

Questions to Prepare for the Final Exam

Berkeley

2. What is an object, like an apple, for Berkeley?
6. How does the notion of the independent existence of material objects depend on the doctrine of abstract ideas?
7. What kind of abstraction does Berkeley say we can perform? What can't we do, as regards abstraction?
10. Why can't our ideas of objects resemble material substance? How does this show the primary/secondary distinction to be unhelpful?
11. "In short, extension, figure, and motion, abstracted from all other qualities, are inconceivable" (§10, AW 449a). Explain. What does this show?
13. Explain Berkeley's argument against the primary qualities from the relativity of perceptions.
16. "In short, if there were external bodies, it is impossible we should ever come to know it; and if there were not, we might have the very same reasons to think there were that we have now" (§20, AW 451a). Explain.
21. What are laws of nature, according to Berkeley? Be specific. How do we learn them? Why are they useful?
32. "Colors, sounds, tastes, in a word, all those termed 'secondary qualities,' have certainly no existence without the mind. But by this acknowledgment I must not be supposed to derogate anything from the reality of matter or external objects..." (AW 464b). Explain. Who, besides Hylas, holds this view?
34. How does the example of the mite show the relativity of extension?
36. How does a microscope serve to show that the appearance of figure can change?
37. What is the relation between motion and time? How is time measured? What does this mean for motion?
43. "Consequently, the very same arguments which you admitted as conclusive against the secondary qualities are... against the primary, too" (AW 468a). Explain.
54. What "abuse of language" is a chief part of philosophical confusion?
55. How do we, supposedly, arrive at abstract ideas?
56. "But then whatever hand or eye I imagine, it must have some particular shape and color" (§10, AW 441a). Explain. How is this an argument against abstract ideas?
60. How does the notion of an abstract, general idea lead to a contradiction?
66. How does materialism lead to skepticism? How does idealism avoid skepticism?
75. Do we need matter to explain our perceptions? Explain.
86. "There is no such thing as the ten-thousandth part of an *inch*; but there is of a *mile* or *diameter of the earth*, which may be signified by that inch" (§127). Explain. How does this indicate the basic error of the notion of infinite divisibility, for Berkeley?
91. What does uniformity in nature show? What do blemishes in nature show?

Hume

4. "What was never seen or heard of, may yet be conceived, nor is anything beyond the power of thought except what implies an absolute contradiction" (§II, AW 539b). Explain.
7. How can we determine, according to Hume, whether a philosophical term is meaningless?
9. Distinguish relations of ideas from matters of fact. How do we learn propositions that are solely concerned with relations of ideas?
12. How do we learn to connect specific causes with their effects? How can we not learn this, according to Hume?
13. How does Hume argue that effects can not be discovered by examining their causes?
15. "Thus the observation of human blindness and weakness is the result of all philosophy..." (§IV.1, AW 544b). Explain. Why does Hume make this conclusion?
17. What do inferences about the future presuppose, as their foundation? Why can't experience establish this premise?
21. What is the role of custom, or habit, in our understanding of cause and effect?
28. How do we respond when a general cause and effect rule fails to apply in a particular instance? Do we assume that nature is irregular?
35. Distinguish conjunction from connection. Of which do we have knowledge?
36. Why do we call some objects causes and others effects? What gives us the feeling that there is a connection between the two?
39. Regarding their determinacy, how do human actions differ from physical interactions?
40. How does Hume define liberty? How does this definition make the debate over free will merely verbal?
41. Is liberty the opposite of necessity or constraint? Explain.
63. "The great subverter of Pyrrhonism or the excessive principles of scepticism, is action, and employment, and the occupations of common life" (§XII.2, AW 597b). Explain.
67. Do we have an idea of our selves? What do we think about when we think about our selves?
68. What is the self? How is the self an exemplar of diversity?
70. "Every distinct perception which enters into the composition of the mind is a distinct existence and is different and distinguishable and separable from every other perception, either contemporary or successive" (AW 529b). Explain. What does this mean for personal identity?

Kant

5. Does our cognition conform to objects, or do objects conform to our cognition? Explain. Consider Copernicus's revolution.
7. Why are topics like God, freedom, and immortality inaccessible to reason? How does Kant deny knowledge in order to make room for faith?
8. Distinguish analytic and synthetic judgments. Why are experiential judgments all synthetic?
9. How is 'every effect has a cause' synthetic? How is it *a priori*?
10. How are some mathematical propositions synthetic *a priori*?
13. How does Kant disagree with Hume about mathematics? How does the disagreement provide hope for mathematics?
16. What are intuitions? How do they differ from concepts?
20. Is space an abstraction from outer experiences? How does it underlie outer experiences?
22. What is a transcendental exposition of a concept? How does Kant provide a transcendental exposition of space?
23. Are things-in-themselves in space? Explain.
30. "Thoughts without content are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind" (A51/B76, AW 737b). Explain.
36. How does Kant praise and criticize Locke regarding a deduction of pure concepts of the understanding?
39. "[The categories] are concepts of an object in general whereby the object's intuition is regarded as *determined* in terms of one of the *logical functions* in judging" (B128, AW 745b). Explain.
40. What is a combination of the manifold of representations? How is it missing from a merely sensible intuition?
42. Describe the principle of the synthetic unity of apperception. How is it the supreme principle of human understanding?
56. Contrast the thesis and antithesis of the first antinomy, concerning whether the universe is infinite (in space).
57. How does Kant argue that the universe has a beginning in time? How does he argue that it does not have a beginning in time?
58. How does Kant argue that the universe is spatially bound? How does he argue that it is spatially infinite?
68. What is Kant's distinction between a logical predicate and a real predicate? Why is 'is omnipotent' a real predicate, while 'exists' is merely a logical predicate?
69. "A hundred real thalers do not contain the least coin more than a hundred possible thalers" (A599/B627, AW 822a). Explain. Why not?
70. How does Kant's distinction between logical and real predicates demonstrate a flaw in the ontological argument?