



Sri Aurobindo National History Essay Competition 2025–26



Winning Essays
GRADE 9

**Why is it important to preserve old monuments?
What can we learn from them?**



Sri Aurobindo National History Essay Competition 2025-26



Rafiya Sayed
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GRADE 9
FIRST PRIZE

**Chosen Monument: Usgalimal Geoglyphs,
Goa**

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PRESERVE OLD MONUMENTS?

Every place has something that makes it special , and for us is Sanguem , one of the greatest treasures we have is this Usgalimal Rock Carvings . Many people in India don't even know that Goa has such an ancient prehistoric site , but we are lucky enough to have it right here in our own taluka . These carvings are not modern artwork , they are thousands of years old and were made by early human communities who lived here long before any kingdoms , rulers or modern towns existed. This is why it is extremely important that we preserved this monument not for ourselves but also for the generations that will come after us .

The first and the biggest reason we must protect the Usgalimal Rock Carvings in their historical importances . This carvings is their historical importance. These carvings include figures of animals , people and different shapes that shown how ancient human expressed themselves . At that time there was no written languages , so this was how they recorded their thoughts and their life .When we look at this carvings , we are not just looking at rocks – we are actually looking at one of the oldest forms of art in India . It feels like the people who lived thousands of years ago are trying to communicate with us through this markings. If we do not preserve this monuments there is a big part of our early human story will disappear forever.

Another reason why this monument is important is because it is a part of our identity as people of Sanguem . many states in India have forts,temples, or old buildings , but very few can say they have pre historic carvings that are this ancient and well preserved. When we talk about Sanguem and mention Usgalimal , people immediately recognize how are area is . It gives as a sense of pride that are small taluka has something that even many big cites. This do not have this site proves that Goas history did not start only with the Portuguese period it goes much deeper , by preserving the carvings we are preserving our identity and showing others how rich our heritage truly is .

The Usgalimal carvings are also very important for education . students , teachers, archaeologists and even tourists can learn a lot from this site. Reading about pre historic humans in a text book is one thing but actually visiting the carvings and seeing them in the riverbed is a completely different experience . It makes history feel alive . when students from Sanguem visit the site they get inspired to learn more about ancient life archaeology, and the importance of protecting heritage . If the carvings get damaged or washed away , future students will lose this amazing opportunity to learn directly from history.

Another big reason to preserve Usgalimal is its value for tourism and the local economy . heritage tourism is very important for Goa , and Usgalimal can attract visitors who are interested in archaeology and ancient culture . When tourists visit Sanguem to see the carvings, it helps local businesses , shops , food stall and guides . this create income for the people leaving near by. If the sites taken care of and promoted properly , it can bring more recognition to Sanguem. But if the carvings gets spoiled we will lose not only a historic site but also the economic benefits that it brings.

The natural surroundings of the carvings are also important. The Usgalimal Rock Carvings are located near the Kushavati river and this peaceful , natural setting shows how early humans lived close to nature. Preserving the monument automatically means we also protect the riverbank , the rocks and the environment around it . Today , when the world is facing so many environmental problems , it is important for us that ancient people respected nature , and we must learn the same message today.

But preserving Usgalimal is not always easy . The carvings are on an open riverbed , which means heavy rains and floods can damage them some visitors walk on the carvings without knowing their value. Others may scratch them or step on them carelessly . Littering , pollution and lack of awareness are also threats to the site . If the people do not understand how precious the Carvings are , they will not take care of them. This is why we need to work together to protect the monument . the government should put signs , fences and proper walkaways so people understand how to behave at the site. Archaeologists can use modern technology to record and study the carvings so that if anything happens we will still have detailed information . Schools in Sanguem can organize trips and awareness programs to teach students why the carvings must be protected when we visit the site. We should not allow anyone to damage the carvings or the surrounding environment.

Preserving the Usgalimal Rock Carvings is not only about saving an old monument- it is about respecting our past . These carvings have survived for thousands of years. They have faced rain , heat , storms and time itself . Now it is our responsibility to make sure they continue to survive . These carvings connect us with people who lived long before us yet walked on the same land that we work on today. If we lose this monument we will lose a chapter of history that can never be replaced.

In conclusion , the Usgalimal Rock Carvings are one of the most valuable treasures of Sanguem and Goa . They carry historical , cultural , educational , environmental and economic importance . Preserving them means preserving our identity , our pride and our link to the earliest people of this region . Heritage is not just something we inherit , it is something we must protect and pass on . By taking care of Usgalimal , we are making sure that future generations can also see and learn from this beautiful piece of ancient history.



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GRADE 9
SECOND PRIZE

**Chosen Monument: Shri Chandreshwar
Bhuthnath Temple, Goa**

Why is it important to preserve old monuments and a monument that I would like to preserve

A Monument is not just a building or a statue, but a storyteller of history, people and the culture of its time. They remind us of our rich heritage in a fast-changing modern world. Monuments hold emotional connections and give an identity to a place. Therefore, preserving monument strengthens our bond to the past and relates stories about the place they are situated in.

Monuments are associated with a purpose and convey a meaning. They could be as ancient as the rock cut caves and paintings or a structure built in the memory of a person, an event of the past or in relation to a religious belief. The ruins of Vijayanagar Empire at Hampi, in Karnataka is one such example. Monuments preserve stories of the past and help us experience history as though we were present during its time.

Monuments apart from being a history lesson, also reflect tradition, custom, art and architecture of different era. Their beauty or story inspires people and creates a sense of pride and belonging to a place. Monuments serve as outdoor classrooms helping people learn about the art, architecture history or religious significance attached to it. They help us gain a deeper understanding and instead of reading about it in books, visiting the monument creates a far better experience.

Whenever somebody visits a place, monuments of the area are an attraction. Most of the monuments in our country are now a tourist attraction, especially the ones which are recognised as UNESCO heritage sites. The recent addition of Maratha Military Landscapes of India by UNESCO has introduced the forts of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to the list of key monuments in the country. Though this may affect the sanctity of the place it is a great opportunity for local businesses to thrive as a tourist destination and support the overall economy of the country. For the place, the monument enhances its beauty. Amidst the modern-day chaos monuments add that historical charm and the calmness that people love to experience. Monuments remind us that the past shall not be forgotten and it remains a place for people to think and reflect on its creation.

In recent times, due to various factors such as pollution, urbanisation, and community neglect monuments are losing their charm. Instead of reflecting on the monument, the place is turned into a venue for personal photography. Though it is not entirely wrong, the ease of digital media circulation has been used by visitors extensively in ways which do not focus on the monument. Monuments which depict the sad memories of wars or events in history are turned into spots of social media reels.

Modernisation is not an excuse to destroy our heritage. In the name of development monuments are being neglected and destroyed. Years of history preserved for ages is lost. It is not only, the duty of the government but the citizens of the country should take responsibility for preserving these gems.

A monument I would like to preserve is the 5th Century AD temple of Shri Chandreshwar Bhuthnath situated atop a hill in Quepem Goa, a village close to my heart. The joy of climbing the steps to the top of the hill to reach the temple and enjoying the valley view from there is fascinating. The temple is a witness to centuries of rule by Bhoja and the Kadamba Dynasty rulers. A variety of rituals, and community traditions are practiced till date by the devotees attached to the temple.

In my visit a few days ago, as I was admiring the surroundings, I noticed that some miscreants had etched their name on the ancient huge rock next to the temple. Carving your name into a piece of history does not make you a part of it! I am keen on the preservation of this temple because of the history attached to it, its beautiful architecture and serenity, and the annual festivities which have a deep emotional connect for me. By taking steps to maintain the cleanliness and protection of the site we shall pass on the history and traditions tied to it to the next generation to remind them of our rich cultural heritage.

To conclude, I would like to state once again that monuments link each and every one of us to a place, to the past and to the identity of cities and areas that we call home. Preserving them means preserving and protecting our culture, history and the architecture of it. Monuments hold emotional connect to the millions in our country and keep us united. Let us all be responsible towards the cause of monument preservation and strive to save these historical structures for many more years to come.



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Jayaditya Pratap Singh

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GRADE 9

SPECIAL MENTION FOR OUTSTANDING RESEARCH

**Ancient Monuments and Their
Importance**

Why is it important to preserve old monuments? What can we learn from them?

Old monuments are the most priceless heritage of a nation. They comprise of old temples, stupas, mosques, monasteries, forts, palaces, caves, and many more structures. These monuments not only serve as a glimpse into our pasts and heritage but also act as inspirations for sustainable building technologies. These monuments serve as witnesses of the distant past, as witnesses of the advancement of the nation and human civilization itself. Preserving old monuments also helps the future generations to know about their pasts, origins, heritage, culture etc.

One of the most important roles these monuments play are telling us about ancient cultures, religions, rituals and practices. They also tell us about ancient art through carvings on structures, wall paintings, cave arts and many other types of art. These things help us to understand what type of rituals, religions, culture, rituals ancient people performed and how they appreciated art, music, and culture. Therefore, we can also learn about past heritage from all kinds of old monuments, such as palaces which tell us about the lifestyle of rulers, forts which tell us about ancient defense systems, and many more things.

Another important role these monuments play are telling us about ancient architecture, science, and mathematics. Ancient architects have built monuments with immense symmetry and intricate designs, without the use of modern power tools. This shows how advanced ancient peoples were in terms of science, architecture and mathematics. Architects and engineers in today's age also learn from ancient monuments how to use sustainable building technologies. Archaeologists and historians can also learn about different types of ancient architecture from old monuments from different parts of the world. Therefore, these monuments still provide us invaluable knowledge about science, architecture, and mathematics.

These monuments also play an important role in telling us about ancient rulers, kingdoms, wars, and many other things. Facts written in historical sources written by ancient authors are often backed up by these ancient monuments. So, without these monuments, many facts written in historical texts would become unreliable and inaccurate. Historians and archaeologists would have difficulty with what should be considered as real history, and what should not. Therefore, it is important to preserve these monuments as they provide us with invaluable information about old wars, rulers, kingdoms, empires, and many more things.

Preserving monuments is also necessary for maintaining a sense of pride and national identity. These monuments remind us of ancient struggles, movements, sacrifices, and achievements of our ancestors. They make us feel proud of country's rich and centuries long heritage and instills patriotism in every citizen of the country. When an old monument is destroyed, or not looked after and neglected, a part of our old heritage is forever destroyed; it is not however, forgotten. Protecting these monuments ensures that future generations will also feel the same sense of pride, honor and identity. Our ancestors built these monuments in hopes that they stand tall, long after their deaths. Therefore, we should also preserve these monuments to fulfill the wishes of our ancestors.

Old monuments also play a major role in education. Visiting a historical site to learn about it can educate us in a better way. Students can learn history better when they see monuments in real life. Students should be encouraged to visit old monuments and schools should take students on field trips to ancient monuments. Through this way, students can learn about their own heritage and understand history, culture, and identity, deeply. Textbook learning can only educate us about monuments to a certain limit, whereas visiting the monument and seeing it in real life, in front of us, can educate us a lot more than a textbook.

In addition to cultural and importance, these ancient monuments also contribute significantly to economic growth and development through tourism revenue. Many types of tourists, from religious pilgrims to people who are on vacation, come from all over the world visit these heritage sites, which help to generate revenue for local communities and also for the whole nation. Hotels, restaurants, guides, transport providers and local businesses profit from heritage tourism. Thus, preserving monuments also helps to generate employment and it contributes to the overall economic growth of the whole nation. However, ancient monuments in today's age face a lot of problems. Pollution, vandalism, overcrowding, lack of maintenance and negligence, cause damage to these priceless pieces of ancient history and heritage. Natural reasons like weathering and climate change also affect the condition of monuments. This makes preservation of these pieces of heritage more important and urgent than ever before.

Preservation of monuments is a responsibility shared by all citizens of the country. The government of the nation should enforce strict laws, provide proper maintenance to these structures, and spread awareness about conservation efforts. Schools should be encouraged to teach children about heritage conservation, so that the children are well informed and treat heritage sites with proper respect. Thus, it is really important to teach the population about conservation efforts and how to treat heritage sites with proper respect, so that they do not cause accidental harm to these priceless pieces of heritage and history.

In conclusion, old monuments are treasures that provide us with a connection to our past as well as guiding us towards the future. They teach us history, architecture, culture, values, and responsibility. Preserving and protection them is not just about protecting mere buildings, it is about preserving and protecting our own heritage, culture, pride, knowledge, and our own identity. It is the duty of the government and the citizens of the entire nation to protect and preserve these monuments so that they can learn about their heritage, culture, knowledge, architecture, values, beliefs, practices, and most importantly, take pride in their own unique past and identity.