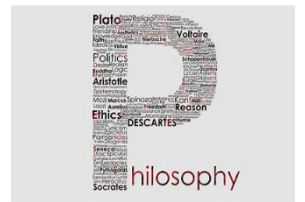


Philosophy Bridging Work



Welcome to Philosophy!

Well done for choosing Philosophy A Level! You've made a good choice! Philosophy is a fantastic course and I'm sure you will enjoy having your mind stretched and your assumptions about the world challenged. There is no doubt that it is a demanding course and you will need to be committed to working independently in order to be successful.

This bridging work will focus on introducing you to one of the units you will study in Y12. You will be directed to a number of videos to watch and a little bit of reading. You will need to not only answer the questions in this booklet, but also learn the information, because when we meet face to face in June, there will be a short quiz to see what you have learnt.

The unit we will focus on is called, 'Moral Philosophy'. This attempts to answer the question: what is the morally right thing to do in a situation? E.g. Should I steal from the rich to give to the poor? Should I lie to my mum when she asks if I like her new hat? Is it ever right to kill one person to save many more?

One of the most important answers to these questions comes from utilitarianism.

Task 1: Please find out the meaning of the word, 'hedonism', which you will need in the course. Use a dictionary or a google search to find out the meaning:

Hedonism:

Task 2: Now watch this short video introducing you to utilitarianism and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIK3T6MRs2k>

1. Who first put forward utilitarianism?
2. What is the underlying principle of utilitarianism? An action is right if it produces...
3. Bentham saw human behaviour as...
4. He believed human beings were naturally motivated by...

5. What were the 7 characteristics of the Hedonic Calculus:

| Its | Meaning |
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6. Jeremy Bentham's view is known as _____ Utilitarianism.

7. Think about this moral dilemma: you are on a boat. You see two people drowning in one area of the sea and one person drowning in another area of the sea. You don't have time to reach both places. What would utilitarianism say you should do? Why?

8. Think about this moral dilemma: Imagine ten sadists have captured an innocent person and they are torturing him. Imagine the pleasure the ten sadists is getting is outweighing the pain one innocent person is getting. According to act utilitarianism is this the right action? Why?

9. What two other problems are there with act utilitarianism?

10. Who founded rule utilitarianism?

11. In what way does rule and act utilitarianism agree?

12. In what two ways do rule and act utilitarianism differ?

13. Your friend is in your house. A psycho knocks on your door who wants to kill your friend and asks if your friend is in your house. How would a rule utilitarian respond? Why?

14. How might rule utilitarians get around this problem?

15. What is the problem with soft rule utilitarianism?

16. What is preference utilitarianism?

17. State two problems with preference utilitarianism.

Task 3: Utilitarianism is an ethical theory that only considers the consequences of an action. But is this right? A famous thought experiment was devised to investigate this idea: 'The Trolley Problem'. Now watch this video about the trolley problem and answer the questions underneath: [The Trolley Problem - YouTube](#)

18. Would an act utilitarian switch the lever to save the five people, even if it resulted in one being killed? Why?

19. Would you switch the lever to save the five people, even if it resulted in one being killed? Why?

20. Would an act utilitarian push the large person off the bridge to save the five people, even if it resulted in one being killed? Why?

21. Would you push the large person off the bridge to save the five people, even if it resulted in one being killed? Why?

Task 4: Please read some pages from this online textbook: [ch1 \(openbookpublishers.com\)](#). Chapter one starts by explaining what Hedonism is: it is basically the idea that something is good if it is pleasurable and bad if it is not pleasurable. Hedonism is the basis for utilitarianism because utilitarianism seeks to ensure the most number of people have the most pleasure. This assumes it is good to increase people's pleasure.

It feels intuitively obvious that pleasure is good. However, Nozick was not so sure. Read the section on 'Nozick's Experience Machine' and answer these two questions:

22. What is Nozick's Experience Machine?

23. What did Nozick's thought experiment about an experience machine seek to show?

Task 5: It would be beneficial for your success in this course to read more about utilitarianism in this textbook and make notes. It would be useful to read these sections:

- 4. The Foundations of Bentham's Utilitarianism
- 5. The Structure of Bentham's Utilitarianism
- 6. Hedonic Calculus
- 7. Problems with Bentham's Utilitarianism