

# General Philosophy

## June & August 2023

### SECTION A: MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Answer ALL questions in Section A in the OMR sheet provided.

1. Philosophy seeks knowledge to find\_\_\_\_\_.

- A. a logical world  
B. what the world has  
C. people who are understanding  
**D. the meaning and relevance of knowledge**

2. For Socrates, the soul is harmed by a lack of \_\_\_\_\_

- A. wealth  
B. courage  
**C. knowledge**  
D. community

3. "What is knowledge?" and "What is truth?" are in the branch of Philosophy known as\_\_\_\_\_ -

- A. Logic  
B. Aesthetics  
C. Metaphysics  
**D. Epistemology**

4. To be peaceful and happy Epicurus advocated \_\_\_\_\_

- A. living a simple life**  
B. living with a lot of wealth  
C. including a lot of physical desires  
D. living in a society that has an expensive lifestyle

5. Critics of the 'divine command theory' have argued that the theory implies that God's commands are\_\_\_\_\_

- A. unclear  
B. arbitrary  
C. not knowable  
D. well-supported

6. Which of the following is an example of "happiness"?

- A. Having a lot of money.
- B. Being able to buy expensive presents.
- C. Being able to eat at expensive restaurants.

**D. Having family support despite making mistakes.**

7. If you assume that a set of statements is true, and yet you can recognise a false or absurd statement from it; then the original set of statements must be false. This kind of argument is known as \_\_\_\_\_

- A. Modus Tollens
- B. Modus ponens
- C. Hypothetical syllogism
- D. Reduction ad absurdum**

8. According to Socrates, a clear sign that a person has \_\_\_\_\_ is the exclusive pursuit of social status, wealth, power, and pleasure.

- A. worldly wisdom
- B. **an unhealthy soul**
- C. exceptional desires
- D. philosophical ambition

9. The view that we consist of two different substances (body and mind) and that these two interact is known as \_\_\_\_\_

- A. materialism
- B. functionalism
- C. identity theory
- D. substance dualism**

10. The very fact that a person is thinking shows that he \_\_\_\_\_

- A. exists**
- B. is dreaming
- C. does not exist
- D. is not being deceived

11. Traditionally art has been defined as a(n) \_\_\_\_\_

A. utility

B. wealth

C. well-being

**D. representation**

12. Metaphysics is the study of \_\_\_\_\_

A. Ethics

B. Politics

**C. Existence**

D. Knowledge

13. A moral theory explains \_\_\_\_\_

A. why people do what they do

**B. why an action is right or wrong**

C. where a moral agent got its values

D. why one moral event caused another

14. Rawls defines a moral person as a \_\_\_\_\_

A. happy person

B. person who is always right

C. a person who lives a good life

**D. a person who improves the lives of others**

15. According to Hobbes, the condition of man in a state of war were everyone is against everyone, every man has a right to \_\_\_\_\_

**A. everything**

B. due process

C. some things

D. lawful treatment

16. Making a lying promise would be wrong because \_\_\_\_\_

A. most people condemn the practice

**B. people can cause harm to others by making a lying promise**

C. it is impossible to say that everyone should make a lying promise

D. you can be arrested if you make a lying promise by the state laws

17. The belief that decisions about right and wrong are purely personal and subjective is known as \_\_\_\_\_

A. Ethics of care

B. Ethical egoism

C. Ethnocentrism

**D. Moral relativism**

18. The social sciences ask questions about how people think and act; philosophy is the study of \_\_\_\_\_

A. philosophers' questions which have no answers

B. questions that can be answered by using scientific experiments

**C. the meaning of beliefs and whether diverse beliefs are justified**

D. how people with diverse backgrounds disagree with each other

19. The \_\_\_\_\_ theory states that the right thing to do is to follow the rules that rational, self-interested people would agree to follow for their mutual benefit.

A. utilitarian

B. virtue ethics

C. ethics of care

**D. social contract**

20. What does the meaning of life refer to?

A. god's plan

**B. internal meaning**

C. external meaning

D. meaning in an after life

21. Which of the following explains a materialistic philosophy?

A. Recycling objects will make a person happy.

B. Sharing material goods makes a person happy.

**C. Having more material goods makes a person happy.**

D. Having experiences are more important than material goods.

22. Which of the following explains intrinsic motivation?

**A. Buying a boat because you love fishing.**

B. Buying a second house to appear wealthy.

C. Buying a big meal because you are hungry.

D. Buying an expensive car to impress your friends.

23. Which of the following demonstrates moral luck?

**A. Only the consequence matters in a moral judgement.**

B. The reasons are placed systematically before a decision is made.

C. No matter how much a person tries, the individual cannot reason for the right thing to do.

D. The principles by which people judge others are similar to the principles used to judge ourselves.

24. The branch of Philosophy that deals with values is known as \_\_\_\_\_

A. Ontology

**B. Axiology**

C. Metaphysics

D. Epistemology

25. What is meant by the term "dualism"?

A. The notion that people have two minds

**B. The notion that the mind and body are separate entities.**

C. The notion that the mind and the body are intrinsically one.

D. The notion that the Psychological life is a product of physiological function.

26. Relativism means \_\_\_\_\_

**A. what is right or wrong depends on the concerned culture**

B. what is right or wrong depends on the education a person has

C. what is right or wrong depends on the grandparent's education

D. what is right or wrong depends on the games played by children

27. Philosophy originated from \_\_\_\_\_

**A. questions about life**

B. questions from people

C. questions about religion

D. questions from politicians

28. Skeptics consider truth as \_\_\_\_\_

A. real

**B. probable**

C. practical

D. necessary

29. What is meant by the term 'Ontology'?

A. It refers to the nature of time.

**B. It refers to the study of reality.**

C. It refers to the need of objectivity.

D. It refers to the impulsive behaviour of humans.

30. Epistemology is the study of \_\_\_\_\_

A. the theory of nature

**B. the theory of knowledge**

C. the theory of the meaning of religion

D. the study of right action and the greater good

## SECTION B: SHORT ESSAYS

Answer THREE (3) questions only.

**1. Materialism is a belief that owning, and acquisition of the right properties is the vital ingredients of happiness. Explain two objections to materialism. Include an example.**

### **Ans:- Objection 1: Hedonic Adaptation**

One objection to materialism is the phenomenon known as hedonic adaptation. This refers to the tendency of humans to quickly adapt to new circumstances, including improvements in their material well-being. According to this objection, the initial joy and satisfaction derived from acquiring new possessions or wealth are often short-lived. Over time, individuals become accustomed to their improved living standards, and the happiness derived from material possessions diminishes.

**Example:-** Consider an individual who saves up to buy the latest and most advanced smartphone. Initially, they experience a surge of happiness and satisfaction with their new gadget. However, as time passes, the novelty wears off, and the individual becomes accustomed to the smartphone's features. The initial excitement fades, and the pursuit of the next desirable possession becomes a continuous cycle, as the lasting happiness derived from material acquisitions proves elusive.

### **Objection 2: Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Values**

Another objection to materialism is rooted in the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic values. Intrinsic values are those that have inherent worth, such as personal relationships, personal growth, and a sense of purpose. Extrinsic values, on the other hand, are related to external factors like wealth, status, and possessions. Critics argue that materialism tends to prioritize extrinsic values at the expense of intrinsic ones, leading to a potential neglect of the aspects of life that bring deeper and more enduring satisfaction.

**Example:-** Imagine an individual who focuses excessively on climbing the corporate ladder and accumulating wealth as a measure of success. While they may achieve financial success and acquire luxurious possessions, they may find that their pursuit has come at the cost of neglecting personal relationships, self-reflection, and personal fulfillment. In this case, the objection is that the exclusive emphasis on material acquisitions has led to a life that may be externally successful but lacks intrinsic value and genuine happiness.

## 2. Explain Pragmatism. Explain with an example 'the world of sense' and 'the world of Science.'

**Ans:-** Pragmatism is a philosophical approach that emphasizes the practical consequences and real-world outcomes of beliefs, ideas, and actions. Developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by philosophers such as Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey, pragmatism rejects abstract and absolute truths in favor of understanding concepts based on their practical implications and effects.

In pragmatism, the focus is on the usefulness of ideas rather than their absolute truth or metaphysical nature. Pragmatists argue that the meaning of concepts should be understood in terms of their practical consequences and how they guide human behavior.

Now, let's explore the concepts of "the world of sense" and "the world of science" in the context of pragmatism:

### 1. The World of Sense

- In pragmatism, the "world of sense" refers to the immediate, experiential world that we perceive through our senses. It includes the tangible, observable aspects of our everyday experiences.
- Pragmatists argue that our understanding of reality is shaped by our sensory experiences, and meaning is derived from these immediate, concrete encounters.
- **Example:-** If you touch a hot stove, the immediate sensation of pain is part of the world of sense. Pragmatism would focus on the practical consequences of this experience, such as learning to avoid touching hot surfaces in the future to prevent harm.

### 2. The World of Science

- The "world of science" in pragmatism refers to the systematic inquiry into the patterns, regularities, and structures underlying our experiences. It involves the development of scientific theories and concepts to explain and predict phenomena.
- Pragmatists acknowledge the importance of scientific inquiry, but they emphasize that scientific theories are valuable to the extent that they are practically useful and lead to positive outcomes.



- **Example:-** Consider the theory of gravity. In the world of science, scientists develop theories to explain the force of gravity and predict its effects on objects. Pragmatism would assess the value of this theory based on its practical consequences, such as enabling the construction of safe buildings and the development of technologies like satellites.

In summary, pragmatism underscores the importance of practical consequences and the real-world impact of ideas. The distinction between "the world of sense" and "the world of science" highlights the balance between immediate sensory experiences and the broader scientific understanding of the world, both of which contribute to our practical engagement with reality.

### **3. Define Feminism in social justice. Give an example.**

**Ans:-** Feminism in the context of social justice refers to the advocacy for the equal rights, opportunities, and treatment of all genders, with a particular focus on addressing historical and current disparities and discrimination faced by women. It seeks to challenge and dismantle societal norms, structures, and systems that perpetuate gender-based inequalities.

#### **Example**

Consider a workplace where women consistently receive lower pay than their male counterparts for the same job roles. A feminist approach to social justice would involve advocating for equal pay for equal work, challenging gender biases in hiring and promotion processes, and addressing workplace cultures that contribute to gender-based discrimination. Feminist activists and organizations may work towards implementing policies and practices that ensure fair treatment and opportunities for women, ultimately contributing to a more just and equitable society.

#### **4. Explain the Three (3) main fields of Philosophy: Epistemology, Metaphysics, and Ethics.**

**Ans:-** The three main fields of philosophy—Epistemology, Metaphysics, and Ethics—address different aspects of human understanding, reality, and morality.

Here's a brief explanation of each:

##### **1. Epistemology**

**Definition:-** Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the nature, scope, and limits of human knowledge. It investigates questions related to belief, truth, justification, and the nature of knowledge itself.

**Key Questions:-** Epistemologists ask questions like: What is knowledge? How do we acquire knowledge? What are the criteria for justified belief? Can we trust our senses and reasoning processes? How does belief relate to truth?

##### **2. Metaphysics**

**Definition:-** Metaphysics is concerned with the nature of reality and existence. It explores the fundamental nature of being, the structure of reality, and the relationships between objects and their properties. Metaphysics often delves into questions about time, space, causation, identity, and the nature of existence itself.

**Key Questions:-** Metaphysical inquiries include: What is the nature of reality? Does a particular thing exist independently of our perception of it? What is the relationship between mind and body? Are there fundamental substances or building blocks of reality?

##### **3. Ethics**

**Definition:-** Ethics is the branch of philosophy that deals with questions of morality and how individuals should conduct themselves in the moral realm. It examines concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, and the principles that govern human behavior.

**Key Questions:-** Ethical questions include: What is the nature of moral value? How should we determine what is right or wrong? Are there objective moral principles, or is morality subjective? How should we make ethical decisions, and what are the consequences of our actions?

## **5. Explain Atheism. Explain the difference between an atheist and a religious person.**

**Ans:-** Atheism is the absence or rejection of belief in the existence of gods or deities. Atheists are individuals who do not subscribe to any form of theism or belief in a higher power. The term can encompass a range of perspectives, from those who actively assert that gods do not exist to those who simply lack belief in any deity due to a lack of evidence.

The key difference between an atheist and a religious person lies in their beliefs regarding the existence of a higher power or deity:

**1. Atheist:-** An atheist does not believe in the existence of gods or deities. Atheism is not a unified belief system; it is a lack of belief in the supernatural.

**2. Religious Person:-** A religious person, on the other hand, adheres to a particular religious faith or belief system that includes the worship of one or more deities. Religious beliefs often involve specific doctrines, rituals, and moral codes that guide the adherent's understanding of the divine and their place in the world.

It's important to note that within both the atheist and religious categories, there is considerable diversity. Atheists may hold different philosophical perspectives, and religious individuals may follow various faiths with distinct beliefs and practices.

Some atheists may be secular humanists, skeptics, or agnostics, each with its own nuanced stance on the question of the divine. Likewise, religious individuals may follow different religions (e.g., Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism) and interpret their beliefs in various ways.

The diversity of perspectives within both atheism and religious belief makes it crucial to approach these discussions with an understanding of the individual's specific beliefs and values rather than making broad generalizations.

## SECTION C: CRITICAL ESSAYS

Answer ONE (1) question only.

**1. A neurophysiologist, while establishing correlations between brain functions and the feeling of pain, wonders whether the 'mind' is distinct from the 'brain'. Explain your view with an example.**

**Ans:-** The question of whether the mind is distinct from the brain is a longstanding debate in philosophy and neuroscience. While I don't have personal views, I can present different perspectives on this matter. Here are some points to consider:

### 1. Physical vs. Non-Physical Aspect

**Mind-Brain Identity Theory:-** This perspective argues that the mind and the brain are one and the same. Mental states, such as thoughts and emotions, are identical to specific brain states. For example, if a person experiences pain, the corresponding neural activity in the brain is the pain itself.

**Dualism:-** This perspective suggests a clear distinction between the mind and the brain. Dualists argue that the mind and consciousness are non-physical entities separate from the physical brain. The mind interacts with the brain but is not reducible to it.

### 2. Neurobiological Basis of Mental Processes

**Brain Localization:-** Many neuroscientists emphasize the relationship between specific brain regions and particular mental functions. For instance, the amygdala is associated with emotions, and damage to this area can impact emotional experiences, supporting the idea that the mind is closely tied to the physical brain.

**Emergent Properties:-** Some argue that the mind emerges from the complexity of neural networks and their interactions. This perspective acknowledges the physical basis of the mind but emphasizes that the mind is more than the sum of its individual neural components.

### 3. Consciousness and Subjectivity

**First-Person Experience:-** Dualists often highlight the subjective nature of consciousness, arguing that the qualitative aspects of our experiences (such as the redness of an apple) cannot be fully explained by the physical processes in the brain alone. The mind, in this view, adds a subjective layer to the purely physical processes of the brain.

**Neural Correlates of Consciousness:-** Neuroscientists seek to identify the neural correlates of consciousness, trying to link specific brain activities to conscious experiences. While this approach supports the idea that consciousness is closely tied to brain function, it doesn't necessarily resolve the question of whether the mind is distinct from the brain.

### 4. Examples

**Phantom Limb Pain:-** In cases of phantom limb pain, individuals may experience pain in a limb that has been amputated. The brain is still generating sensations of pain even though the physical limb is no longer present. This phenomenon raises questions about the relationship between the mind's experience of pain and the physical status of the brain.

**Brain Injuries and Personality Changes:-** Cases of personality changes following brain injuries or lesions suggest a close connection between the mind and the brain. Damage to specific brain regions can lead to alterations in behavior, emotions, and cognitive functions, implying that these aspects of the mind are closely tied to the brain.

In conclusion, the debate over the relationship between the mind and the brain is complex and multifaceted. The examples and perspectives presented above highlight the ongoing exploration within neuroscience and philosophy to understand the nature of consciousness and the mind-brain connection.

**2. Explain "Free will". Give an example. Do outside forces like chance control lives? Give an example.**

**Ans:-** "Free will" is a philosophical concept that refers to the ability of individuals to make choices and decisions freely, independent of any external influences or determinism. It suggests that individuals have the power to act according to their own intentions and beliefs, without being constrained by factors beyond their control.

An example of free will can be seen in everyday decision-making. For instance, when a person decides what career to pursue, whom to be friends with, or what hobbies to engage in, they are exercising their free will. These decisions are often guided by personal values, preferences, and individual experiences, highlighting the autonomy individuals have in shaping their lives.

On the other hand, the extent to which external forces like chance or deterministic factors control lives is a complex and debated issue. Some argue that external factors, such as genetics, upbringing, and societal influences, can significantly impact one's choices and behaviors, limiting the scope of free will. Others maintain that individuals can still make meaningful decisions despite external influences.

An example of external forces affecting lives could be the role of chance or unforeseen events. For instance, someone might randomly encounter a life-changing opportunity, like meeting a mentor or stumbling upon a job opening. Conversely, an unexpected accident or health issue could disrupt one's plans, emphasizing the role of chance in influencing life events.

Ultimately, the debate about free will and the impact of external forces on individuals' lives continues to be a complex and nuanced topic in philosophy, psychology, and other disciplines. Different perspectives exist, and the interplay between personal agency and external influences is a subject of ongoing exploration and discussion.

**3. The release of Chat GPT less than six months ago has shown the capabilities of AI, which takes information and constructs content after receiving a question from a user. Explain your views by giving THREE (3) reasons if it is morally wrong for a student to use Chat GPT when preparing an assignment.**

**Ans:-** While the use of ChatGPT or similar AI tools can be beneficial in various contexts, there are ethical concerns associated with students relying solely on such tools when preparing assignments. Here are three reasons why it might be considered morally wrong:

### **1. Plagiarism and Academic Integrity**

Dependence on ChatGPT without proper understanding and attribution can lead to unintentional plagiarism. If students use the generated content without thoroughly reviewing and acknowledging the source, they may present someone else's work as their own. This undermines the principles of academic integrity, as students are expected to produce original work to demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter.

### **2. Lack of Personal Learning and Development**

Using AI tools to generate content might hinder the student's personal learning and development. Assignments are not just about the final product; they are an opportunity for students to engage with the material, think critically, and enhance their cognitive skills. Relying solely on ChatGPT denies students the chance to grapple with concepts, conduct independent research, and develop their analytical and problem-solving abilities.

### **3. Erosion of Ethical Values**

Allowing AI to generate content without active engagement may contribute to a gradual erosion of ethical values. Learning involves not just the acquisition of information but also the development of a moral compass and ethical decision-making skills. By bypassing the effort required for academic tasks, students might inadvertently foster a mindset that prioritizes shortcuts over diligence, potentially impacting their ethical conduct in other areas of life.

In summary, while AI tools like ChatGPT can be powerful aids, it's crucial for students to use them responsibly, ensuring that the learning process and ethical considerations are not compromised. Balancing technology with genuine effort and understanding is essential for academic and personal growth.