

Tamil Literature — Optional Syllabus

UPSC Civil Services (Main) Examination

The Tamil language and its literature — Sangam classics to modern writing.

Paper I	250 marks	3 hours
Paper II	250 marks	3 hours
Optional total	500 marks	Counts toward the Mains merit

Paper I syllabus 250 marks · 3 hours

Answers must be written in Tamil

Section A — Part 1: History of Tamil Language

- Major Indian Language Families—The place of Tamil among Indian Languages in general and Dravidian in particular—Enumeration and Distribution of Dravidian languages.
- The language of Sangam Literature—The language of medieval Tamil : Pallava Period only—Historical study
- of Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs—Tense markers and case markers in Tamil.
- Borrowing of words from other languages into Tamil—Regional and social dialects—difference between
- literary and spoken Tamil.

Section A — Part 2 : History of Tamil Literature

- Tolkappiyam-Sangam Literature—The division of Akam and Puram—The secular characteristics of Sangam
- Literature—The development of Ethical literature—Silappadikaram and Manimekalai.

Section A — Part 3 : Devotional Literature (Alwars and Nayanamars)

- The bridal mysticism in Alwar hymns—Minor literary forms (Tutu, Ula, Parani, Kuravanji).
- Social factors for the development of Modern Tamil Literature; Novel, Short Story and New Poetry—The
- impact of various political ideologies on modern writings.

Section B — Part 1 : Recent trends in Tamil Studies

- Approaches to criticism : Social, psychological, historical and moralistic—the use of criticism—the various
- techniques in literature; Ullurai, Iraicchi, Thonmam (Myth) Otturuvagam (allegory), Angadam (Satire),
- Meyappadu, Padimam (image), Kuriyeedu (Symbol), Irunmai (Ambiguity)—The concept of comparative
- literature-the principle of comparative literature.

Section B — Part 2 : Folk literature in Tamil

- Ballads, Songs, proverbs and riddles—Sociological study of Tamil folklore. Uses of translation—Translation of Tamil works into other languages-Development of journalism in Tamil.

Section B — Part 3 : Cultural Heritage of the Tamils

- Concept of Love and War—Concept of Aram-the ethical codes adopted by the ancient Tamils in their
- warfare-customs beliefs, rituals, modes of worship in the five Thinais.
- The Cultural changes as revealed in post sangam literature—cultural fusion in the medieval period (Jainism
- and Buddhism). The development of arts and architecture through the ages (Pallavas, later Cholas, and
- Nayaks). The impact of various political, social, religious and cultural movements on Tamil Society. The
- role of mass media in the cultural change of contemporary Tamil society.

Paper II syllabus 250 marks · 3 hours

Answers must be written in Tamil The paper will require first-hand reading of the text prescribed and will be designed to test the critical ability of the candidate.

Section A — Part 1 : Ancient Literature

- (1) Kuruntokai (1—25 poems)
- (2) Purananuru (182—200 poems)
- (3) Tirukkural Porutpal : Arasiyalum Amaichiyalum (from Iraitatchi to Avaianjamai).

Section A — Part 2 : Epic Literature

- (1) Silappadikaram : Madhurai Kandam only.
- (2) Kambaramayanam : Kumbakarunan Vadhai Padalam.

Section A — Part 3 : Devotional Literature

- (1) Tiruvasagam : Neetthal Vinnappam
- (2) Tiruppavai : (Full Text).

Section B

- Modern Literature

Section B — Part 1 : Poetry

- (1) Bharathiar : Kannan Pattu
- (2) Bharathidasan : Kudumba Vilakku
- (1) Mu. Varadharajanar : Aramum Arasiyalum
- (2) C. N. Annadurai : Ye! Thazhntha Tamilagame.

Section B — Part 1 : Poetry: (3) Naa. Kamarasan : Karappu Malarkal

- Prose

Section B — Part 2 : Novel, Short Story and Drama

- (1) Akilon ; Chittairappavai
- (2) Jayakanthan : Guruppeedam
- (3) Cho : Yaurkkum Vetkamillai

Section B — Part 3 : Folk Literature

- (1) Muthuppattan kathai Edited by Na. Vanamamalai, (Publication : Madurai Kamaraj University).
- (2) Malaiyaruvi, Edited by Ki. Va Jagannathan (Publication : Saraswathi Mahal, Thanjavur).

Syllabus as per the official UPSC Civil Services (Main) Examination notification. Study notes for this optional are being added on RaahUPSC — raahupsc.com.