

ReSchoolEd Academy

Debate Workbook

UPSC – Merit Filter or Ritual Endurance Test?



Re/

“Not Coaching. ReCoding.”

Debate Workbook: UPSC – Merit Filter or Ritual Endurance Test?

“Every system creates the kind of people it tests for. Before you prepare for UPSC, ask: what is this exam really selecting?”



Part 1: Understand the Architecture

- Map the exam stages (Prelims, Mains, Interview). For each, write:
 - What skills it claims to test.
 - What it actually tests in practice (from mocks/peers/observation).



Part 2: The Case for the Exam

- How does uncertainty mirror real-life administration challenges?
- Does the multi-stage filter ensure diversity of skills (knowledge, writing, personality)?
- Can any other system handle 10–12 lakh aspirants fairly without this screening model?
- Exercise: Write a one-page argument defending UPSC as a necessary and effective selection tool. Include at least 2 examples (e.g., IAS officers who proved the model right).



Part 3: The Case Against

- How much of the exam design still reflects colonial bureaucracy selection?
- Does the unpredictability reward exam pattern mastery over true governance vision?
- How many qualities of a great public leader are not tested here?
- Exercise: Write a one-page argument critiquing UPSC as a ritualized endurance test. Include examples of capable individuals who couldn't clear, and why.



Part 4: Your Position

- After arguing both sides, where do you stand? Is UPSC mostly merit filter, mostly ritual, or a complex mix?
- Exercise: Create a 'selection equation' with weights: Knowledge, Endurance, Composure, Luck, Vision/Empathy.
- Compare your equation with what the exam should ideally test.



Part 5: The ReSchoolEd Challenge

- Imagine you were allowed to reform UPSC with 2 changes to better select public administrators.
- Exercise: Draft your 'New UPSC Model' in 5 bullet points.
- Reflect: Would you still be willing to attempt this reformed version? Why or why not?



ReSchoolEd Closing Note

“An exam is never neutral. It shapes the kind of mind it rewards. To commit to UPSC is to commit to the kind of test it is. Debate that openly before you enter the arena.”

