

# A Level Philosophy



## Pre-course Preparation Task Booklet SUMMER TERM 1

Exam board: AQA

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/philosophy/as-and-a-level/philosophy-7172>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Congratulations on choosing to study Philosophy at A Level. The best way for you to prepare is to begin to familiarise yourself with concepts and terminology you will not have encountered before, not even in your GCSE subjects. A preparatory investigation of philosophical terms and certain key texts over the summer will make you more confident when you start the course in September and prepare you for a more independent approach to learning.

Philosophy is very demanding as an A Level subject and you will be feeling like Alice through the rabbit hole but it is more than worthwhile should you choose to jump into it. It is difficult but fascinating.

The focus of this guide is material you would normally encounter in Year 12, namely EPISTEMOLOGY and MORAL PHILOSOPHY but there will be an indication of what you can expect in Year 13. To register interest, return work at the end of every week and for further questions, email Ms Sdrolia at [csdrolia@thomastallis.org.uk](mailto:csdrolia@thomastallis.org.uk)

First things first... what is in this guide?

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# 1. How to Prepare for Philosophy A Level

Let's start with an anecdote from Plato...

*Theodorus: What do you mean by this, Socrates?*

*Socrates: Why, take the case of Thales, Theodorus. While he was studying the stars and looking upwards, he fell into a pit, and a neat, witty Thracian servant girl jeered at him, they say, because he was so eager to know the things in the sky that he could not see what was there before him at his very feet. The same jest applies to all who pass their lives in philosophy.*

Plato, *Thaetetus*, 174a

MORAL:

Don't be like Thales. He was fiendishly smart but he didn't keep his eyes on the ground and so made a fool of himself. ORGANISATION AND ATTENTION TO DETAIL ARE EVERYTHING.

SO...

Purchase the following:

- 2 x A4 folders (Large – you'll need it!)
- Plastic document wallets
- Plastic dividers
- Labels
- A4 lined paper
- Highlighter pens

Organise your folders (one for Epistemology; one for Moral Philosophy) by creating a clearly labelled section for each module. Put the module descriptions, available in this guide (**Epistemology p. 6; Moral Philosophy p.8**) at the front of each relevant section.

Put your pre-course preparation work and reading in the front of the relevant folder ready for inspection in September!

## 2. General A Level Course Content Overview

### Year 12

- **Epistemology**

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge. The epistemology module covers what the definition of knowledge is, what we can know, and how we acquire knowledge and concepts. It also covers the idea of scepticism.

- **Moral Philosophy**

Moral philosophy is often referred to as ethics. It's about right and wrong, good and bad. This module covers ethical theories, applications of these theories, and the meaning of moral language.

### Year 13

- **Metaphysics of Mind**

The metaphysics of mind looks at what minds and mental states actually are. This module covers various theories which say the mind is a physical thing and others which argue it is non-physical.

- **Metaphysics of God**

This module covers the concept of God as typically conceived by the three main monotheistic religions. It covers whether such a concept is possible as well as arguments for and against the existence of God.

### 3. The Exam (End of Year 13)

Paper 1: Epistemology and moral philosophy
<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <p>Sections 1 and 2</p>
<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 3 hours</li> <li>• 100 marks</li> <li>• 50% of A-level</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A: Five questions on epistemology</li> <li>• Section B: Five questions on moral philosophy</li> </ul>



Paper 2: The metaphysics of God and the metaphysics of mind
<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <p>Sections 3 and 4</p>
<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 3 hours</li> <li>• 100 marks</li> <li>• 50% of A-level</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A: Five questions on the metaphysics of God</li> <li>• Section B: Five questions on the metaphysics of mind</li> </ul>

## 4. Year 12 Program of Study 2020-2021

### Epistemology

#### THE DEFINITION OF KNOWLEDGE

- Justified True Belief
  - The tripartite definition
  - Necessary and sufficient conditions
  - Problem: Gettier cases
    - Gettier case 1
    - Gettier case 2
- Other definitions of knowledge
  - JTB+ no false lemmas
    - Problem: fake barn county
  - Reliabilism
    - Children and animals
    - Problem: fake barn county
  - Virtue epistemology
    - Linda Zagzebski: What is Knowledge?
    - Problem: children and animals
  - Infallibilism
    - Problem: too strict

#### KNOWLEDGE FROM PERCEPTION

- Direct realism
  - Problems:
    - The argument from illusion
    - The argument from hallucination
    - The argument from perceptual variation
    - The time lag argument
- Indirect realism
  - Sense data
  - Primary and secondary qualities
  - Problem: Scepticism
    - Russell's reply
    - Locke's first reply
    - Locke's second reply
- Idealism
  - Bishop Berkeley
    - Attack on primary/secondary qualities distinction
    - Master argument

- Is Berkeley a sceptic?
- Problems:
  - Solipsism
  - Hallucinations and illusions

## KNOWLEDGE FROM REASON

- Some definitions
  - Analytic / synthetic
  - A priori / a posteriori
  - Rationalism / empiricism
- Intuition and deduction
  - Descartes: Meditations
    - Three waves of doubt
    - Cogito ergo sum
    - Clear and distinct ideas
    - Argument for the existence of God
  - Empiricist responses:
    - Hume's Fork
      - Relations of ideas
      - Matters of fact
- Innate knowledge
  - Plato: Meno
  - Leibniz: Necessary truths
  - Empiricist responses:
    - John Locke: Essay Concerning Human Understanding
      - Tabula rasa
      - Abstract general ideas
      - Arguments against innate knowledge

# Moral Philosophy

## ETHICAL THEORIES

- Utilitarianism
  - Act utilitarianism
    - The felicific calculus
    - Problems:
      - Difficult to calculate
      - Tyranny of the majority
      - Moral status of particular relationships
      - Higher and lower pleasures
  - Rule utilitarianism
  - Preference utilitarianism
- Kant's deontological ethics
  - The good will
  - Duty
  - The categorical imperative
    - Contradiction in conception
    - Contradiction in will
    - The humanity formula
  - Problems:
    - Difficult to apply
    - Ignores consequences
    - Other valuable motivations
    - Conflicts between duties
- Aristotle's virtue theory
  - The good
  - Arête and ergon
  - Eudaimonia
  - Virtues and practical wisdom
  - The golden mean
  - Problems:
    - No clear guidance
    - Circularity
    - Competing virtues

## APPLIED ETHICS

- Stealing
- Simulated killing
- Eating animals
- Telling lies

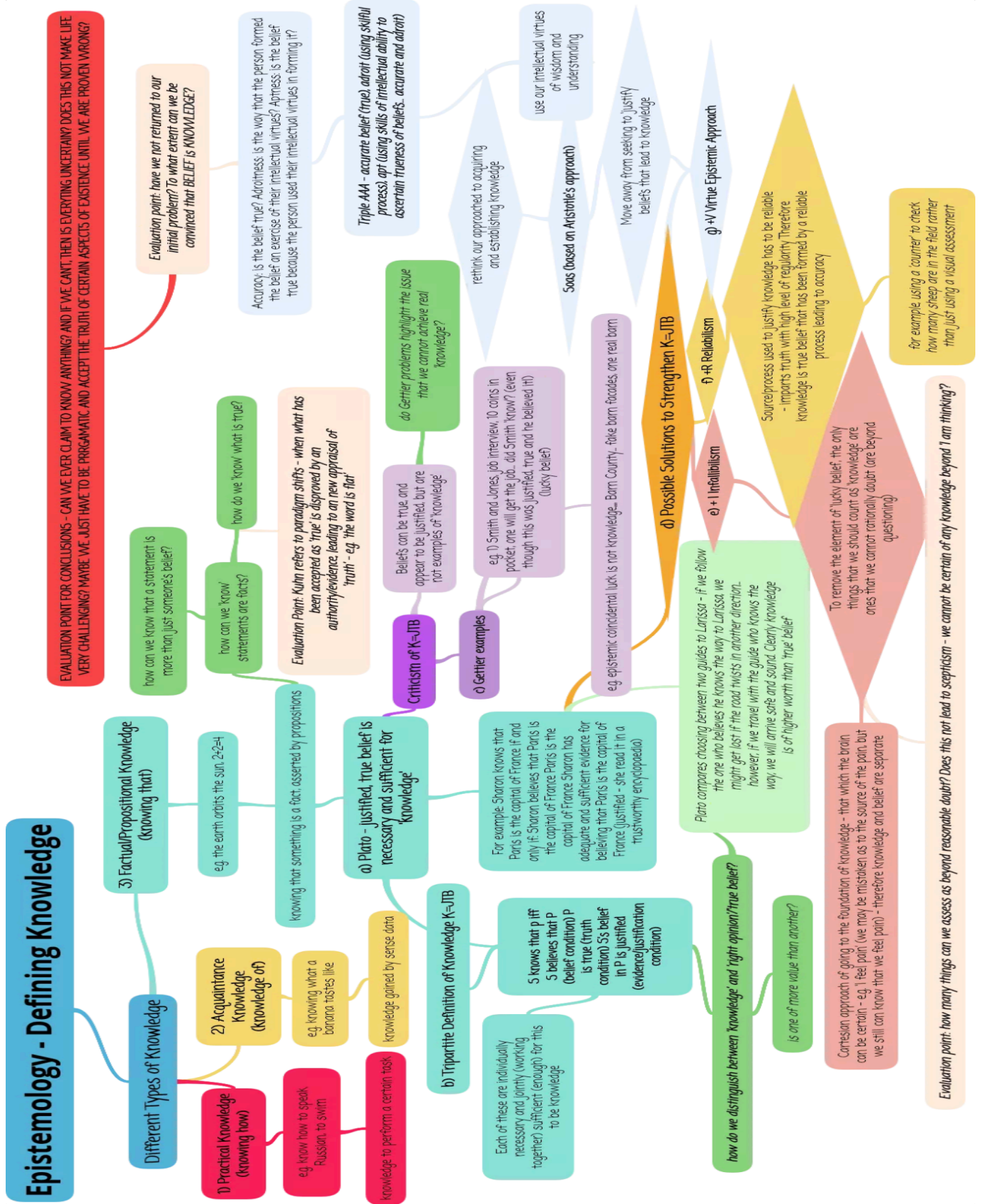
## METAETHICS



- Realist theories
  - Ethical naturalism
    - Problems
  - Ethical non-naturalism
    - G.E. Moore: *Principia Ethica*
    - Naturalistic fallacy
    - Intuitionism
    - Problems
  
- Anti-realist theories
  - Error theory
    - J.L. Mackie: *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*
      - Argument from queerness
      - All moral judgements are false
  - Non-cognitivism
    - Emotivism
      - Hume: *Treatise of Human Nature*
        - Arguments *against* cognitivism
          - Moral judgements motivate action
          - Moral judgements are not relations of ideas or matters of fact
        - Arguments for emotivism
          - The is/ought problem
          - Comparison to Locke's primary and secondary qualities
      - A.J. Ayer: *Language, Truth and Logic*
        - The verification principle
        - Rejection of ethical naturalism
        - Rejection of ethical non-naturalism
        - Argument for emotivism
      - Prescriptivism
        - R.M. Hare: *The Language of Morals*
          - Imperatives and value judgements
          - 'Good'
        - Problem: moral argument and reasoning
    - Problems:
      - Moral nihilism
      - Moral progress

# 4. Tips: How to read/study philosophy.

a. Connective mind maps are your best friends. Literally. Make them.



b. Classification tables are your next best friends. For example:

Theoretical positions and claims in the metaphysics of mind						
Theoretical positions and claims in the metaphysics of mind	Substance dualism	Property dualism	Behaviourism: hard/soft	Mind/brain type identity theory:	Eliminative materialism	Functionalism
'Mind' is a physical phenomena.						
Only I have direct access to what I am thinking and feeling.						
The mind and body causally interact.						

c. Flashcards. Oldie but goodie.

anti-realism, moral

The theory that claims that there are no moral properties. Error theory and moral non-cognitivism are both anti-realist.

d. Writing the same definition a hundred times. It works.

**Question 1: What is philosophical scepticism?**

**[3 marks]**

Student C

Philosophical scepticism sometimes involves questioning whether knowledge of the world is possible at all, as all the usual standards of justification we use are unconvincing: for example, whether it is possible to know that other minds exist, or whether the future will resemble the past (the problem of induction).

## Week One: Terminology (20/04 – 24/04)

Let's start with the basics. Below you will see some terms you must begin to familiarise yourselves with. It's going to hurt your neural synapses a little but all good things are worth the effort. These terms are your bread and butter and you need to remember that philosophy is rather unforgiving when it comes to precision. It does not use terms in a commonsensical way.

The tasks will grow more and more fun down the line. Just bear with them a little.

1. Research the answers to these general questions and write the definition for each one. Try to keep a log of the resources (websites/books) that you use. The catch? Try to use vocabulary that any non-philosopher would understand.

- a. What is philosophy?
- b. What is epistemology?
- c. What is ontology?
- d. What is metaphysics?
- e. What is ethics?
- f. What is logic?

Make a mind map to connect them.

2. Have look at the following terms.

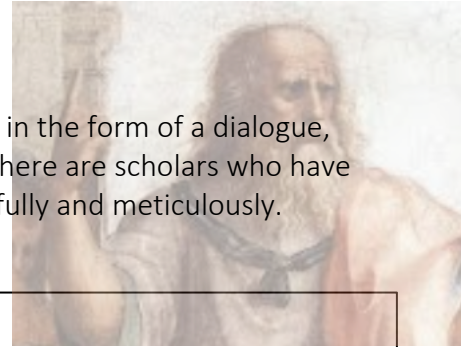
- a. Put a tick next to the terms you recognise. Try and write *your own* definitions of these terms. What do you understand by them?
- b. Find the proper definitions of the terms and create flashcards.

- proposition/argument
- antecedent/consequent
- analytic/synthetic
- a priori/a posteriori
- necessary/contingent
- consistent/inconsistent
- objective/subjective
- tautology

- dilemma
- paradox
- prove/proof
- true/false
- justification

## Week Two: Plato (27/04 – 01/05)

Disclaimer: Many a reader thinks that because Plato writes in the form of a dialogue, his writings and ideas are easy to digest. Don't be fooled. There are scholars who have spent a lifetime trying to fathom his philosophy. Read carefully and meticulously.



As Whitehead put it half in jest, half in seriousness:

“The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato”

A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*

Second Disclaimer: The reference to Meno's 'slave' is historically contingent and indicative of the supposed reach of democracy, which did not extend to non-citizens (i.e. women and slaves). The classical Greeks would, indeed, frequently keep slaves from other rival Greek tribes. An interesting subject to research for historical reasons alone!

TIP: You can print off the key texts specified from the links attached or you can read them online. YOU ARE ADVISED TO BE MAKING DETAILED NOTES OF THEM.

1. Research a few facts about Plato's life and philosophy. Create a mind map with important dates and Dialogues (including a summary of the basic ideas in them). Consult the following websites:

<https://www.gradesaver.com/author/plato>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Plato>

<https://www.biography.com/scholar/plato>

There are many more sources for you online. Just look!

2. Read Plato's *Meno* (<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/meno.html>) and circle the right answer in the multiple choice questions below. As you would do in maths, *show your work*; makes notes of the extract of the dialogue where you find the answer:

1. With what question does the *Meno* begin?

- a. What is virtue?
- b. Can virtue be taught?
- c. Is virtue a kind of knowledge?
- d. Are there many virtues or one?

2. Where is Meno from?

- a. Sparta
  - b. Athens
  - c. Eos
  - d. Thessaly
3. Socrates reminds Meno that no virtue is truly beneficial without:
- a. Justice
  - b. Moderation
  - c. Wisdom
  - d. All of the above
4. Socrates uses which examples to demonstrate the idea of a definition?
- a. Shape and colour
  - b. Shape and odour
  - c. colour and sound
  - d. tables and chairs
5. "What else is being miserable," asks Socrates...
- a. ...'than not to know the truth?'
  - b. ...'than to seek virtue and fail to find it?'
  - c. ...'than to desire bad things and secure them?'
  - d. ...'than to be a sophist?'
6. What mistake does Socrates eventually reveal in Meno's definition of virtue as the desire for beautiful things and the power to attain them?
- a. This is a list, not a definition.
  - b. The definition implicitly contains the term it sets out to define.
  - c. The definition does not correspond to an eidos.
  - d. The definition does not cover all cases of virtue.
7. Why does Meno call Socrates a torpedo fish?
- a. Socrates is quick
  - b. Socrates is numbing
  - c. Socrates is cold-hearted
  - d. Socrates is suspicious
8. What paradox does Meno raise?
- a. How can one look for what one does not know?
  - b. How can those without virtue be elected if democracy is virtuous?
  - c. Xenon's paradox.
  - d. How can virtue be wisdom but not knowledge?
9. According to Socrates, the soul is:
- a. Infinitely large
  - b. Inherently virtuous
  - c. Corruptible
  - d. Immortal



10. According to Socrates, learning is a kind of:
  - a. Recollection
  - b. Virtue
  - c. Political skill
  - d. Gift of the gods
  
11. Socrates questions Meno's servant about:
  - a. The radius of a circle
  - b. The height of the Parthenon
  - c. The double of a square's area
  - d. The golden ratio of a given square
  
12. Socrates says that "all that the soul endures, if directed by \_\_\_\_\_, ends in happiness."
  - a. Virtue
  - b. Wisdom
  - c. Prophets
  - d. Truth
  
13. Socrates reacts to Anytus' disapproval of the Sophists with:
  - a. Amazement
  - b. Anger
  - c. A rebuke
  - d. A theory
  
14. Protagoras is used as an example of:
  - a. A rich sophist
  - b. A corrupt politician
  - c. A gifted priest
  - d. A man of true knowledge
  
15. Anytus suggests that Meno talk to whom to learn about virtue?
  - a. The sophists
  - b. Any Athenian on the street
  - c. An oracle
  - d. Gorgias
  
16. Gorgias refuses to say:
  - a. That virtue is truth
  - b. That Socrates is a bad influence
  - c. That he can teach virtue
  - d. That he can't teach virtue
  
17. How does true opinion relate to knowledge?
  - a. It's always inferior.
  - b. It's sometimes superior.

- c. They are equally good
- d. It's inferior in the long run

18. According to Socrates' conclusion at the end of the Meno, beneficent statesmen are like:

- a. Soothsayers and prophets
- b. Oracles and deities
- c. Gorgias and Anytus
- d. Blindfolded children

**2. In your own words, answer the following questions:**

a. What metaphor does Socrates use in reply to Meno's first attempt to define virtue? What error does this metaphor point out?

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b. What is Meno's paradox and what is Plato's solution to it?

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c. At some point in the dialogue, Socrates expresses his disagreement to the position that is commonly known as 'relativism'. He does so by quoting the famous sophist Protagoras.

"Man is the measure of all things: of things which are, that they are, and of things which are not, that they are not."

Read the passage below and offer a critical appreciation of it, also drawing on your knowledge of the entire dialogue. What is relativism as Plato explores it here? How does relativism affect our ability to know? What exactly is it that Socrates is objecting to and what is the solution he proposes?

Theaet. At any rate, Socrates, after such an exhortation I should be ashamed of not trying to do my best. Now he who knows perceives what he knows, and, as far as I can see at present, knowledge is perception.

Soc. Bravely said, boy; that is the way in which you should express your opinion. And now, let us examine together this conception of yours, and see whether it is a true birth or a mere, wind-egg:-You say that knowledge is perception?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. Well, you have delivered yourself of a very important doctrine about knowledge; it is indeed the opinion of Protagoras, who has another way of expressing it, Man, he says, is the measure of all things, of the existence of things that are, and of the non-existence of things that are not:-You have read him?

Theaet. O yes, again and again.

Soc. Does he not say that things are to you such as they appear to you, and to me such as they appear to me, and that you and I are men?

Theaet. Yes, he says so.

Soc. A wise man is not likely to talk nonsense. Let us try to understand him: the same wind is blowing, and yet one of us may be cold and the other not, or one may be slightly and the other very cold?

Theaet. Quite true.

Soc. Now is the wind, regarded not in relation to us but absolutely, cold or not; or are we to say, with Protagoras, that the wind is cold to him who is cold, and not to him who is not?

Theaet. I suppose the last.

Soc. Then it must appear so to each of them?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. And "appears to him" means the same as "he perceives."

Theaet. True.

Soc. Then appearing and perceiving coincide in the case of hot and cold, and in similar instances; for things appear, or may be supposed to be, to each one such as he perceives them?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. Then perception is always of existence, and being the same as knowledge is unerring?

Theaet. Clearly.

Soc. In the name of the Graces, what an almighty wise man Protagoras must have been! He spoke these things in a parable to the common herd, like you and me, but told the truth, his Truth, in secret to his own disciples.

Theaet. What do you mean, Socrates?

Soc. I am about to speak of a high argument, in which all things are said to be relative; you cannot rightly call anything by any name, such as great or small, heavy or light, for the great will be small and the heavy light—there is no single thing or quality, but out of motion and change and admixture all things are becoming relatively to one another, which "becoming" is by us incorrectly called being, but is really becoming, for nothing ever is, but all things are becoming. Summon all philosophers—Protagoras, Heraclitus, Empedocles, and the rest of them, one after another, and with the exception of Parmenides they will agree with you in this. Summon the great masters of either kind of poetry—Epicharmus, the prince of Comedy, and Homer of Tragedy; when the latter sings of Ocean whence sprang the gods, and mother Tethys, does he not mean that all things are the offspring, of flux and motion?

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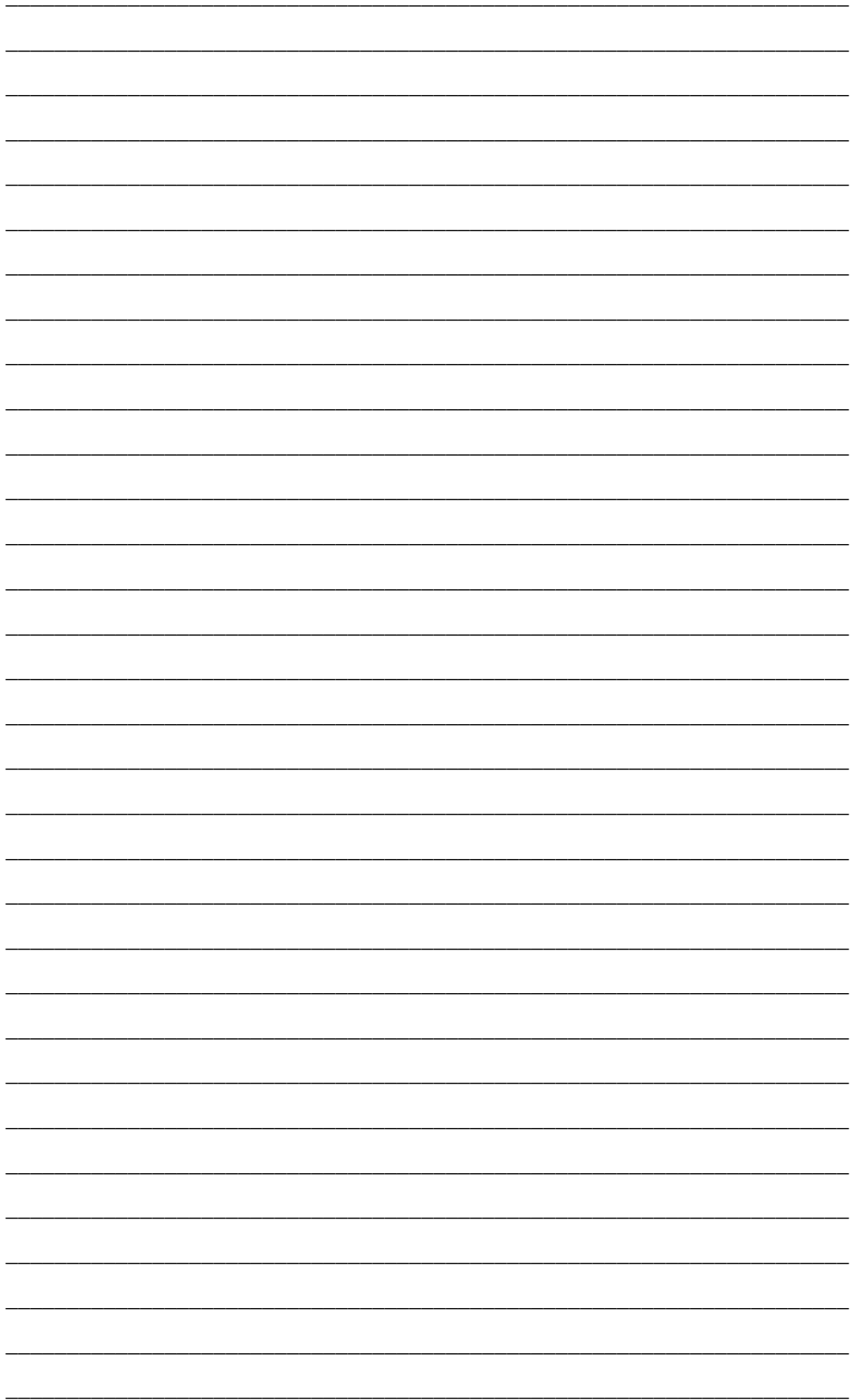
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## Weeks Four & Five: Aristotle

(11/05 – 15/05; 18/05 – 22/05)



1. From teacher (Plato) to student (Aristotle; philosophy's first essayist). Research a few facts about Aristotle's life and philosophy. Create a mind map with important dates and works (including a summary of the basic ideas in them). Consult the following websites:  
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Aristotle>  
<https://www.notablebiographies.com/An-Ba/Aristotle.html>  
<https://thegreatthinkers.org/aristotle/biography/>

Again, there are plenty of websites for you to consult out there.

2. Read Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>) and circle the right answer in the multiple choice questions below. As you would do in maths, *show your work*; highlight the exact extract of the dialogue where you find the answer.

TIP: ACCORDING TO THE SPECIFICATION, YOU DO NOT HAVE TO READ ALL OF THE 10 BOOKS, only Books 1 (1–5, 7–10, 13), 2 (1–7), 3 (1–5), 5, 6 (1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13), 7 (12–13), 10 (1–8).

HOWEVER, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT READ THE ENTIRE WORK FOR BETTER COMPREHENSION. YOU HAVE PLENTY OF TIME UNTIL SEPTEMBER SO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT. THESE ARE *DIFFICULT* TEXTS.

1. Which of the following words is *not* a plausible translation of *eudaimonia*?
  - a. Happiness
  - b. Virtue
  - c. Success
  - d. Fulfillment
2. Which of the following is always an end in itself?
  - a. Happiness
  - b. Virtue
  - c. Intelligence
  - d. Honor
3. Which of the following, according to Aristotle, is the highest pursuit in life?
  - a. The pursuit of pleasure
  - b. The pursuit of honors
  - c. The pursuit of Plato's Form of Good

- d. The pursuit of rational contemplation
4. Which of the following is *not* listed as a virtue in Aristotle's Table of Virtues and Vices?
- Courage
  - Humility
  - Patience
  - Wittiness
5. Which of the following statements about Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean is correct?
- The mean is the exact middle point between two opposing vices.
  - Virtues and vices exist in sets of opposing pairs.
  - The mean between two opposing vices may be much closer to one vice than the other.
  - The virtuous mean is the same for all people.
6. How do we learn virtue?
- By habit
  - By dialectical argument
  - By rational instruction
  - By learning from our mistakes
7. If someone does wrong out of ignorance and never comes to recognize this ignorance, how do we describe that person's action?
- Voluntary
  - Involuntary
  - Nonvoluntary
  - None of the above
8. Which of the senses is most susceptible to licentiousness?
- Taste
  - Touch
  - Sight
  - Smell
9. Which of the following is *not*, strictly speaking, a virtue?
- Wittiness
  - Modesty
  - Magnificence
  - Courage
10. Which of the following does Aristotle consider to be the worst?
- Being great and expecting great honors
  - Being mediocre and expecting great honors
  - Being great and expecting moderate honors
  - B and C are equally bad.

11. Which of the following is *not* one of the social virtues?
  - a. Amiability
  - b. Sincerity
  - c. Wittiness
  - d. Self-deprecation
  
12. Which of the following is *not* a concern of particular justice?
  - a. Honour
  - b. Safety
  - c. Money
  - d. Happiness
  
13. How is justice different from virtue?
  - a. Virtue is just one form of justice.
  - b. Justice deals with our relations to others, while virtue is a state of being.
  - c. Justice can be a vice in the wrong hands.
  - d. Justice is a human invention while virtue exists objectively.
  
14. Which of the following is *not* an intellectual virtue?
  - a. Intuition
  - b. Wisdom
  - c. Wittiness
  - d. Prudence
  
15. Which intellectual virtue is the most important?
  - a. Prudence
  - b. Wisdom
  - c. Intuition
  - d. Scientific knowledge
  
16. Which of the following is most blameworthy?
  - a. Softness
  - b. Vice
  - c. Brutishness
  - d. Incontinence
  
17. Which of the following pleasures can be a source of incontinence without qualification?
  - a. Sex
  - b. Honor
  - c. Wealth
  - d. Victory
  
18. Which of the following most accurately reflects Aristotle's view of pleasure?
  - a. It is always bad.
  - b. It is a process of restoration.

- c. It distracts us and keeps us from thinking straight.
  - d. The pleasure of a virtuous person is the supreme good.
19. What is the best form of friendship based upon?
- a. Utility
  - b. Pleasure
  - c. Goodness
  - d. Law
20. Which is the best kind of political constitution, according to the *Ethics*?
- a. Monarchy
  - b. Aristocracy
  - c. Timocracy
  - d. Democracy
21. Which of the following relationships is analogous to the king-subject relationship?
- a. Husband-wife
  - b. Father-son
  - c. Master-slave
  - d. Brother-sister
22. How should one treat an old friend whom one has long since exceeded in friendship?
- a. Remain friends as always.
  - b. Remain friends, but not as closely as before.
  - c. Break off the friendship, but maintain feelings of goodwill for the old friend.
  - d. Break off all relations with the old friend.
23. What does Aristotle claim to be the highest human activity?
- a. Political science
  - b. Friendship
  - c. Contemplation
  - d. Prudence
24. Who are the best teachers of political science?
- a. Sophists
  - b. Politicians
  - c. Friends
  - d. None of the above
25. Which of the following concepts does Aristotle *not* advocate?
- a. Distributive justice
  - b. Ethical egoism
  - c. Democracy
  - d. Happiness as the highest good

2. Give the definitions, as explained by Aristotle of the following terms:

Akrasia

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Arete

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Eudaimonia

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Telos

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Plato and  
Aristotle in  
conversation.

Snippet from  
Raphael's  
painting, The  
School of  
Athens.

## Week Six: Elements of Logic (Half term 25/05-29/05)

You will have noticed that Aristotle introduces the term *phronesis* in Book 3 of the Nichomachean Ethics:

*Phronesis* - Often translated as “prudence,” this term is perhaps better, but more clumsily, translated as “practical wisdom.” *Phronesis* is an important intellectual virtue that allows us to reason properly about practical matters. *Phronesis* consists in no small part of an appropriate application of the practical syllogism.

Practical syllogisms consist of three terms.

a. Major premise

The major premise states some general practical truth—for example, “Always hold the door open for elderly people.”

b. Minor Premise

The minor premise states a particular fact related to the major premise—for example, “An elderly person is coming toward this door.”

c. Conclusion

The conclusion is the action that the major and minor premises entail—in other words, holding the door open for the elderly person.

Applied to Aristotle’s system, we have the following:

The practical syllogism cannot be completed without both moral virtue and *phronesis*. Moral virtue supplies us with the appropriate major premises, and *phronesis* (minor premise) helps us to move from the major premise to an appropriate course of action (the conclusion). Without *phronesis*, the virtuous person would not necessarily know how to act, and without moral virtue, the clever person would not always pursue the appropriate ends.

### **IN MODERN TERMS:**

A syllogism is a type of logical argument that is usually brief in form. It was first put forth as a type of reasoning by the Greeks, specifically Aristotle. It is a type of deductive reasoning that establishes a conclusion based on two joined premises. The syllogism is created using two premises and the logical conclusion that follows. The conclusion must be specific and cannot be more general than either premise. It follows that if the premises are true, the conclusion must be true.

**1. Let's play a game. Based on the definition above and given the following purported facts, which statement can be concluded?**

- i) All gems in the game are expensive in-game purchases.  
All rubies in the game are gems.

*Therefore which of the following can we conclude?*

- a. Some rubies in the game are expensive in-game purchases.
- b. All rubies in the game are expensive in-game purchases.
- c. Some gems in the game are expensive in-game purchases.
- d. None of the above

- ii) No robots are evil.  
All mobile phones are robots.

*Therefore which of the following can we conclude?*

- a. All mobile phones are evil.
- b. All robots are mobile phones.
- c. Some mobile phones are evil.
- d. None of the above.

- iii) All bugs are poor computer software.  
Some rounding errors are bugs.

*Therefore which of the following can we conclude?*

- a. All rounding errors are poor computer software.
- b. Some rounding errors are poor computer software.
- c. Some rounding errors are false.
- d. None of the above.

- iv) All educational things are useful.  
Some websites are not useful.

*Therefore which of the following can we conclude?*

- a. Some websites are not educational.
- b. All websites are educational.
- c. All educational things are not websites.
- d. None of the above.









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4. (More) Fun Time: The ancients *love* taunting us to this day. Let's move on to the *pièce de résistance* that is the Problem of Future Contingents. (Don't forget to thank Aristotle for this gem...)

Read the following extract from Aristotle's *On Interpretation*:

#### The sea battle

Suppose that a sea-battle will not be fought tomorrow. Then this was also true yesterday (and the week before, and last year) that it will not be fought, since any true statement about what will be the case in the future was also true in the past. But all past truths are now necessary truths; therefore it is now necessarily true in the past, prior and up to the original statement "A sea battle will not be fought tomorrow", that the battle will not be fought, and thus the statement that it will be fought is necessarily false. Therefore, it is not possible that the battle will be fought. In general, if something will not be the case, it is not possible for it to be the case. "For a man may predict an event ten thousand years beforehand, and another may predict the reverse; that which was truly predicted at the moment in the past will of necessity take place in the fullness of time" (*On Interpretation* 18b35).

Now that the first shock is over, let's take things one at a time.

- Research and write down the definitions for the following.

a. What is a logical paradox?

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b. What is logical antinomy or contradiction?

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c. What is logical proof?

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d. What is logical necessity?

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e. What is logical contingency?

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f. What is bivalence?

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g. What is determinism?

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- Now re-read the problem and try to answer the questions that follow as best as you can, using some of the new terminology:

### The sea battle

Suppose that a sea-battle will not be fought tomorrow. Then this was also true yesterday (and the week before, and last year) that it will not be fought, since any true statement about what will be the case in the future was also true in the past. But all past truths are now necessary truths; therefore it is now necessarily true in the past, prior and up to the original statement "A sea battle will not be fought tomorrow", that the battle will not be fought, and thus the statement that it will be fought is necessarily false. Therefore, it is not possible that the battle will be fought. In general, if something will not be the case, it is not possible for it to be the case. "For a man may predict an event ten thousand years beforehand, and another may predict the reverse; that which was truly predicted at the moment in the past will of necessity take place in the fullness of time" (*On Interpretation* 18b35).

1. How do propositions/statements about the future differ from those of the past?

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2. Is tomorrow's sea-battle necessary? Yes or no and why?

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3. What specific problem do propositions about future contingents pose?

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4. Can you put the problem of future contingents in syllogistic form?

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FINALLY, WE'VE ARRIVED TO THE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION:  
GIVEN WHAT YOU HAVE READ AND WRITTEN SO FAR, WHAT  
WOULD YOU SAY IS PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT  
CONCEPT OF PHILOSOPHY, IN GENERAL? \_\_\_\_\_