

# What Is Philosophy?

## (1) What is Philosophy?

- Identify defining features of philosophy as a discipline
- Identify traditional areas of philosophy
- Explain the concepts of cognitive dissonance and belief perseverance.
- Explain the difference between knowledge, justified belief, and mere opinion.
- Explain the difference between *proving X* and *having evidence for X*.

## (2) Analyzing Arguments

- Describe and explain Plato's "Allegory of the Cave"
- Distinguish sentences, statements, propositions
- Identify simple and complex statements
- Identify premises and conclusions
- Identify necessary and sufficient conditions
- Identify and complete enthymemes

## (3) Extended Arguments

- Explain Russell's view of the value of philosophy
- Diagram extended arguments

## (4) Deductive Logic

- Define soundness and validity
- Use the method of counter-example to show invalidity:
  - alternate scenario method
  - substitution method
- Identify the basic forms of deductive arguments (and two invalid forms)
- Describe and evaluate Postman's point in his brief essay

## (5) Inductive Logic

- Distinguish inductive from deductive arguments
- Define cogency and strength
- Identify and evaluate different kinds of inductive argument
  - generalization
  - authority
  - analogy
  - hypothetical induction

## (6) The Ethics of Belief

- Explain and evaluate the highlights of Clifford's essay
  - his thesis
  - Justified beliefs vs true beliefs
  - Beliefs and their consequences
  - What duties we have with respect to our beliefs.
- Distinguish "a reason for P's truth" (being justified in

believing P) from "a proof of P's truth" (knowing that P is true).

## (7) Plato's *Apology*

- Describe the beginning of philosophy with the Presocratics
  - Appearance and reality
  - Naturalism
- Compare Socrates and the Sophists
  - Who were the sophists?
  - Why was Socrates thought to be a sophist?
  - How did they differ?
- Recognize and describe Socratic irony
- Describe and evaluate Socrates' understanding of the philosophical way of life
  - The nature and value of truth
  - The human epistemic condition
  - The philosopher's role in society
- Discuss the relationship of Sartre's short story to Plato's *Apology*

## (8) Plato's *Meno*

- Describe each of the three levels of reading Plato
  - As a piece of literature
  - Substantive claims
  - Methodological claims
- Describe the various substantive claims made in the *Meno*:
  - difference between knowledge and "true belief",
  - the Theory of Forms,
  - the Learner's Paradox,
  - the Theory of Recollection
- Describe the various methodological claims made in the *Meno*:
  - defining one's terms,
  - the benefits of the *elenchus*,
  - the hypothetical method.

## (9) Plato's *Euthyphro*

- Describe these substantive claims made in the *Euthyphro*:
  - anthropomorphism
  - religious epistemology
  - religion and morality
- Describe these concepts related to the nature of definition:
  - Necessary and sufficient conditions (see §4 for review)
- Describe the proper form of a definition (and the way in which the other forms fail)
  - Ostensive definition
  - Definition by subclass
  - Definition by superclass
  - Definition by genus and difference