



MARKSCHEME

November 2012

PHILOSOPHY

Higher Level and Standard Level

Paper 1

25 pages

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Note to examiners

This markscheme outlines what members of the paper setting team had in mind when they devised the questions. The topics listed in the bullet points indicate possible areas candidates might cover in their answers. They are not compulsory points and not necessarily the best possible points. They are only a framework to help examiners in their assessment. Examiners should be responsive to any other valid points or any other valid approaches.

Using the assessment criteria

Candidates at both Higher Level and Standard Level answer **one** question on the Core Theme (Section A).

Candidates at Higher Level answer **two** questions on the Optional Themes (Section B), each based on a different Optional Theme.

Candidates at Standard Level answer **one** question on the Optional Themes (Section B).

Answers on the Core Theme and the Optional Themes are assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on pages 4 to 5 and 8 to 9.

Paper 1 Section A assessment criteria**A Expression**

- Has the student presented the answer in an organized way?
- How clear and precise is the language used by the student?
- To what extent is the language appropriate to philosophy?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1	The student expresses some basic ideas but it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. The use of language is not appropriate to philosophy.
2	The student presents some ideas in an organized way. There is some clarity of expression but the answer cannot always be followed. The use of language is not always appropriate to philosophy.
3	The student presents ideas in an organized way and the answer can be easily followed. The use of language is appropriate to philosophy.
4	The student presents ideas in an organized and coherent way and the answer is clearly articulated. The use of language is effective and appropriate to philosophy.
5	The student presents ideas in an organized, coherent and incisive way, insights are clearly articulated and the answer is focused and sustained. The use of language is precise and appropriate to philosophy.

B Knowledge and understanding

- To what extent does the student demonstrate knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme?
- How well has the student understood the philosophical arguments and concepts used?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1	The student demonstrates a superficial knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme. There is only a basic understanding of the philosophical arguments and concepts used.
2	The student demonstrates some knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme. There is a limited understanding of the philosophical arguments and concepts used.
3	The student demonstrates satisfactory knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme. Philosophical arguments and concepts are satisfactorily understood.
4	The student demonstrates a good knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme, which is used effectively to support the answer. Philosophical arguments and concepts are largely understood.
5	The student demonstrates a comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of the philosophical issues arising from the core theme, which is used incisively to support the answer. Philosophical arguments and concepts are well understood.

C Identification and analysis of relevant material

- How clearly has the student identified a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme?
- To what extent does the student present and explore two different philosophical approaches to the issue arising from the core theme?
- How effectively does the student critically discuss the issue arising from the core theme?
- How effectively does the student identify and analyse relevant counter-arguments?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1–2	The student shows little awareness of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme and identifies relevant material in only a limited way. There is little analysis and few or no examples are given.
3–4	The student shows some awareness of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme and identifies some relevant material. Some appropriate examples are given.
5–6	The student shows an understanding of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme and explores two different philosophical approaches to the issue. There is a satisfactory analysis of the material. Examples are generally appropriate and give some support to the answer.
7–8	The student shows an effective understanding of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme. The student explores two different philosophical approaches to the issue in a convincing way. There is a compelling critical discussion of the issue. Examples are appropriate in their support of the answer. Counter-arguments are identified.
9–10	The student shows an in-depth understanding of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme. The student explores two different philosophical approaches to the issue in a convincing, engaging and thoughtful way. There is an incisive and compelling critical discussion of the issue. Examples are appropriate and effective in their support of the answer. Counter-arguments are identified and analysed in a convincing way.

D Development and evaluation

- Does the student develop the argument in a coherent way?
- How well does the student develop and evaluate ideas and arguments?
- To what extent does the student express a relevant personal response?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1–2	The student develops ideas and arguments in a basic way with little or no evaluation of them.
3–4	The student develops some ideas and arguments but the development is simple, or is asserted without support or reference. There may be some basic evaluation of the ideas and arguments but it is not developed.
5–6	The student develops ideas and arguments in a satisfactory way and evaluates them to some extent. There is some evidence of a relevant personal response.
7–8	The student develops ideas and arguments from a consistently held perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments is effective. There is good evidence of a relevant personal response.
9–10	The student develops ideas and arguments from a consistently held and well justified perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments is compelling or subtle, and convincing. There is strong evidence of a relevant personal response.

SECTION A

Core Theme: What is a human being?

1. Passage from the *Popul-Vuh*

This passage might encourage a reflection on the extent to which the relation with an origin or creator is a central distinctive feature of the human condition. Furthermore the stimulus opens a wide spectrum of issues related to human nature, human knowledge and the future of humanity.

Key Points

- Existentialism
- Non-Western approaches to the nature and origin of humans
- Nihilism
- Theism
- Humanism
- Determinism
- Gender issues in accounts of the human condition, including politics of relationships (*e.g.* reference to “wives”)
- The scientific view regarding the origin of humans
- Humans as imperfect beings
- Post-modern interpretations of the human condition
- An approach to society that reflects a “worldview” (not necessarily drawing on a classical philosophical school), *e.g.* cultural and local traditions
- Religious approaches to the nature and purpose of being human

Discussion

- Pessimism and optimism regarding the origin and destination of humanity
- Perhaps life has no sense. Does this devalue living and make life pointless?
- Is it a common human activity to search for the meaning of life?
- The issues of freedom and responsibility for our own existence
- Can humans be in charge of their own destiny? Is it possible that all aspects of life are predetermined?
- To what extent do we as human beings need narrations about ourselves?
- Is there any limit to the variety of interpretations a person might create?
- How central is gender to an understanding of what it is to be human?
- Is living one’s life a creative activity?
- Individual action and destiny *vs.* collective action and destiny
- Based upon our nature as humans, will we always know and understand the world and our human condition in an imperfect manner?
- Is the notion of a Higher Being necessary for an account of meaning in the human condition?
- The relationship between physical attributes and other facilities like speech, strength, and energy in an account of the nature of human beings

2. Picture

This picture invites an exploration of the human condition with regard to the construction of places in which to live, our bodily nature, living in societies, and our relationship with nature and its consequences. Moreover, it opens possibilities for discussion of aspects related to human creativity starting with its material dimensions, but also as a social and collective activity. It might also raise concerns regarding our relationship with the environment in contemporary societies.

Key Points

- Interpretations of the human condition: biological and social necessities; social conditioning
- The spatial dimension of our lives and intersubjectivity
- For some humans, life takes place “between earth and sky”
- Architecture and engineering as means of bringing a landscape into being
- Non-Western approaches to nature and our relation to it
- Basic emotions related to living in highly populated cities
- Existentialism
- Approaches to space, architecture, relation to nature that reflect a “worldview”, not necessarily drawing on a classical philosophical school, *e.g.* artistic or cultural perspectives
- Human beings in the present world; mass societies, the individual and the collective
- Artistic, social, political implications of technology in relation to the human condition
- Ideas of the state of nature and civilization
- Ways of inhabiting and living in urban and rural environments and their impact on the human condition
- The relationship between the individual and society
- The loss of individuality, alienation, isolation

Discussion

- Construction and inhabitation as the transformation or manipulation of nature (the existing physical, material, and biological environments) to satisfy human needs and goals
- Are we imprisoned by technological development?
- How do modern societies relate to nature?
- Environmental pollution as a result of human action
- The degrees and modes in which the architectural organization of our daily life might affect our lives and our understanding of ourselves
- Does pollution obscure our possibilities of living a different, better human life?
- The inevitability of human intervention in nature
- Is environmental pollution directly linked to, or the result of, specific social, political, economic systems?
- Do contemporary living spaces threaten individuality? How? Why?
- How can we understand our personal identity in a mass society?
- Does the planning of cities reflect the nature of human beings as individuals? *E.g.* Plato
- Does increasing urbanization suggest human beings are more at home as social animals in community than as individuals?

Paper 1 Section B assessment criteria

A Expression

- Has the student presented the answer in an organized way?
- How clear and precise is the language used by the student?
- To what extent is the language appropriate to philosophy?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1	The student expresses some basic ideas but it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. The use of language is not appropriate to philosophy.
2	The student presents some ideas in an organized way. There is some clarity of expression but the answer cannot always be followed. The use of language is not always appropriate to philosophy.
3	The student presents ideas in an organized way and the answer can be easily followed. The use of language is appropriate to philosophy.
4	The student presents ideas in a clear and organized way and the answer is clearly articulated. The use of language is effective and appropriate to philosophy.
5	The student presents ideas in an organized, coherent and incisive way, insights are clearly articulated and the answer is focused and sustained. The use of language is precise and appropriate to philosophy.

B Knowledge and understanding

- To what extent does the student demonstrate knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme?
- How well has the student understood the philosophical arguments and concepts used?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1	The student demonstrates a superficial knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. There is only a basic understanding of the philosophical arguments and concepts used.
2	The student demonstrates some knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. There is a limited understanding of the philosophical arguments and concepts used.
3	The student demonstrates satisfactory knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. Philosophical arguments and concepts are satisfactorily understood.
4	The student demonstrates a good knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme, which is used effectively to support the answer. Philosophical arguments and concepts are largely understood.
5	The student demonstrates a comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme, which is used incisively to support the answer. Philosophical arguments and concepts are well understood.

C Identification and analysis of relevant material

- How well has the student understood the specific demands of the question?
- To what extent does the student identify and analyse relevant supporting material?
- To what extent does the student provide appropriate examples and use them to support the overall argument?
- How effectively does the student identify and analyse relevant counter-arguments?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1–2	The student shows little understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies relevant supporting material in only a limited way. There is little analysis and few or no examples are provided.
3–4	The student shows some understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies and analyses some relevant supporting material. Some appropriate examples are provided.
5–6	The student shows a satisfactory understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies supporting material that is nearly always relevant. There is a satisfactory analysis of this material. The examples provided are generally appropriate and give some support to the overall argument.
7–8	The student shows an effective understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies relevant supporting material that is analysed in a sound and thoughtful way. The examples provided are appropriate in their support of the overall argument. Counter-arguments are identified.
9–10	The student shows an in-depth understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies supporting material that is always relevant. The implications of this material are analysed in detail. The examples provided are well chosen and compelling in their support of the overall argument. Counter-arguments are identified and analysed in a convincing way.

D Development and evaluation

- Does the student develop the argument in a coherent way?
- How well does the student develop and evaluate ideas and arguments?
- To what extent does the student express a relevant personal response?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1–2	The student develops ideas and arguments in a basic way with little or no evaluation of them.
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5–6	The student develops ideas and arguments in a satisfactory way and evaluates them to some extent. There is some evidence of a relevant personal response.
7–8	The student develops ideas and arguments from a consistently held perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments is effective. There is good evidence of a relevant personal response.
9–10	The student develops ideas and arguments from a consistently held and well justified perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments is compelling or subtle, and convincing. There is strong evidence of a relevant personal response.

SECTION B

Optional Theme 1: Grounds of epistemology

3. Evaluate the claim that reason is the only reliable source of knowledge.

This question invites an evaluation of the view that the use of reason is the only means to the acquisition of reliable knowledge.

Key Points

- The nature of reason and logical deduction and induction
- The elimination of the senses as a source of knowledge
- The elimination of revelation as a source of knowledge
- The consistency of knowledge claims based on reason
- *A priori* knowledge and certainty
- The link between reason and intuition; just “knowing” and the possession of “clear and distinct ideas”
- Knowledge by definition
- Self-evident truths
- The limits of reason in developing new knowledge
- Reason and analytic truths
- Necessary truths and contingent truths
- Cultural variations in approaches to the exclusive reliance on reason
- The relationship of reason to knowledge in the realms of morality and aesthetics
- The relationship between reason and metaphysics, *e.g.* ontological proofs
- The relationship of reason to absolutism and relativism
- Alternative ways of acquiring knowledge; experience, memory, authority, faith

Discussion

- Are eternal truths which become the bases for knowledge important?
- Do contingent truths have validity if they are beyond reason?
- Are human thought and reason powerful enough to think of everything?
- Does the variety of the interpretations of sense-data enrich our understanding of the world?
- Is reason culturally dependent? Do humans encode and decode differently?
- The limits of reason in relation to a scientific world and laws of nature
- Does empirically based knowledge have a complementary role alongside reason?
- Is *a priori* knowledge limiting?
- Does the world of maths, logical deduction, and self-evident truths lack richness?
- Might rational knowledge resolve the difficulties presented by relativism?
- Reason and folk traditions, religious thought, cultural variations
- The categories of reason and experience in Kant’s thought

4. Evaluate the claim that we reliably encounter the physical world as it really is.

This question invites an evaluation of various views on how we have any knowledge of the physical world and the associated problems related to these knowledge claims.

Key Points

- Problems of perception; assessing encounters with the physical world
- Is the world constructed by our minds or independent of us?
- Do we know ourselves to be part of the physical world?
- Qualities of the physical world that might be mind-constructed; the difference between primary and secondary qualities, representative theories of reality
- Abstract qualities such as beauty that might be dependent on the perceiver and not absolute/fixed in nature
- Naïve realism and the problem of illusion
- Causal theory; appearance as a sign of reality; the “real” can be directly encountered
- Idealist theories; only the ideas in our mind or those in the mind of God are real
- Phenomenalism and a world of representations
- Strong and weak realism; the physical world does exist but is unknowable; internal realism, e.g. perspectivalism
- The status of reality in sceptical empiricism
- Constructive conceptual frameworks or linguistic frameworks that establish a “world” that is public and agreed upon
- Nominalism; conceptualism; resemblance and representation
- The nature of matter
- Scepticism, relativism
- Transcendental idealism; a belief that there are real objects and we consciously apply *a priori* categories to our sensory information to construct a real world
- The relationship of sense-data to the need to verify our claims about a physical world

Discussion

- Can there be any certain knowledge of the physical world?
- How far can we be sure that our mental constructs approximate the physical world?
- What evidence is there that the physical world behaves according to laws?
- If we categorize the physical world, how do we know which categories are appropriate?
- Does scepticism have to produce a relativistic view of the world?
- Is it possible for sense-data to enable the construction of a consistent physical world given the limitations of the sense organs?
- Does language presuppose an agreed public world that we all encounter?
- If we all have different conceptual frameworks how can we have the same physical world? If we all have the same conceptual framework have we constructed it?
- Could conceptual frameworks be culturally biased? Could different cultures have constructed different physical worlds?
- If the common sense view of naïve realism is difficult to sustain, why is it the common sense view?

Optional Theme 2: Theories and problems of ethics

5. Evaluate the claim that humans have moral obligations towards non-humans.

This question invites an evaluation of whether humans have duties towards non-humans, including animals and the wider environment.

Key Points

- The differences between humans and non-humans
- Conscious choice making as a distinguishing human feature
- The differences between sentient and non-sentient entities
- The relationship of suffering to the notion of duties
- Rights and reason; a non-reasoning being might not warrant the granting of rights
- Personhood, humans and moral obligations
- Utilitarian views
- The value of life; measurements of the value of life; happiness, economic worth
- Deontological views
- Restrictions on human activity if we have obligations to a broad spectrum of non-humans
- Speciesism; the implications of having relationships with non-humans
- Autonomy and moral considerability
- Personification of non-humans
- Environmental rights; deep ecology and environmental obligations

Discussion

- Are there fundamental moral differences between humans and non-humans?
- Should we interpret the UN Declaration of Human Rights as applying to non-humans?
- Rights and obligations
- Is it reasonable to defend the rights of non-rational creatures?
- To what extent do dietary issues emerge as a result of granting rights to non-human beings? Would the killing of animals for food be outlawed? How do these issues impact on vegetarianism?
- Can liberty and integrity be attributed to non-humans?
- Do beings who cannot make moral decisions warrant moral consideration? Do entities that cannot make moral decisions warrant moral consideration?
- The recognition by some non-Western cultures of moral obligations towards non-humans
- How does the protection of human life outweigh the protection of lives of other creatures?
- On what basis might a hierarchy of non-human life forms establish the limits of moral obligations?

6. Evaluate the claim that moral progress is possible.

This question seeks an evaluation of the idea that there could be such a thing as moral progress.

Key Points

- The distinction between moral progress and making judgments of moral progress
- The nature of moral progress; treatment of others, increasing humaneness, increasing happiness, increasing awareness
- Does the development of rational thought lead to moral progress?
- Changes in moral understanding over time
- The impact of culture on moral judgments
- Greater information creating the possibility of increased levels of empathy with possible effects on moral understanding
- Consistency, coherence and universality
- Values as more than feelings and choices
- Conflicts with self-interest theories of ethics
- Applications of categorical imperatives
- The decline in belief in religious based morals and the growth in relativistic positions
- Utilitarian, deontological and virtue approaches; how might moral progress be measured?
- Multicultural differences contribute to moral progress
- Who judges when moral progress has occurred?

Discussion

- Is the idea of moral improvement relativistic? Does it deny the possibility of moral progress?
- Is rational behaviour always moral?
- Does increased information about consequences lead to moral progress?
- Does a diversity of moral values across cultures limit progress?
- Is it possible that some cultures are more advanced morally? What measures might exist to draw this conclusion? Might the idea that some cultures are more advanced morally be abused?
- How far is simple personal approval an indicator of progress and improvement in morals?
- Are moral actions purely relative? Are they dependent upon the individual and the circumstances? If so, is the idea of moral progress applicable?
- Are there contexts in which an understanding of moral progress is rejected? *E.g.* fundamentalism of any kind
- Is increasing our respect for others a way toward moral improvement?
- The issue and importance of tolerance
- Would a return to a dominance of religion produce moral improvement?
- Are some moral values better than others? If so, why? If not, why not?

Optional Theme 3: Philosophy of religion

7. To what extent is the distinction between moral evil and natural evil justifiable?

This question invites an evaluation of the success or otherwise of the distinction often made between moral evil and natural evil. Answers might challenge the assumption that such a distinction even exists.

Key Points

- The usual distinction between types of evil: natural evil, which is not the product of human agency, and moral evil, which is the product of human agency
- Inclement weather that causes crop failure and widespread starvation is an example of causal phenomena usually described as natural evil. Should such events be considered *evils* as against *bads*?
- Moral evil is characterized as a harm inflicted on sentient beings, *e.g.* murder, torture, enslavement, prolonged humiliation
- The distinction between natural evil and moral evil is not to be taken too sharply because human beings may act as natural causes, *e.g.* as carriers of diseases. Moreover, evil that results from natural causation may deserve moral condemnation, when those responsible failed to prevent it
- The idea of human nature. In moral discourse, choices or actions may be qualified as “inhuman”, “unnaturally cruel”, or “morally unreasonable”. In political discourse, proposals, policies or conduct may be described as violations of “human rights”. In international law, actions may be described as “crimes against humanity”. Do these ideas have any connection with the characterization of evils?
- Interpretations of moral evil, *e.g.* as a deviation from the good, as illusory, as a necessary contrast for the existence of the good
- The idea that moral evil does exist, and it is the result of common human vices

Discussion

- God and the existence of evil
- Is it legitimate to speak of “natural” evil? Is it not the case that evil entails will?
- If one argues that there is a human nature or a natural law, the concept of natural evil might be seen from quite a different angle
- Evil and non-theistic religious traditions
- Non-Western perspectives on evil
- The extent to which the notion of evil depends on a religious approach to human life
- Is it useful to distinguish between evil and suffering?
- The denial of the existence of evil in monistic traditions
- Possible explanations for the existence of evil from soul-making to soul-deciding perspectives

8. To what extent might atheism be justified by rational argumentation?

The question asks for a discussion of reasons for atheism. Furthermore it also allows for a critical analysis of atheism.

Key Points

- Atheism: the affirmation of the non-existence of God or gods; it suggests positive disbelief
- An atheist as anyone who denies the existence of any sort of divine reality
- The idea of God presented by the monotheistic religions as a purely spiritual, supernatural being who is perfectly good, all-powerful, the all-knowing creator of everything, as the context for atheism
- To explain that the traditional arguments for the existence of God are inadequate would be required as part of a rational justification of atheism
- Classical arguments for the existence of God: the cosmological, ontological and teleological arguments
- Atheistic arguments for the non-existence of God: the argument from evil and suffering
- Atheists have contended that the idea of God is incoherent
- The growing power of science in explaining the origins and nature of the world
- The role of free will in supporting and denying the existence of God
- Subjectivist accounts of religious belief (*e.g.* within existentialist traditions)

Discussion

- Since many different gods have been objects of belief, might one be an atheist with respect to one god while believing in the existence of some other god?
- The issue of pluralism and reasons for rejecting belief in God or gods
- The validity and soundness of arguments for atheism
- Should a distinction be drawn between criticizing the idea of God and criticizing aspects of religions, no matter how important these might be?
- Does the existence of evil provide a moral justification for disbelief in God? Can such moral justifications be considered rational arguments?
- Is it possible to demonstrate the non-existence of anything?
- Statements purportedly about God, including the statement, “God does not exist”, are simply cognitively meaningless
- Comparison between Western and non-Western reasons for atheism
- The struggle between atheism and theism; the theistic insistence on an agential explanation of various natural phenomena, including the existence of the universe
- The development of natural sciences and critical social theories and their impact on belief in God
- How has neuro-theology and neuro-philosophy impacted on both theism and atheism?
- The distinction between agnosticism and atheism; the distinction between atheism and anti-theism

Optional Theme 4: Philosophy of art

9. Evaluate the claim that the fundamental criterion by which works of art should be judged is the contribution they make to society.

This question asks for an evaluation of one of the criteria by means of which art may be judged. It allows for an evaluation of the relationship between art and the society in which the art is produced. It also allows for an evaluation of the roles other criteria might play in the evaluation of art in society.

Key Points

- What artists do cannot be seen in isolation from the society in which they work
- Art functions for social and political utility
- Art is generally received and judged according to a society's ethos
- Art exists, is used, and is evaluated in relation to the religion(s), moral values, ideologies, scientific perspectives and philosophies operative in a society
- Art impacts upon and is impacted by the personal and social aspects of a society and its members; art as a cause of change
- Art contributes to the sense of unity and the feeling of community in a society
- Marxists see the value of art in its function to serve the revolution by reflecting socio-economic laws which underpin class struggle
- Art as propaganda and manifestation of ideology
- Art promotes bourgeois and decadent values and perspectives
- Art for art's sake vs. art as mouthpiece for societal norms
- Art as a political tool; art as power; art as a moral force
- Art and inspiration

Discussion

- Must art have a function?
- Is art useful?
- Does art ever have a function over and above that of being the object of aesthetic experience?
- Should art contribute to national or societal identity?
- Should art serve society? If so, does this entail censorship and control?
- Should art support ideologies and/or power structures? If so, how and when?
- Under what conditions, if any, can art maintain independence from the society in which it is produced?
- Is one of the contributions of art to society that of promoting progress and development? Change? Revolution?
- Should art contribute to society by making its ethos and values more understandable?
- Should art contribute to the improvement and efficiency of the material aspects of a society?
- Should art contribute to societies around the world in similar fashions?
- Should art be judged as being separate from, and contributing to, society?
- Is there an epistemic distance in properly appreciating art?

10. To what extent is the imitation of reality the essential function of visual art?

This question asks for an assessment of one of the essential aspects of visual art. This might include an assessment of the relationship between a work of visual art and objective reality. It allows for comments on the interpretation of visual art and on the various ways in which visual art can operate or function in a society or culture.

Key Points

- Visual art does not have only one purpose or function
- Visual art involves some form of imitation
- Platonic view of art as imitation: copies of copies where art is doubly removed from true reality, e.g. mimesis
- Aristotelian view of art as imitation: art as the representative appeal to real life via the mind and emotions
- Neo-Platonic view of art as imitation, e.g. fine art invites and involves the contemplation of divine ideas
- Renaissance view of artists reproducing ideals and abstract notions in visual form of, for example, sculpture and painting
- Imitation in the visual arts vs. imitation in music, literature, performing arts *etc.*
- Imitation as common characteristic vs. imitation as criterion of value vs. imitation as prime function
- Imitation as convincing illusion: *trompe l'oeil*
- Imitation requires a recognition of resemblance and an appreciation of conventions
- Imitation in art: seeing as vs. seeing in
- Imitation and imagination: combining the sensory, rational and emotive operations of the viewer
- Imitation and emotive and non-cognitive aspects of the aesthetic experience
- Does art construct “reality” rather than copy or describe it?

Discussion

- Should visual art imitate or represent reality? Can it do this? To what extent?
- Should visual art imitate or represent invisible realities, for example, love?
- Should visual art redefine reality through its representation of it? Can it do that if reality is objective?
- Are all works of visual art imitative? Should they be? Why or why not?
- Is artistic imitation or representation a matter of convention?
- Is what is imitated in visual art limited to what is received from sense perception?
- What is the aesthetic value of visual art if it is the static imitation or representation of reality?
- Are the imitative or representational aspects of visual art the same across cultures? Multicultural views of visual art
- Might a work of visual art be equally successful in imitation, expression, execution and purpose?
- To what extent does inspiration play a role in imitation and representation in visual art?
- Installation art

Optional Theme 5: Political philosophy

11. Evaluate the claim that the citizen has a duty to obey the state.

This question asks for an evaluation of the obligations a citizen has with regard to the state of which he or she is a citizen. The question invites an analysis of the notions of the state and its authority over its citizens as well as an exploration of the notion of citizenship. An evaluation of the notions of law and legal obligation might be included.

Key Points

- The notion of citizenship and civic responsibilities
- The state as sovereign authority: the right of action to issue orders; the right to have the orders obeyed
- Citizens have prudential obligation: coercive power of the state and the fear of punishment
- Citizens have obligations emerging from a sense of moral duty
- Prudential obligation highlights self-concern and strategic reasoning
- Moral obligation highlights good citizenship and virtuous character
- Moral and prudential obligation rest on freedom of choice and civic responsibility
- Social contract theories: duty to obey laws based upon implicit promise
- Contract of citizenship: acceptance of obligations in exchange for benefits
- Contract of community: relinquishing of individualism for communal protection by law
- Contract of government: relinquishing of informal community for organized governmental protection by law
- Theories of consent: collective consent legitimizes civil obligation of all
- Theories of general will: laws are obeyed since they represent the will of all
- Theories of justice: obey laws since they provide for equitable distribution of all benefits and burdens
- Social theories, *e.g.* Hobbes, Rousseau

Discussion

- Does citizenship imply obligations? Why? How?
- To what extent can a state claim authority over its citizens?
- Does civil responsibility give rise to moral obligations?
- Under what conditions ought a citizen choose to disobey the laws of a state?
- Can there be conditions in which a citizen has no choice but to obey the laws of a state?
- What recourse does a citizen have if the laws of a state interfere with the rights and privileges of good citizenship?
- Do social contract theories justify the force of law in a state?
- The notions of citizenship, civil obedience and disobedience in different cultures
- How do the notions of citizenship, the state and obedience to laws operate in a global context?

12. “Sovereignty entails taking decisions and settling disputes within a political system independent from external powers and with final authority over all citizens.” Discuss and evaluate.

This question asks for a discussion and evaluation of the notion of sovereignty and its relation to territorial integrity, political and legal authority and the supremacy and independence of the state amongst, and in relation to, other states.

Key Points

- Sovereignty as the highest power in a political hierarchy and the obligation of obedience
- Sovereignty as the final or ultimate power in a political system
- Sovereignty and the quality of generality over all actions of a group
- Sovereignty as the highest competence in all legislative, executive and judicial matters
- Sovereignty and the autonomy of other agents or powers
- Sovereignty and legitimate authority structures
- Sovereignty of the ruler *vs.* sovereignty of the law
- Sovereignty and the social contract, the general will and tacit and explicit consent
- Sovereignty embodied in the state, in an individual and in the collectivity
- Sovereignty and the promotion of the interests of the state
- Sovereignty and territoriality: geographic integrity *vs.* expansionist policies
- Absolute *vs.* non-absolute sovereignty
- Internal *vs.* external sovereignty; internal respect *vs.* external recognition
- *De jure* and *de facto* notions of sovereignty
- Sovereignty and the Treaty of Westphalia

Discussion

- Is sovereignty still a relevant political notion in the contemporary political climate?
- Should international law apply to individual sovereign nations?
- Can sovereignty be understood in a limited manner? *E.g.* the European Union
- Should sovereignty stand in the way of notions of civil, political and human rights?
- Can smaller political groups and minorities survive the power structures of a sovereign state?
- Can sovereignty operate in a democratic state? How?
- Does the sovereignty of a state override the sovereignty of political institutions within the state?
- Should sovereignty be redefined in an international and/or global political context?
- Can political sovereignty ever belong to the people rather than to the executive?
- What political arrangement could allow sovereign states to maintain internal and external sovereignty in a peaceful manner?
- Do citizens owe full allegiance and obedience to the sovereign power of their state?

Optional Theme 6: Non-Western traditions and perspectives

13. With reference to one or more of the non-Western traditions and perspectives you have studied, explain and discuss the philosophical understanding of the individual.

This question invites an explanation and discussion of one of the basic understandings at the heart of different non-Western traditions and perspectives. The responses can investigate both the ontological approaches to the individual and the possible ethical and societal perspectives that arise.

Key Points

- The relation of the self to the notion of the individual; some perspectives denying self while acknowledging the existence of the individual
- The relation of individuals to the general; the sharing of/participating in a natural or supernatural essence
- The nature of the individual; issues of soul, spirit, intelligence
- The Buddhist conception of the individual as a being with desire and comprised of basic elements of nature; *annata* – the non-existence of the soul
- The illusory nature of the separateness of the individual in relation to the rest of nature/creation
- The relation of the self to the individual (denial of self in some traditions, emergence of self in others)
- The view of the individual in traditions which deny the self
- The evolution of individual identity in relation to the community
- Individual responsibilities; to neighbours, to the environment, to divine beings and other supernatural beings and/or phenomena
- The comparative lack of emphasis on social structures in favour of the enlightenment of individuals
- Ancestral and tribal traditions

Discussion

- The distinction between the individual and the universal in the tradition(s) studied
- Community and social implications of the idea of the individual in the traditions studied
- The immanence of the divine and the consequences for an understanding of the individual
- The individual and enlightenment; the road to enlightenment being within
- Does the understanding of the individual affect the view of salvation?
- Ethical implications of the responsibility of individuals for evil acts as opposed to social deprivation or other external factors
- Does the view of the individual hamper or help adaptations to modern globalized society?
- Modern notions of individualism arising principally in the West; has globalization forced a new individualism on non-Western traditions?

14. With reference to one or more of the non-Western traditions and perspectives you have studied, explain and discuss teachings about the transmigration of the soul.

This question invites an explanation and discussion of a key part of the teachings of non-Western traditions, and other perspectives, according to which the soul travels to a new body (or eternity) following the destruction of the body. The teaching might also have an ethical element which could be discussed.

Key Points

- Transmigration in different traditions and perspectives
- The ethical and salvation implications of the law of *karma* (action)
- The social implications of the *karma* tradition and the caste system
- *Moksha* and liberation due to the eradication of negative *karma* or strenuous effort, *e.g.* *yoga*
- The release of the soul in different traditions
- The notion of *Brahman*
- Buddhist traditions which do not accept the existence of a soul but speak of a stream of being
- *Nirvana* and the nature of human life and continuity
- Salvation as release, as annihilation, as nothingness
- Australian indigenous beliefs in the ancestor continually being reborn in infants
- Ancestral traditions in indigenous American systems
- Animal possession of sacred souls which are reincarnated, *e.g.* Indonesia

Discussion

- Social and ethical implications of the tradition or perspective studied in light of the teaching on salvation
- The issue of the possibility of memory of past incarnations
- The continuity of the person; can identity be preserved if souls transmigrate to new bodies?
- The relation of the soul to the body
- Death in the traditions or perspectives
- Non-material substance in different traditions and perspectives; does it fail the test of modern inductive science?

Optional Theme 7: Contemporary social issues

15. “We get the media we deserve.” Discuss and evaluate.

This question invites a discussion and evaluation of the issues raised in the modern world by the media. Responses might explore not just the traditional areas of print and broadcast media, but also discuss the emergence of new web-based media generated by users themselves in social networks or other on-line activity.

Key Points

- The implications for interaction and understanding from the composition of the modern media
- Traditional sources of media and new web-based and mobile technology applications
- Possible interpretations of the assumption of the question: sceptical or respectful judgments of the activity and role of the media
- The implications of private, corporate and state ownership of media
- The connections between the purchasers of media and the providers
- The media and globalization
- The media, commerce and the “free market”; advertising
- Possible motivations and objectives of the modern media
- New forms of media, *e.g.* Wikipedia, Youtube, Facebook
- Holding the media to account
- The media influence on understanding, especially of values

Discussion

- The role of technology in the modern media; has excessive power become invested in those with technological expertise?
- The reasonable limits of media interest; private lives of celebrities, critical exposure of political figures, private lives of public figures *etc.*
- Does the media have an impact on our view of social justice?
- Can any system of regulation be imposed that would not be accused of censorship? *E.g.* consider regulation of media in periods of war
- The objectivity of knowledge, the subjectivity in reporting it
- Media and politics
- Media monopolies
- Media personnel being representative of society
- What are the ethical aspects of media, media use and media dissemination?
- How can individuals or societies control, improve, select and/or adapt media?

16. To what extent should any human be concerned about the state of the environment his or her society passes on to its successors?

This question invites an assessment of the issues involved in the relationship of humans to the environment of the future. It might invite reflection on issues such as stewardship and responsibility and it might explore the nature of human activity and of human domination of the environment.

Key Points

- The relationship of humans to the environment
- The (possible) responsibility for the future; obligations to future people, non-humans and the environment
- Humans as stewards of nature
- Different ecological traditions and environmental approaches
- Moral responsibilities to the future – moral links over time
- Human use of non-human animals; extinction of species
- Deep ecology and the Gaia model of understanding
- Individual human beings and societal groupings and responsibilities
- The use of natural resources; the distribution of natural resources; the sufficiency of natural resources in the future
- Human innovation vs. human conservation
- Environmental ethics approaches
- Economic considerations and environmental ethics

Discussion

- Sentience and moral responsibility; are humans only responsible for other sentient beings?
- Waste and wastefulness
- Aesthetic considerations
- Technological bequests to future generations; the knowledge economy
- Examples of human environmental impacts; agriculture, mining, housing, recreation *etc.*
- The issue of relativism in ethical judgments over time and concerning a global issue
- The desire in some communities to preserve; the need in some communities to mine and “use” the environment
- Religious influences on understanding the management and handling of the environment
- Indigenous traditions’ emphasis on leaving the land for future generations, denying any sense of present ownership
- Do environmental issues carry any universal or trans-cultural obligations and responsibilities?

Optional Theme 8: People, nations and cultures

17. Evaluate the claim that culture is not only the materials a people create, and what they do with them, but is also about their ideas, feelings and expectations about themselves, others and the world in which they live.

This question invites an evaluation of those elements and components that might define culture. It allows for both an identification of culture in general, and for an application to a specific culture or cultures.

Key Points

- Culture as the totality of learned, socially transmitted behaviour: values, norms, customs, material objects, ideas, folkways, mores, taboos, laws, sanctions *etc.*
- Culture as a way of life or as a distinctive lifestyle
- Culture as shared context and/or perspective for inter-personal relationships
- Culture and religious, political, aesthetic, moral and ideological perspectives
- The interplay of culture and language, *e.g.* The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis
- Culture and ethnocentrism
- Understanding culture objectively: Max Weber and the *verstehen* approach; Marxists' economically grounded accounts of culture
- The development and evolution of culture: cultural innovation, cultural diffusion, cultural levelling, cultural universals
- Material and non-material aspects of culture: material human creations and abstract human creations
- Ideal culture *vs.* real culture: perspectives a society professes to hold *vs.* perspectives a society actually practises
- Cultural lag: the gap between change and adaptation to change in a culture
- Culture shock
- Variations within culture: multiculturalism, high culture, popular culture, counter-culture, sub-culture

Discussion

- Is it possible to identify all the components that constitute culture?
- Might culture account for the development and evolution of the human species?
- Is culture always a matter of conventionally shared perspectives or are there some absolute truths about culture?
- Is it possible to avoid ethnocentrism? How?
- Is it possible to develop a credible approach to cultural relativism? How?
- Can anyone ever understand a culture objectively?
- Are there any cultural universals?
- What is the impact of a tendency to promote a global culture on the integrity of specific cultures in the world?
- Is it possible to distinguish ideal from real culture?
- Will all cultures inevitably suffer from cultural lag as a result of the rapid pace of industrial and technological developments?
- Can the variations within a culture, such as counter-cultures and sub-cultures, survive the pressures put on them by the dominant cultural perspectives of a society?
- The influence of location on the possibility of shared culture, *e.g.* the Balkans, metropolises inhabited by different ethnic groups
- The ways in which cultural patterns of some groups are favoured over those of other groups

18. Evaluate the claim that nationalism and national character constitute the foundations of personal and social identity.

This question asks for an evaluation of the nature of nationalism, an examination of the role(s) of the notion of nationalism in defining national character and an exploration of the function(s) of nationalism in establishing identity.

Key Points

- Nationalism: sense of superiority, development and defence of one’s country and all supporting beliefs, values, ideologies
- Nationalism: commonalities in cultural and national characteristics, guided by a common ideology and driven by a common conception of national destiny; nationalism as basis for “imagined communities” (Benedict Anderson)
- Centrality of the nation in explaining historical developments and political situations
- Personal interests placed in service of the defence and advancement of the nation/state
- Nationalism ideologically legitimizes the establishment of the sovereign state which holds the highest, ultimate and final authority; is it a construct set up for this purpose of legitimization?
- Nationalism aligns political perspectives with national interests
- Nationalism and sentiments against any violation of national interest or sovereignty
- Nationalism establishes identity on cultural, ideological and material levels
- Nationalism emphasizes that national character differentiates people
- Nationalism and national character lead to national and political autonomy and independence
- Nationalism and the pursuit of national interests at the expense of the interests of other nations
- Nationalism and national character *vs.* internationalism and international character *vs.* globalism and global character
- Nationalism as a malign force: genocide, war-mongering *etc.*

Discussion

- Do all formulations of nationhood rest upon nationalism as the foundational ideology of identity?
- Does nationalism have a future in an international, multicultural, multi-ethnic global context?
- Is nationalism an inherently dangerous phenomenon?
- Is membership in a nation an essential value and good for every individual within the borders of that nation? Place of ethnic minorities? Place of racial minorities? Place of religious minorities?
- Are there positive aspects of nationalism?
- Does nationalism impede progress and development on the personal, social, cultural and material levels?
- Does nationalism annul personal identity? Cultural diversity? Ethnic plurality?
- What is the relation between nationalism and a nation’s religions?
- Can nationalism successfully define “national character”?
- Can “national character” define personal identity? Can it preserve personal integrity?
- What about “dual nationality”?
- Geographical influences on the development of national identities
- Might globalization impact on the phenomena of nationalism and national character?