

Indian Literature for SSC & Railway Exams

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INDIAN LITERATURE

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Indian Literature for SSC & Railway Exams

Language and Literature

- **Language** is a medium through which we express our thoughts.
- **Literature** is a mirror that reflects ideals and philosophies which govern our society
- To know any particular culture and its tradition it is very important that we understand the evolution of its language and the various forms of **literature** like drama ,poetry and religious and non-religious writings
- Poetry, drama and religious and non-religious writings are called as **literature**.

The role of Sanskrit

- Sanskrit is the mother of many Indian languages. The Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and Dharmasutras are all written in Sanskrit. There is also a variety of secular and regional literature.
- Sanskrit is the most ancient language of our country. It is one of the twenty-two languages(As per eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution) listed in the Indian Constitution
- **Rig Veda**, the oldest literary heritage of mankind is written in Sanskrit.
- **Ashtadhyayi** (Sanskrit Grammar book) was written by The great grammarian “**Panini**”
- **Panini** is known as the father of Sanskrit language
- The **Lalitavistara** Sutra is a Sanskrit **Mahayana Buddhist** sutra that tells the story of Gautama Buddha
- **Sanskrit** is perhaps the only language that transcended the barriers of regions and boundaries
- Some of the **important Literature** written in **Sanskrit** are

Literature	Written By
Rajatarangini (Details of kings of Kashmir)	Kalhana
Abhijnana Shakuntalam	Kalidasa
Meghdoot	Kalidasa

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Mricchakatika	Shudraka
Swapna Vasavadattam	Bhasa
Ratnavali	Sri harsha
Arthashastra	Chanakya
Kamasutra	Vatsyayana

The Vedas

- The Vedas are the earliest known literature in India. The Vedas were written in Sanskrit
- The word 'Veda' literally means knowledge. In Hindu culture, Vedas are considered as eternal and divine revelations. They treat the whole world as one human family Vasudev Kutumbakam
- Four types of Vedas are
 1. Rig Veda
 2. Yajur Veda
 3. Sama Veda
 4. Atharva Veda
- Each Veda consists of the Brahmanas, the Upanishads and the Aranyakas

Rig Veda

- The Rig Veda is the earliest of the Vedas. It is a collection of 1028 hymns in Vedic Sanskrit
- The hymns of Rig Veda were recited by **Hotri**
- The prominent gods of the Rig Veda are Indra, Agni, Varun, Rudra, Aditya, Vayu, Aditi and the Ashwini twins. Some of the prominent goddesses are Usha - the goddess of dawn, Vak - the goddess of speech and Prithvi - the goddess of earth

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Yajur Veda

- Yajur means sacrifice or worship. This Veda is concerned mostly with rites and mantras of different sacrifices
- The Yajur veda is a ritual Veda

Sama Veda

- Sama means melody or songs. This Veda consists of 16,000 ragas and musical notes. Out of total 1549 verses only 75 are original and others are from the Rig Veda
- The Sama Veda is important for music

Atharva Veda

- The Atharva Veda is also known as the Brahma Veda. It contains treatment for ninety-nine diseases.
- The Atharva Veda is mostly dealing with magic

The Upanishads

- The Upanishads are ancient Sanskrit texts of spiritual teachings and ideas of Hinduism
- Upanishads – Meant to be learnt sitting near the guru.
- They are called the end of Vedas
- Upanishads deal with questions like the origin of the universe, life and death, the material and spiritual world, nature of Knowledge and many other questions

The Ramayana and the Mahabharata

- The Ramayana and Mahabharata are the two epics of India
- The **Ramayana** of **Valmiki** is the original Ramayana. It is called Adikavya and Maharishi Valmiki is known as Adi Kavi
- The **Mahabharata** was written by **Ved Vyas**

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- The **Mahabharata** contains the famous **Bhagavad Gita** which contains the essence of divine wisdom and is truly a universal gospel.
- **Bhagavad Gita** has been translated nearly in all the main languages of the world

Puranas

- The **Puranas** occupy a unique position in the sacred literature of the Hindus
- There are eighteen Puranas and about the same number of Upapuranas. Some of the well-known Puranas are – Brahma, Bhagvat, Padma, Vishnu, Vayu, Agni, Matsya and Garuda.
- The Puranas follow the lines of the epics, and the earliest Puranas were compiled in the Gupta period.

OTHER SANSKRIT LITERATURE

- **Kautilya's Arthashastra** is an important treatise of the **Mauryan times**. It reflects the state of society and economy at that time and provides rich material for the study of ancient Indian polity and economy.
- The **Gupta period** was **India's golden age of culture** and one of the greatest and most glorious times. The Gupta kings patronized the classical Sanskrit literature.
- Major literary works and authors in Gupta Period

Authors	Literary works
Kalidas	1. Abhijan Shakuntalam 2. Vikramorvashi 3. Malvikaganimithram 4. The epic poems Raghuvamsha 5. Kumarasambhava 6. Meghaduta 7. Ritusambara
Vishakhdutta	Mudrarakshasa

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Shudraka	Mrichchhakatika
Bhasa	Svapnavasavadattam

- The Kushana kings patronised Sanskrit scholars. **Ashvaghosha** wrote the **Buddhacharita** which is the biography of the Buddha. He also wrote **Saundarananda**
- Books on **medicine** were written by **Charak** and on **surgery** by **Sushruta**. **Madhava** wrote a book on **pathology**. Books written on **astronomy** by **Varahamihira** and **Aryabhatta** and on **astrology** by **Lagdhacharya**.

Books	Written by
Madhava Nidana(Books on Pathology)	Madhava
Panch-Siddhantika (Books on astrology)	Varamihira
Brihat Samhita (Astrology)	Varamihira
Aryabhatiya (Book on astronomy and mathematics)	Aryabhatta
Sushruta Samhita(Books on Surgery)	Sushruta
Charak Samhita (Books on medicine)	Charak

- **Brihat-Samhita** is basically a monumental work on **Astrology** composed by **Great Varahamihira**.
- **Aryabhatiya**, a Sanskrit **astronomical** treatise, was written by Indian mathematician **Aryabhata**
- **Natyashastra** is written by **Bharata Muni**
- The **Gita Govinda** is a work composed by the 12th-century poet, **Jayadeva**.

Buddhist and Jain Literature

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- The religious books of the Jains and the Buddhists refer to historical persons or incidents.
- The **Buddhist** works were written in **Pali**
- The **Jain texts** were written in **Prakrit**
- The Buddhist works can be divided into the canonical and the non-canonical
- The canonical literature is best represented by the “Tripitakas”, that is, three baskets - Vinaya Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka and Abhidhamma Pitaka
 1. Vinaya Pitaka (rules and regulations of daily life)
 2. Sutta Pitaka (dialogue and discourse on morality and deals with Dharma)
 3. Abhidhamma Pitaka (Deals with Philosophy)
- The non-canonical literature is best represented by the Jatakas. Jatakas are the most interesting stories on the previous births of the Buddha

Tamil or Sangam literature

- Poets, bards and writers, authors came from various parts of South India to Madurai to create sangamas. Such assemblies were called “Sangamas”, and the literature produced in these assemblies was called “Sangama literature”
- Three sangams were held. The poems collected in the first sangam have been lost. In the second Sangam about 2000 poems have been collected
- ‘**Thirukural**’ is written by Tamil saint **Thiruvalluvar** .which has been translated into many languages
- Thiruvallurar’s work ‘Kural’ is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the epics, the second part with polity and government and the third part with love.
- **Silappadikaram** and **Manimekalai** are called twin epics
- Two famous epics **Silapathikaram** and **Manimegalai** written by Ilango Adigal and Chithalai Chathanar respectively

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- **Tolkappiyam** is the Tamil grammar text and the oldest surviving work of Tamil literature. Tolkappiyar is the author of Tolkappiyam
- Tamil devotional poems are written by Nayanmars (saints who sang in praise of Shaivism) and Alvars (saints who sang in praise of vaishnavam)

Telugu, Kannada and Malyalam literature

- The **Vijayanagara period** was the golden age of **Telugu literature**
- **Krishnadevaraya** (1509-1529), the greatest of the Vijayanagara emperors, was a poet of great merit. His work **Amukta Malyada** is regarded as an excellent prabandha in Telugu literature. Eight Telugu literary luminaries, popularly known as **ashtadiggajas** adorned his court
- **Uttara- Harivamsam** written by **Nachana Somana**(court poet of Bukka I)
- Apart from Telugu, Vijayanagara rulers extended their patronage to Kannada and Sanskrit writers as well.
- **Madhura**, a noted Jain poet wrote in Kannada the **Dharmanathpurana** on the life of the fifteenth Jain Tirthankar
- **Pampa**, known as the father of Kannada wrote his great poetic works **Adi purana** and **Vikramarjuna Vijaya**
- Malayalam developed much later compared to other South Indian languages. The language of Malayalam emerged around the eleventh century AD

NORTHERN INDIAN LANGUAGES & LITERATURE

- The studies have indicated that all the scripts of present northern Indian languages, except that of Urdu, have had their origin in old Brahmi

Urdu

- Urdu emerged as an independent language towards the end of the 4th century AD
- The earliest Urdu poet is supposed to be **Ameer Khusrau** (1253-1325). He started writing as a poet in the reign of Sultan **Balban** and was a follower of **Nizam ud-din Auliya**

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- Important works composed by **Ameer Khusrau** are **Laila Majnun** and **Ayina-I-Sikandari** (dedicated to Alauddin-Khilji)
- Another well-known Urdu poet is **Iqbal**. His **Sare Jahan se accha Hindostan hamara** is sung and played at many of the national celebrations in India
- **Fasana-e-Azad** is a famous Urdu book written by **Pandit Ratan Nath Sarshar**

Persian

- Persian was introduced in India with the coming of the Turks and the Mongols. Persian remained the court language for many centuries
- Babar wrote his tuzuk-i-baburi (autobiography) in Turkish language, Akbar got it translated into Persian
- The **Mahabharata** was translated into Persian at **Akbar's** orders, by **Faizi** and **Abd al-Qadir Badauni** and named **Razmnama**.
- Jahangir's autobiography (Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri) is in Persian
- Abul Fazl's **Akbarnamah** and **Ain-e-Akbari** is a fine piece of literature
- **Padmavat** written by **Malik Muhammad Jayasi** in Persian

Hindi Literature

- **Prithviraj Raso** (written by Chand Bardai) is supposed to be the first book in the Hindi language. It is an account of exploits of Prithviraj Chauhan
- **Tulsidas** wrote **Ramcharitmanas** in Hindi based on Valmiki's Ramayana
- **Sur Sagar** (Krishna infant life) written by **Surdas**
- **Bharatendu Harishchandra** (Father of modern Hindi literature) was one of the earliest to produce dramas in Hindi
- 'Nirala' written by **Suryakant Tripathi**.

Bengali Literature

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- The Baptist Mission Press was established in Serampore near Calcutta in 1800 by William Carey. William Carey also wrote a grammar book of Bengali
- The most important name that influenced the whole of India was that of **Rabindra Nath Tagore**. Novels, dramas, short stories, criticism, music and essays, all flowed from his pen. He won the **Nobel Prize** for literature in **1913** for his **Geetanjali**.
- **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee** also contributed a lot in Bengali Literature.
- "**Vande Mataram**" is a Sanskrit poem written by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee**, which he included in his Bengali novel **Anandamath**.

Punjabi Literature

- Punjabi is a language with several shades. It is being written in two scripts, Gurmukhi and Persian.
- Adi Granth, the holy book of the Sikhs
- **Rana Surat Singh**-Famous epic composed by **Bhai Vir Singh** in Punjabi

Marathi Literature

- The earliest Marathi poetry and prose is by Saint Jnaneshwar (Gyaneshwar) who lived in the thirteenth century. He wrote a long commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. He was the one who started the kirtan tradition in Maharashtra.
- **Bal Gangadhar Tilak** (1857-1920) started his Journal **Kesari** in Marathi. This helped the growth of Marathi literature
- Tukaram And Ramdas (Guru of Shivaji)-famous poets of Marathi

ANCIENT INDIA LITERARY WORKS AND AUTHORS

S.No	Authors	Literary works
1	Kalidas	Abhijan Shakuntalam Vikramorvashi

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		Malvikaganimithram The epic poems Raghuvamsha Kumarasambhava Meghaduta Ritusambara
2	Vishakhadutta	Mudrarakshasa
3	Shudraka	Mrichchhakatika
4	Bhasa	Svapnavasavadattam
5	Chanakya(Kautilya)	Arthashastra
6	Vatsyayana	Kamasutra
7	Banabhatta	Harshacharita Kadambari
8	Panini	Ashtadhyayi
9	Ved Vyas	Mahabharata
10	Valmiki	Ramayana
11	Sri Harsha	Nagananda Ratnavali
12	Vishnu Sharma	Panchatantra
13	Aryabhata	Aryabhatiya
14	Kalhana	Rajtarangini
15	Somdeva	Kathasaritsagara
16	Ashvaghosha	Buddhacharita
17	Bharata Muni	Natyashastra
18	Kamandaka	Nitisara

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19	Varahamihira	Brihat Samhita Panchasiddhantika
20	Megasthenes	Indica
21	Patanjali	Mahabhasya
22	Jayadev	Gita Govinda
23	Virsen	Navratna
24	Amara simha	Amara kosha
25	Tolkappiyar	Tolkappiyam
26	Thulasi das	Ramcharitmanas
27	Chithalai Chathanar	Manimekalai
28	Ilango Adigal	Silappathikaram

MODERN INDIAN LITERATURE

- English is a foreign language but since the British came to India the language has had a major impact on several fields—in education, literary effort and as a medium of communication.
- Kashiprasad Ghosh** is considered the First Indian poet worked in English
- Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol** is an epic poem by **Sri Aurobindo Ghose**
- Major literary works and authors

S.No	Authors	Literary works
1	Dadabhai Naoroji	1. Poverty and Un-British Rule in India 2. Poverty of India
2	Sri Aurobindo Ghose	1. The Life Divine. 2. Savitri – A Legend and a Symbol. 3. The Synthesis of Yoga.

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		4. Powers Within
3	Rabindranath Tagore	1. Gitanjali 2. Gora(Novel)
4	Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi	1. My Experiments with the Truth 2. Hind Swaraj
5	Sarojini Naidu	1. The Golden Threshold 2. The Bird of Time 3. The Broken Wing
6	Jawaharlal Nehru	1. The Discovery of India 2. Glimpses of World History
7	Mulk Raj Anand	1. Untouchable 2. Coolie 3. Two Leaves and a Bud 4. The Village 5. Across the Black Waters 6. The Sword and the Sickle 7. The Big Heart 8. Seven Summers 9. Private Life of an Indian Prince
8	R.K. Narayan	1. Malgudi Days 2. Swami and Friends 3. The Guide 4. The Dark Room 5. Waiting for the Mahatma
9	Raja Rao	1. The Cat and Shakespeare 2. The Serpent and the Rope 3. Kanthapura

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10	Kamala Markandaya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nectar in a Sieve 2. Some Inner Fury 3. A Silence of Desire 4. Two Virgins 5. A Handful of Rice 6. Pleasure City
11	Manohar Malgaonkar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distant Drum 2. A Combat of Shadows 3. The Princes 4. A Bend in the Ganges 5. The Devil's Wind 6. Spy in Amber
12	Anita Desai	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear Light of Day 2. The Accompanist 3. Fire on the Mountain 4. Games at Twilight 5. The village by the sea 6. In Custody 7. cry the peacock
13	Nayantara Sehgal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rich Like Us 2. A time to be happy
14	Khushwant Singh	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train to Pakistan
15	Bhabani Bhattacharya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. So Many Hungers 2. He Who Rides Tiger 3. Music for Mohini 4. shadow from Ladakh
16	Arundhati Roy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The God of Small Things 2. The Ministry of Utmost Happiness

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17	Salman Rushdie	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grimus 2. Midnight's Children 3. Shame 4. The Satanic Verses 5. Haroun and the Sea of Stories 6. The Moor's Last Sigh 7. The Ground Beneath Her Feet 8. Shalimar the Clown 9. The Enchantress of Florence 10. Luka and the Fire of Life 11. Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights. 12. The Jaguar Smile
18	Vikram Seth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Suitable Boy 2. An Equal Music 3. The Golden Gate 4. A Suitable Girl 5. The Humble Administrator's Garden 6. Two Lives
19	Subhas Chandra Bose	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Indian Struggle
20	Lala Lajpat Rai	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unhappy India
21	B. R. Ambedkar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What Congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables
22	Ram Mohan Roy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Precepts of Jesus
23	Rohinton Mistry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Fine Balance
24	Suketu Mehta	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximum City
25	Nirad C. Chaudhuri	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Autobiography of an

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		Unknown Indian 2. The Continent of Circe 3. To Live or not to Live
26	Sunetra Gupta	1. The Glassblower's Breath

IMPORTANT ONE LINER

- **Bhagavad Gita** comprises **18 chapters** in the **Bhishma Parva** of the epic **Mahabharata**
- In **1785**, the **Bhagavad Gita** was first translated into **English** by **Charles Wilkins**
- **Thiruvalluvar** Wrote the **Thirukkural**, which deals with many aspects of life
- **Upanishad** deals with concepts about origin of universe, death and birth, material and spiritual world
- The **Jataka stories** are related to the previous lives of **Budha**
- Famous novel '**Anandamath**' written by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee**
- **Narayan Pandit** is the author of book **Hitopadesha**
- Sahitya Akademi Award , Jnanpith Award are important Indian literature awards
- The **first** award for **Jnanpith Award** was given in **1965** to G. Sankara Kurup for Malayali Literature
- **Sahitya Akademi Award** was started in **1954**
- **Meghdoot** is a lyric poem written by **Kalidasa**
- **Atharva Veda** contains note of **Magical charms and spells**
- **Mrichchhakatika** an ancient Indian book written by **Shudraka** deals with **the love affair of a rich merchant with the daughter of a courtesan.**
- The Earliest known works of Indian literature was **Rig Veda**, which is a collection of **1028 hymns** written in **Vedic Sanskrit**
- The **Ramacharitam** is a Sanskrit epic poem written in by **Sandhyakar Nandi** during Pala Empire
- **Anandamath** is a Bengali fiction, written by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee** And published in 1882.
- In 1981, **Salman Rushdie** won the **Booker Prize** for **Midnight's Children**
- **Kiran Desai** novel **The Inheritance of Loss** won the 2006 Man Booker Prize

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- **Devdas** is a Bengali romance novel written by **SaratChandra Chatterjee**.
- First Indian to Win Booker Prize was **Arundhati Roy** for 'The God of Small Things'
- **Rabindranath Tagore** is the author and composer of the national anthem of India and Bangladesh.
- **Wings of Fire: An Autobiography** of A P J Abdul Kalam
- The **Gupta period** was **India's golden age of culture**
- **KM Ganguli** was the first to provide a complete translation of the Sanskrit epic Mahabharata in English
- **The Shadow Lines** is a **Sahitya Akademi Award** winning novel by Indian writer **Amitav Ghosh**.
- **Tripitaka & Jakarta** literature related to **Buddhism**
- The **Buddhist** works were written in **Pali**
- The **Jain texts** were written in **Prakrit**
- "**Natyashastra**" the main source of **India's classical dances** was written by **Bharat Muni**
- The **father of Tamil literature** is '**Agastya**'.
- The **Muktika** refers to the **canon of 108 Upanishads**.
- **Vinaya Patrika** is a devotional poem composed by the 16th-century Indian poet, **Tulsidas**

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