

Sample Exam Questions

[Note: Questions with an asterisk (*) can also be found on the student Learning Link site for this title.]

PART I: PHILOSOPHY

Bertrand Russell, “The Value of Philosophy”

Essay Questions

- 1) Explain why and in what respect Russell thinks that philosophy is importantly different from other fields of inquiry.
- 2) How does Russell argue that philosophy is a “good of the mind”?
- 3) According to Russell, what is the value of “speculative interest,” and how does philosophy help to keep it alive?

Multiple-Choice Questions

- *1. According to Russell, science is valuable *primarily* for . . .
 - a. Its effects on mankind in general
 - b. Its effects on the student
 - c. The technology it produces
 - d. None of the above

2. Which of the following best characterizes what Russell means by the “practical man prejudice”?
 - a. Overlooking the value of philosophy
 - b. Taking science to be the only valuable subject to study
 - c. Taking philosophy to be the only valuable subject to study
 - d. Overlooking the fact that the goods of the mind are as important as the goods of the body

- *3. According to Russell, philosophy aims at which of the following types of knowledge?
 - a. The kind that gives unity and system to the body of the sciences
 - b. The kind that results from a critical examination of the grounds of prejudices and beliefs
 - c. All of the above
 - d. None of the above

4. According to Russell, philosophy doesn’t give definite answers to its questions because . . .

- a. As soon as definite knowledge is possible, the subject ceases to be called philosophy
- b. Part of the value of philosophy is its uncertainty
- c. The kinds of questions it asks must remain insoluble
- d. (a) and (c)

*5. According to Russell, the “man who has no tincture of philosophy” . . .

- a. Takes the world to be definite, finite, and obvious
- b. Contemptuously rejects unfamiliar possibilities
- c. Goes through life imprisoned by local prejudices
- d. All of the above

6. Which of the following isn't a reason Russell offers as to why philosophy is valuable?

- a. It keeps alive our sense of wonder.
- b. It increases our knowledge as to what may be
- c. It allows one to rationally defend one's personal aims
- d. Contemplating philosophical subjects enlarges one's Self

*7. According to Russell, what is the problem with philosophies that assimilate the world to Man?

- a. They aren't actually philosophies
- b. They impair any attempt at forming a union between the Self and not-Self
- c. They diminish our feeling of certainty
- d. There is no such problem, according to Russell

8. For Russell, the “free intellect” . . .

- a. Will see without a here and a now
- b. Values abstract and universal knowledge
- c. Disvalues knowledge in which one's personal history factors
- d. All of the above

*9. According to Russell, which of the following is a benefit of making one's mind accustomed to freedom and impartiality

- a. That one will become more free and impartial in the world of action and emotion
- b. That one will be able to live a materially comfortable life
- c. That one will be better fit to find out the Truth in all philosophical matters
- d. That one will be able to recognize right from wrong

10. Philosophy, for Russell, is to be studied . . .

- a. For the sake of finding definite answers to questions of human interest
- b. For the sake of finding the answers one needs to go on in this world
- c. For the sake of the questions themselves
- d. For the sake of improving the world

Multiple-Choice Answers

1. a

2. d
3. c
4. a
5. d
6. c
7. b
8. d
9. a
10. c

True/False Questions

- *1. According to Russell, philosophy is valuable for the same reason science is valuable.
- *2. Russell holds that philosophy is valuable because of the answers it gives one to questions of human interest.
- *3. For Russell, man isn't the measure of all things.
- 4. A benefit of studying philosophy, according to Russell, is that it frees one from one's circle of private interests.
- 5. Russell contends that philosophy does not involve uncertainty, despite common thought.

True/False Answers:

1. F
2. F
3. T
4. T
5. F

Plato, "Apology: Defence of Socrates"

Essay Questions

- 1) What activity is Socrates referring to when he says that he has gone around "examining" the citizens of Athens?
- 2) How does Socrates reconcile the claim that he is the wisest person with the claim that he knows nothing?
- 3) Reconstruct and evaluate Socrates' argument that it is not rational to fear death.

Multiple-Choice Questions

- *1. Evenus is a . . .
 - a. Craftsman
 - b. Poet
 - c. Sophist

d. Politician

2. According to the oracle at Delphi . . .

- a. Socrates would be tried by Athens
- b. Socrates would be found innocent
- c. Socrates would be condemned to death
- d. There is no one wiser than Socrates

*3. Why does Socrates take himself to be wiser than the people he interviews?

- a. He finds he knows more than they do
- b. He finds they aren't as good at arguing as he is
- c. He finds they think they know things they don't actually know, and he doesn't
- d. He finds they are unjust

4. After hearing the oracle's answer, Socrates goes around Athens and interviews . . .

- a. Politicians
- b. Poets
- c. Craftspeople
- d. All of the above

*5. Socrates stands charged of . . .

- a. Obstructing justice
- b. Corrupting the youth
- c. Murder
- d. All of the above

6. According to Socrates' analogy, Athens is like a _____ and he is like a _____.

- a. horse; gadfly
- b. gadfly; horse
- c. teacher; student
- d. student; teacher

*7. Why doesn't Socrates try to gain sympathy from his jury?

- a. He doesn't believe it will work
- b. He doesn't have children, or anything which can gain him sympathy
- c. He believes he should only be acquitted on the basis of justice and the law
- d. All of the above

8. After being found guilty, what alternative punishment does Socrates ultimately suggest?

- a. A fine of 1 Mina
- b. A fine of 30 Minas
- c. Exile
- d. Imprisonment

- *9. After being condemned to death, what is Socrates' prophecy?
- That Athens will decline after his death
 - That there will never be anyone as wise as he is
 - That after death he will be with heroes and wise people in Hades
 - That killing him will only bring more critics like him

10. According to Socrates, it is harder to avoid _____ than it is to avoid death.
- knowledge
 - wickedness
 - cowardice
 - truth

Multiple-Choice Answers

- c
- d
- c
- d
- b
- a
- c
- b
- d
- b

True/False Questions

- Socrates is found guilty and exiled from Athens.
- For Socrates, while justice is important, it is more important to protect your own life.
- Plato and other students of Socrates offer to pay a fine of 30 minas for him.
- Socrates argues that death is the most frightening thing possible, but he is ready to face it.
- Socrates finds that no one he interviews is wiser than he is, because everyone he interviews thinks they know something, even if they don't know it.

True/False Answers

- F
- F
- T
- F
- T

