

ANALYTICAL COMMENTARY

CURRENT AFFAIRS • ANALYSIS • IMPLICATIONS

1
MIN PREP

3–4
MIN SPEAKING

3
CORE STAGES

NO
SCRIPT

Your task: comment analytically on a current socio-political event from the examination ticket. Move beyond retelling: explain what happened, why it matters, and what is likely to follow.

01

INTRODUCTION — WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

≈ 30 sec

KEY QUESTION What happened, and what is the essential background?

FOCUS Give only the details needed to understand the event.

Briefly indicate its cause/context and whether it was surprising, unprecedented, expected, or part of a wider pattern.

POSSIBLE LENSES: What caused the event? Is it surprising? Unprecedented? Was to be expected? One among other similar events? The result of...?

USEFUL LANGUAGE

- The event was triggered by / resulted from ...
- It came against the backdrop of ...
- The development was widely expected / came as a surprise ...
- It can be seen as part of a broader trend towards ...
- It follows / stems from / is the result of ...
- Although the development was widely anticipated, ... / The development is notable because ...

02

SIGNIFICANCE — WHY DOES IT MATTER?

≈ 1 min

KEY QUESTION What does the event demonstrate?

FOCUS Interpret the event.

Explain what it reveals about actors, policy, political will, alliances, trends or the international environment.

Use PRESENT tenses.

POSSIBLE LENSES: political will • strategic shift • unity/division • multilateralism/unilateralism • balance of power • diplomatic opportunity • pressure/constraints.

USEFUL LANGUAGE

- The event is of major / symbolic / profound importance because ...
- It highlights a trend / pivot towards ...
- It signals a commitment / willingness / reluctance to ...
- It testifies to the inability / political will to ...
- It lays the groundwork for ... / solidifies ... / perpetuates

03

IMPLICATIONS — WHAT IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN?

≈ 2 min

KEY QUESTION What consequences are likely for the country, region, world and Russia?

FOCUS Make evidence-based predictions. Do not merely list possible outcomes.

Use FUTURE forms and the language of probability; explain WHY each consequence is plausible.

ORDER: COUNTRY → REGION → WORLD → RUSSIA
For each level: consequence + probability + reason/evidence.

POSSIBLE LENSES:

COUNTRY → domestic stability • governance • unrest • negotiations • regime/policy change

REGION → regional stability • balance of power • escalation • alliances • spillover

WORLD → global stability • institutions • arms race • geopolitical landscape • wider tensions

RUSSIA → policy response • sanctions/restrictions • strategic interests • influence • diplomatic position

USEFUL LANGUAGE

- This is likely / unlikely to ... / is bound to ...
- Domestically, it may exacerbate tensions / relaunch negotiations ...
- Regionally, it could rebalance power / escalate the conflict
- Globally, it may reconfigure the geopolitical landscape / undermine stability ...
- For Russia, this may lead to / make it more likely that ...

STRUCTURE • ARGUMENTATION • LANGUAGE • DELIVERY

DO ✓

- Follow the three-stage structure clearly.
- Use signposting so the listener can follow your logic.
- Analyse and evaluate instead of simply retelling the news.
- Support predictions with evidence or a clear causal explanation.
- Use topic-specific political and international-relations vocabulary.
- Show knowledge of the wider issue and relevant context.
- Keep a natural pace and purposeful intonation.

AVOID ✗

- Do not omit one of the analytical stages.
- Do not give a chronology with no interpretation.
- Do not make unsupported predictions.
- Do not contradict your own earlier argument.
- Do not use vague claims such as “it is very important” without explaining why.
- Do not rely on primitive vocabulary or an inappropriate register.
- Do not speak too fast, too slowly, or far beyond the 3–4 minute limit.

SIGNPOST YOUR COMMENTARY

OPEN

The event I would like to comment on concerns ...

SIGNIFICANCE

What makes this development particularly significant is ...

IMPLICATIONS

Turning to the likely implications, ...

LOGIC

This is likely because ... / This, in turn, may ...

LANGUAGE BANK

SIGNIFICANCE

- manifest a desire to ...
- underscore willingness / reluctance
- mark a step forward in
- Its significance lies primarily in
- The development highlights / underscores / signals ...
- lays the groundwork for a peace settlement...
- solidifies unity/ resolve/ determination to...
- fosters the development.../ the emergence of a more equitable world
- proves that... the country is under enormous pressure to...
- has shaped the international/domestic environment/ defined political competition
- perpetuates conflict/ disagreement/ underdevelopment

INTERPRETATION

- It can be seen as an attempt to ... (reorder the world/reorient the global system)
- It may be interpreted as evidence of ...
- be interpreted as an attempt to weaponize (its resources/ dominance/ leadership...)
- This suggests a broader shift towards / away from

PROBABILITY

- is likely / unlikely to ...
- will probably ...
- may / might / could ...
- is almost certain / bound to ...
- is expected to ...
- remains contingent on

EVIDENCE & CAUTION

- as a result / consequently
- given that ...
- this may, in turn, ...
- which could ultimately lead to ...
- This is particularly likely because ...
- The immediate impact should not be overstated.
- Much will depend on ... / At this stage, it is too early to conclude that

COUNTRY • cause unrest / violence • exacerbate / aggravate tensions • bring about regime change • relaunch negotiations	REGION • have an adverse / positive effect • rebalance power • plunge the region into ... • escalate into a full-scale conflict	GLOBAL • trigger a new arms race • subvert international institutions • reconfigure the geopolitical landscape • spill over into other spheres	RUSSIA • is not likely to cave in to/ back down under pressure • impose restrictions on/ toughen sanctions • expand zone of influence/ defy court's ruling...
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COMMON ASSESSMENT PITFALLS

STRUCTURE –10–20% Missing section / unclear structure	ANALYSIS –25–35% Insufficient analysis, evaluation, issue knowledge or convincing argumentation	RELEVANCE –50% Complete mismatch with the task; no analysis / issue knowledge
LOGIC –5% Logical error	TIME –5–10% Failure to meet the time requirement	LANGUAGE & DELIVERY up to –20% / –5% Inadequate lexico-grammar; weak intonation / unnatural pace

TOO MUCH BACKGROUND	Keep the introduction to essential facts; analysis must dominate.
DESCRIPTION INSTEAD OF ANALYSIS	After every major fact, ask: What does this demonstrate? Why does it matter?
A LIST OF CONSEQUENCES	Prioritise likely implications and explain why they may occur.
UNSUPPORTED CERTAINTY	Use calibrated probability: likely, may, could, unlikely, contingent on.

1-MINUTE PREPARATION PLAN

0–15 sec EVENT What happened?	15–30 sec WHY? Cause / background	30–45 sec SO WHAT? 2-3 significance points	45–60 sec WHAT NEXT? 4 implications + why
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KEY PRINCIPLE: Do not just tell the listener **WHAT** happened. Explain **WHY** it matters and **WHAT** it may lead to.

THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

EVENT → CONTEXT / CAUSE → SIGNIFICANCE → IMPLICATION → EVIDENCE / WHY