The Poetics" is the foundational text of Western dramatic theory and literary criticism.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Aristotle wrote **The Poetics** (c. 335 BCE), the first philosophical work to focus on literary theory.

In this work, he defines tragedy and its function, famously introducing the concept of **Catharsis**.

Catharsis refers to the "purgation" or "cleansing" of the audience's emotions of **pity and fear** through the experience of watching a dramatic tragedy.

His teacher, Plato, had criticized art for stirring up irrational emotions, but Aristotle argued that this emotional release was actually healthy and beneficial for the soul.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Aristotle is the philosopher who wrote "The Poetics."

 Quick Tip

Aristotle also defined the **Three Unities** of drama often attributed to him: Time, Place, and Action (though he only explicitly detailed the unity of Action).

12. The Ajanta caves are predominantly famous for which type of artistic expression?

- (A) Stone architecture
- (B) Fresco paintings and murals
- (C) Bronze sculptures
- (D) Terracotta figurines

Correct Answer: (B) Fresco paintings and murals

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The Ajanta caves are a UNESCO World Heritage site known for their historical and artistic significance in ancient India.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

While the **Ajanta Caves** consist of impressive rock-cut Buddhist monastery halls (architecture), they are world-famous for their **murals and fresco-style paintings**.

Dating from the 2nd century BCE to the 5th century CE, these paintings depict the **Jataka tales** (stories of the Buddha's previous lives).

The technique used was "fresco secco" (painting on dry plaster), which involved applying layers of mud, cow dung, and rice husks covered with lime before painting.

They represent the zenith of classical Indian painting.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The Ajanta caves are predominantly famous for their fresco paintings and murals.

 Quick Tip

Contrast this with **Ellora**: Ajanta is primarily about **Paintings**, whereas Ellora is primarily about **Rock-cut Sculpture** (like the Kailasa Temple).

13. Which modern Indian artist is known for his "Horse" series and was a founding member of the Progressive Artists' Group?

- (A) Jamini Roy
- (B) M. F. Husain
- (C) Tyeb Mehta
- (D) S. H. Raza

Correct Answer: (B) M. F. Husain

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The question refers to one of the most prominent figures in 20th-century Indian modernism.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Maqbool Fida Husain (M. F. Husain) was a central founding member of the **Progressive Artists' Group (PAG)** in Mumbai in 1947.

He is widely recognized for his **"Horse" series**, where he used vigorous, dynamic lines to depict horses as symbols of energy, speed, and freedom.

His style blended Cubist influences with Indian mythological and folk motifs.

Other options like Jamini Roy focused on folk art, and Tyeb Mehta is known for his "Diagonal" series.

Step 3: Final Answer:

M. F. Husain is the artist known for his "Horse" series.

💡 Quick Tip

M. F. Husain was often called the **"Picasso of India"** because of his bold modern style and high productivity.

14. In aesthetic theory, the term "Mimesis" refers to what concept?

- (A) Emotional purification through art
- (B) Imitation or representation of reality in art
- (C) Spiritual symbolism in artistic expression
- (D) Use of abstract geometric forms in painting

Correct Answer: (B) Imitation or representation of reality in art

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Mimesis is a fundamental Greek term used to describe the primary function of art in relation to the world.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The term **Mimesis** literally means "imitation" or "representation."

In classical Western aesthetics, it refers to the idea that art reflects or copies nature and human life.

Plato used the term critically, arguing that art is "three times removed from reality."

Aristotle viewed it positively, arguing that humans have a natural instinct for mimesis and that art reveals universal truths through its imitative capacity.

Option (A) refers to **Catharsis**.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Mimesis refers to the imitation or representation of reality in art.

💡 Quick Tip

Remember: **Mimesis = Mirroring**. It is the attempt to recreate the likeness of the physical or emotional world in an artistic medium.

15. Which dance form uses Jayadeva's Gita Govinda extensively in its repertoire?

- (A) Kathak
- (B) Bharatanatyam
- (C) Odissi
- (D) Manipuri

Correct Answer: (C) Odissi

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

The *Gita Govinda* is a 12th-century Sanskrit poem that narrates the divine love between Radha and Krishna. It has a strong regional and historical connection to a specific dance form.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

While Jayadeva's **Gita Govinda** has influenced many Indian classical dances, it is most central to **Odissi**.

Jayadeva was born in the village of Kenduli in Odisha, and his verses (called **Ashtapadis**) have been sung and danced in the **Jagannath Temple** at Puri for centuries.

The lyrical and rhythmic qualities of the poem provide the foundation for the "Abhinaya" (expressive) segments of a standard Odissi recital.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Odissi is the dance form that uses Jayadeva's Gita Govinda extensively.

 Quick Tip

The **Gita Govinda** is considered the "Bible" of the Odissi dance repertoire; almost every Odissi dancer performs pieces based on its emotional content.
