

Study Guide: Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume (Spring 2020)

You can use your notes and the primary texts when writing this exam. Please cite these texts when attributing claims to the various philosophers.

[I will ask you to write a more developed essay on one of the following comparative questions. You will not have a choice, so be prepared to write on all of these.]

1. Give an overview of the accounts of substance provided by Locke, Berkeley, and Hume.
2. Imagine the following: “While napping under an apple tree, an apple falls and strikes you on the head, waking you up. You then eat the apple.” Tell the story three times: First, as a laconic Lockean; second, as a beseeching Berkeleyan; third, as a humorous Humean. Be concise and to the point.
3. What is an idea, according to Hobbes, Locke, Descartes, Berkeley, and Hume — and how are these ideas connected with reality?

[You should be able to write a brief paragraph on each of the following. I will expect you to answer five or six of the following, from a set of choices.]

4. What did Bacon mean by an “idol of the mind,” and which idols did he think most prevalent and in need of correction or avoidance?
5. How did Hobbes understand science, or scientific knowledge? Compare this with other kinds of knowledge.
6. Briefly describe Hobbes’ philosophy of nature, and his account of sensory experience.
7. Briefly explain Hobbes’ “Social Contract” theory.
8. What did Locke mean by the “historical, plain method”?
9. What was Locke’s account of the origin, extent, and certainty of human knowledge?
10. Give Locke’s account of abstract ideas, and Berkeley’s rejection of the same.
11. What is Locke’s account of simple and complex ideas?
12. Distinguish Locke’s account of real and nominal essence.
13. Briefly describe what Locke called primary, secondary, and tertiary qualities. Why does he take such pains to distinguish qualities and ideas?
14. What are Berkeley’s criticisms of Locke’s account of qualities and ideas?
15. Describe and evaluate the “representational theory of ideas.”
16. What does “*esse est percipi vel percipere*” mean? How does Berkeley defend this slogan?
17. Why does Berkeley reject the existence of matter? Compare his conception of matter with that of Descartes and Locke.
18. How does Berkeley prove the existence of God?
19. What was Hume’s account of perception? How do impressions and ideas differ?
20. Explain Hume’s problem of induction.
21. How does Hume distinguish “matters of fact” and “relations of ideas”? To what use does he put this distinction?
22. Explain and briefly evaluate Hume’s naturalism.
23. Explain Hume’s account of our idea of “power, force, energy, or necessary connexion”.