ADDITIONAL MCAT HIGH-YIELD PRACTICE TESTS - CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND REASONING SKILLS (CARS)

PASSAGE 1: The Nature of Consciousness

Philosophers have long debated whether consciousness can be fully explained through physical processes in the brain. Materialists argue that mental states are nothing more than brain states, reducible to neurological activity. Dualists counter that subjective experience—what it feels like to see red or taste chocolate—possesses qualities that cannot be captured by physical descriptions alone. This "explanatory gap" suggests that even complete knowledge of brain function might not reveal why particular neural patterns produce specific conscious experiences rather than others, or indeed, why they produce any experience at all.

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1. The passage suggests that the "explanatory gap" refers to:

A. The difference between brain activity and behavior

B. The difficulty explaining why physical processes produce subjective experience

C. The inability to measure consciousness scientifically

D. The conflict between different philosophical schools

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2. Dualists would most likely agree with which statement?

A. Consciousness will eventually be fully explained by neuroscience

B. Brain states are identical to mental states

C. Neural activity alone provides insufficient explanation for conscious experience

D. Subjective experience doesn't exist

PASSAGE 2: Democracy and Education

John Dewey argued that democracy requires more than periodic voting; it demands an educated citizenry capable of critical reflection. Education in democratic societies should not merely transmit information but cultivate habits of inquiry, teaching students to examine evidence, question assumptions, and engage respectfully with opposing viewpoints. Without such educational foundations, democracy risks degenerating into mere majoritarianism, where numerical superiority replaces reasoned deliberation. For Dewey, schools serve as laboratories of democracy itself, where young people learn through practice the intellectual and social skills democratic participation requires.

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3. According to the passage, Dewey believed education's primary democratic function is to:

A. Develop critical thinking and deliberative capacities

B. Teach students about voting procedures

C. Maximize individual achievement

D. Preserve cultural traditions

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4. The passage implies that "majoritarianism" differs from genuine democracy in that majoritarianism:

A. Involves more people in decision-making

B. Requires numerical superiority

C. Lacks reasoned deliberation

D. Depends on educational institutions

PASSAGE 3: The Placebo Effect

The placebo effect demonstrates that the mere belief that one is receiving treatment can produce genuine physiological improvements, even when the "treatment" is pharmacologically inert. This phenomenon raises philosophical questions about the mind-body relationship and practical questions about medical ethics. If physicians know that placebos can be therapeutically effective, are they obligated to prescribe them? Yet doesn't doing so require deception, undermining the trust essential to the doctor-patient relationship? Some researchers propose "open-label" placebos, where patients know they're receiving

inert substances but are told that placebos often work anyway—a compromise that preserves honesty while potentially harnessing placebo effects.

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5. The ethical dilemma presented in the passage centers on:

A. Whether placebos are as effective as real medications

B. The tension between therapeutic effectiveness and patient deception

C. How to measure placebo effects scientifically

D. Whether doctors should discuss treatment options

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6. The "open-label" placebo approach attempts to resolve the dilemma by:

A. Using more effective medications

B. Eliminating the need for patient belief

C. Informing patients while still potentially producing therapeutic effects

D. Avoiding all placebo use

PASSAGE 4: Aesthetic Judgment

Kant distinguished between the agreeable (what merely pleases our senses) and the beautiful (what produces aesthetic pleasure independent of personal interest). When we judge something beautiful, Kant argued, we implicitly claim that others ought to share this judgment—we speak with a "universal voice." Yet aesthetic judgments aren't based on concepts or rules; we can't prove a sunset is beautiful through logical argument. This tension—between the subjective basis of aesthetic judgment and its claim to universal validity—defines what Kant called the "antinomy of taste." Beauty requires both individual sensibility and something approaching objective standards.

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7. According to the passage, Kant believed aesthetic judgments are:

A. Purely subjective with no claim to broader validity

B. Based on logical proof and conceptual analysis

C. Founded on sensory pleasure alone

D. Subjective yet claiming universal agreement

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8. The "antinomy of taste" arises from:

A. Disagreement between different cultures

B. Lack of clear definition of beauty

C. The paradoxical combination of subjectivity and claimed universality

D. Conflict between reason and emotion

PASSAGE 5: Scientific Paradigms

Thomas Kuhn argued that science doesn't progress through steady accumulation of knowledge but through revolutionary paradigm shifts. A paradigm—the constellation of theories, methods, and assumptions defining a scientific field—provides the framework within which "normal science" operates. Anomalies that don't fit the paradigm are initially dismissed or set aside. Only when anomalies accumulate sufficiently does crisis emerge, potentially triggering a paradigm shift where the entire conceptual framework is replaced. Kuhn's account challenged the traditional view of scientific progress as linear and objective, suggesting instead that scientific revolutions involve partly subjective choices between incommensurable worldviews.

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9. According to Kuhn, "normal science" is characterized by:

A. Revolutionary changes in understanding

B. Work within an established paradigm

C. Rejection of previous theories

D. Purely objective methodology

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10. The passage suggests that paradigm shifts involve "subjective choices" because:

A. Scientists lack proper training

B. Experimental data is unreliable

C. Competing paradigms are incommensurable

D. Personal preferences determine all scientific work

PASSAGE 6: The Ethics of Care

Carol Gilligan challenged the dominant model of moral development, which emphasized abstract principles of justice and individual rights. Through research on moral reasoning, Gilligan identified an alternative "ethics of care" that prioritizes relationships, responsibilities, and contextual understanding over universal rules. While the justice perspective asks "What rights apply?" the care perspective asks "Who will be affected and how can harm be minimized?" Critics argue that the ethics of care risks reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes or providing insufficient guidance for resolving conflicts. Defenders respond that recognizing care as a legitimate moral framework enriches rather than replaces justice-based ethics.

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11. Gilligan's ethics of care differs from justice-based ethics primarily in its emphasis on:

A. Universal principles applicable to all situations

B. Relationships and contextual factors

C. Individual rights and autonomy

D. Abstract moral reasoning

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12. Critics of the ethics of care worry that it:

A. Completely rejects all previous moral philosophy

B. Applies only to medical situations

C. May reinforce stereotypes or lack clear guidance

D. Requires too much abstract reasoning

PASSAGE 7: Historical Causation

Historians disagree about whether historical events have single, identifiable causes or result from complex confluences of factors. The "great man" theory attributes historical change to exceptional individuals—Napoleon, Lincoln, Gandhi. The materialist view emphasizes economic conditions and class structures. Still others point to contingency and chance: a different weather pattern, a personal decision, might have altered history's course dramatically. This debate matters not just for understanding the past but for acting in the present: if individuals shape history, heroic action makes sense; if vast impersonal forces dominate, such action may be futile or misguided.

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13. The passage suggests that views on historical causation have implications for:

A. Academic promotion in history departments

B. How we approach contemporary action and agency

C. The accuracy of historical records

D. Teaching methods in schools

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14. The "materialist view" of history emphasizes:

A. Individual leaders and their decisions

B. Random chance and contingency

C. Cultural and religious factors

D. Economic conditions and social structures

PASSAGE 8: Language and Thought

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis proposes that language shapes thought—that the categories and distinctions embedded in our native language influence how we perceive and conceptualize reality. Strong versions claim language determines thought entirely; weaker versions suggest language influences but doesn't determine thinking. Evidence comes from differences in how languages categorize colors, space, and time, correlating with differences in speakers' perceptual discriminations and memory. Critics argue that underlying cognitive capacities are universal, with language merely labeling pre-existing concepts. The

debate continues, with implications for translation, cross-cultural understanding, and the nature of human cognition.

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15. According to the passage, evidence for linguistic relativity includes:

A. Universal grammar structures across languages

B. Correlations between linguistic categories and perception

C. The impossibility of translation

D. Children's ease in learning any language

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16. The "strong version" of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis would claim that:

A. Language influences but doesn't determine thought

B. All languages share universal structures

C. Language completely determines thought

D. Thought exists independently of language

PASSAGE 9: Retributive Justice

Punishment philosophies divide roughly into retributive and consequentialist approaches. Retributivists argue that wrongdoers deserve punishment proportionate to their crimes, regardless of future consequences. Justice demands that moral violations be balanced by suffering—"an eye for an eye" in its most fundamental form. Consequentialists counter that punishment is justified only if it produces good outcomes: deterring future crimes, rehabilitating offenders, or protecting society. Pure retributivism seems to justify pointless suffering; pure consequentialism might justify punishing the innocent if doing so prevented greater harm. Most actual justice systems blend both approaches, though the balance remains contentious.

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17. Retributive justice is primarily concerned with:

A. Preventing future crimes through deterrence

B. Rehabilitating offenders

C. Proportionate punishment for past wrongs

D. Protecting society from dangerous individuals

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18. The passage suggests a weakness of "pure consequentialism" is that it:

A. Requires no evidence for its claims

B. Costs too much to implement

C. Might justify punishing innocent people

D. Provides no deterrent effect

PASSAGE 10: Romanticism and Nature

Romantic poets and philosophers viewed nature not merely as raw material for human use but as possessing intrinsic value and even spiritual significance. Wordsworth wrote of nature's capacity to elevate and heal the human spirit; Thoreau retreated to Walden Pond seeking authenticity unavailable in industrial society. This Romantic conception contrasts sharply with the Enlightenment view of nature as a mechanism to be understood and controlled through reason and science. Yet Romanticism's idealization of wilderness often ignored that landscapes are shaped by human activity and that "pristine" nature is partly a cultural construct. The tension between viewing nature as separate from humans versus recognizing human-nature entanglement persists in contemporary environmental thought.

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19. According to the passage, Romantic thinkers differed from Enlightenment thinkers in viewing nature as:

A. Dangerous and requiring control

B. A mechanism governed by scientific laws

C. Possessing intrinsic value and spiritual significance

D. Irrelevant to human concerns

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20. The passage suggests that Romantic idealization of wilderness was problematic because it:

A. Encouraged scientific inquiry

B. Promoted industrial development

C. Overlooked human influence on landscapes

D. Rejected all spiritual interpretations

PASSAGE 11: The Paradox of Tolerance

Karl Popper articulated what he called the "paradox of tolerance": unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance itself. If we tolerate the intolerant, those who would destroy tolerant society if given power, then tolerance becomes a tool for its own destruction. Popper concluded that tolerant societies must not tolerate intolerance—they must defend themselves against those who would eliminate tolerance. Critics respond that this creates a dangerous exception to tolerance, potentially justifying suppression of unpopular views. They argue that the strongest defense of tolerance lies in maintaining it even toward the intolerant, relying on argument rather than suppression to maintain open society.

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21. Popper's paradox arises from the observation that:

A. All societies are equally tolerant

B. Tolerance has no value

C. Intolerance poses no threat to society

D. Unlimited tolerance may enable intolerance to triumph

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22. Critics of Popper's solution worry that:

A. It preserves too much tolerance

B. It creates exceptions that could justify suppressing dissent

C. It has no practical applications

D. It strengthens intolerant movements

PASSAGE 12: Authenticity in Art

Walter Benjamin argued that mechanical reproduction fundamentally transforms art's nature and social function. The "aura" of an original artwork—its unique presence in time and space, its connection to tradition and ritual—disappears when the work can be endlessly reproduced. Photography and film democratize art, making it accessible to masses rather than elites, but they also commodify it, stripping away the contemplative engagement original artworks inspire. Benjamin saw both loss and liberation in this transformation: the destruction of art's aura might free it from service to tradition and ritual, enabling new political uses. Yet mass reproduction also enables art's incorporation into consumer culture and propaganda.

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23. Benjamin's concept of "aura" refers to:

A. The monetary value of original artworks

B. The unique presence and traditional context of originals

C. The technical quality of reproduction

D. The artist's intention

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24. According to the passage, mechanical reproduction has what contradictory effects?

A. It increases both quality and quantity

B. It preserves tradition while enabling change

C. It raises prices while expanding access

D. It democratizes art while potentially commodifying it

PASSAGE 13: Free Will and Determinism

Compatibilists attempt to reconcile free will with causal determinism by redefining freedom. Rather than requiring that our actions be uncaused (libertarian free will), compatibilists argue we're free when we act according to our desires and choices without external constraint or compulsion. A decision may be determined by prior causes—brain states, genetics, environment—yet still qualify as free if it flows from

the agent's own motivations rather than from coercion. Critics charge that this "redefinition" of freedom trivializes the concept: if our desires themselves are determined by factors beyond our control, in what sense are we truly free? The debate hinges on what we mean by "control" and whether ultimate responsibility requires something more than causal determinism allows.

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25. Compatibilists argue that freedom requires:

A. Actions that are completely uncaused

B. Actions flowing from one's own desires without external compulsion

C. Escape from all causal determination

D. Randomness in decision-making

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26. Critics of compatibilism object that:

A. It preserves too much freedom

B. It applies only to trivial decisions

C. If desires are determined, the sense of freedom is illusory

D. It contradicts all scientific findings

PASSAGE 14: The Value of Wilderness

Environmental ethicists debate whether wilderness areas should be preserved because they benefit humans (anthropocentric justification) or because nature has intrinsic value independent of human interests (ecocentric justification). Anthropocentric arguments emphasize ecosystem services, recreational opportunities, and aesthetic experiences wilderness provides. Ecocentric perspectives insist that species and ecosystems have moral standing regardless of their usefulness to humans. This distinction has practical implications: anthropocentric arguments are more persuasive to many people but justify preservation only when wilderness serves human interests. If ecocentric views are correct, we have duties to preserve nature even when doing so conflicts with human welfare.

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27. The passage suggests the practical difference between anthropocentric and ecocentric views is that:

A. Anthropocentrism protects more land than ecocentrism

B. Ecocentrism justifies preservation even against human interests

C. They lead to identical policy recommendations

D. Only scientists accept ecocentric arguments

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28. Anthropocentric justifications for wilderness preservation emphasize:

A. The intrinsic rights of non-human species

B. Religious obligations

C. Benefits and services wilderness provides to humans

D. The impossibility of economic development

PASSAGE 15: Social Contract Theory

Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau all employed social contract reasoning, but reached remarkably different conclusions. Hobbes imagined the state of nature as a "war of all against all," justifying absolute sovereignty to escape chaos. Locke envisioned a more peaceful state of nature where individuals possess natural rights, with government's purpose being to protect these pre-political rights. Rousseau believed natural humans were neither warlike nor rights-bearing but rather innocent and corrupted by civilization; his social contract aimed to recover freedom through collective self-governance. These differences suggest that the conclusions drawn from social contract thought depend heavily on initial assumptions about human nature—assumptions that themselves require justification beyond the thought experiment.

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29. The passage implies that social contract theories differ primarily because of varying assumptions about:

A. The best form of government

B. Economic systems

C. Human nature in the state of nature

D. Historical accuracy

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30. According to the passage, Locke's social contract emphasizes:

A. Absolute sovereignty to prevent chaos

B. Recovering innocence lost through civilization

C. Collective self-governance

D. Protecting pre-existing natural rights

PASSAGE 16: Narrative Identity

Philosophers like Paul Ricoeur argue that personal identity is constituted through narrative—that we understand ourselves by constructing and telling life stories that integrate our past, present, and future into coherent wholes. This narrative self-understanding isn't a neutral description of facts but an interpretive activity: we select which events matter, how to connect them, what meaning to assign. The stories we tell about ourselves shape who we become, making identity partly self-created rather than simply discovered. Yet we don't author these narratives alone; they're constrained by facts, shaped by cultural resources, and must be recognizable to others. Narrative identity thus involves both freedom and constraint, creativity and limitation.

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31. According to the passage, narrative identity involves:

A. Purely factual description of one's history

B. Complete freedom to invent oneself

C. Interpretive construction constrained by facts and culture

D. Rejection of all continuity over time

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32. The passage suggests that life narratives shape identity by:

A. Simply recording what happened

B. Influencing who we become through interpretation

C. Ensuring complete consistency

D. Eliminating all contradictions

PASSAGE 17: The Problem of Evil

Theodicy attempts to reconcile the existence of evil with belief in an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent God. If God is all-powerful, He could prevent evil; if all-knowing, He would know evil exists; if perfectly good, He would want to prevent it. Yet evil exists. Proposed solutions include the free will defense (evil results from human free choice, which God values despite its risks), the soul-making theodicy (suffering enables spiritual growth), and the claim that what appears evil serves a greater good we cannot perceive. Critics argue these solutions either limit God's attributes or fail to account for the intensity and distribution of suffering, particularly afflicting innocents. The problem persists as a challenge to traditional theism.

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33. The theodicy problem arises from the apparent contradiction between:

A. Different religious traditions

B. Science and religion

C. God's attributed qualities and evil's existence

D. Faith and reason

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34. The "free will defense" attempts to resolve the problem by arguing that:

A. Evil doesn't really exist

B. God is not omnipotent

C. Evil results from valuable free choice

D. We cannot understand God's plan

PASSAGE 18: Postmodernism and Truth

Postmodern thinkers like Foucault and Lyotard challenged Enlightenment confidence in universal reason and objective truth. They argued that what counts as "truth" or "knowledge" is socially

constructed, inseparable from power relations. Science, rather than offering neutral descriptions of reality, embodies particular perspectives and serves particular interests. Grand narratives promising human progress or emancipation are viewed with suspicion as potentially oppressive. Critics charge that postmodernism is self-defeating: if all truth claims are merely power plays, why accept postmodern claims themselves? Defenders respond that recognizing knowledge's entanglement with power doesn't deny all possibility of justified belief, only naive objectivism.

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35. According to the passage, postmodernists view scientific knowledge as:

A. Entirely objective and universal

B. The only legitimate form of knowledge

C. Entangled with social perspectives and power

D. Completely reliable and certain

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36. The self-defeat objection against postmodernism argues that:

A. It requires too much evidence

B. Applying its skepticism to itself undermines its own claims

C. It supports traditional views

D. It has no political implications

PASSAGE 19: Virtue Ethics

Unlike deontological ethics (which emphasizes rules and duties) or consequentialism (which evaluates actions by outcomes), virtue ethics focuses on character. Rather than asking "What should I do?" virtue ethics asks "What kind of person should I be?" Virtues are character traits—courage, honesty, compassion—enabling human flourishing. Right action flows from virtuous character rather than from following rules or calculating consequences. Critics note that virtue ethics seems to offer insufficient guidance for specific dilemmas: how does being virtuous tell us whether to lie to prevent harm? Virtue ethicists respond that moral wisdom cannot be reduced to rules; it requires practical judgment developed through experience and habituation.

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37. Virtue ethics differs from other approaches by emphasizing:

A. Universal moral rules

B. Consequences of actions

C. Character traits and human flourishing

D. Social contracts

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38. The criticism that virtue ethics provides "insufficient guidance" suggests it:

A. Offers too many rules

B. Determines exactly what to do in each situation

C. Lacks clear prescriptions for specific moral dilemmas

D. Applies only to ancient societies

PASSAGE 20: The Nature of Time

Philosophers distinguish between the A-theory and B-theory of time. The A-theory holds that the present is objectively real and privileged; events become real as they occur, then recede into the fixed past. The future is open and indeterminate. The B-theory denies temporal flow: all moments in time are equally real, and temporal relations (earlier/later) are like spatial relations (left/right). The B-theory seems to accord with physics, particularly relativity's revelation that simultaneity is relative to reference frames. Yet the B-theory appears to conflict with our lived experience of time passing and the future's openness. This tension between physical theory and phenomenological experience remains unresolved.

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39. According to the passage, the A-theory of time holds that:

A. All moments are equally real

B. Time is like space

C. The present is objectively privileged

D. Temporal flow is an illusion

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40. The tension described in the passage exists between:

A. Ancient and modern views

B. Physical theory and lived experience

C. Religion and science

D. Individual and social perspectives

PASSAGE 21: Cultural Relativism

Cultural relativism holds that moral judgments are valid only relative to cultural contexts. What's right in one culture may be wrong in another, with no transcultural standards for evaluation. This view promises tolerance by preventing cultural imperialism. Yet it faces serious difficulties. If all values are culturally relative, we cannot condemn practices like slavery or genocide in other cultures. We also cannot criticize our own culture's norms, since morality is defined by those norms. Furthermore, cultural relativism itself claims to be a universal truth transcending cultures, which contradicts its own premise. These paradoxes suggest that while cultural sensitivity is important, complete moral relativism is untenable.

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41. According to the passage, cultural relativism faces a paradox because:

A. It promotes tolerance too effectively

B. It claims universal truth while denying universal truths

C. It applies only to Western cultures

D. It requires too much evidence

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42. The passage suggests that complete cultural relativism would prevent us from:

A. Understanding other cultures

B. Traveling to foreign countries

C. Learning new languages

D. Condemning practices like slavery cross-culturally

PASSAGE 22: The Mind-Body Problem

Descartes' dualism—the view that mind and body are distinct substances—faces the interaction problem: if mental and physical are fundamentally different, how do they causally interact? When I decide to raise my arm (mental event), my arm rises (physical event). Materialist solutions eliminate the problem by identifying mental states with brain states, but seem to leave out subjective experience's qualitative aspects. Idealism solves it by making everything mental, but conflicts with scientific understanding. Neutral monism proposes that mental and physical are different aspects of a more fundamental underlying reality. Each solution faces difficulties, suggesting the mind-body problem may resist complete philosophical resolution.

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43. The "interaction problem" for dualism concerns:

A. How minds develop over time

B. Whether minds exist at all

C. How fundamentally different substances causally interact

D. Which brain regions control movement

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44. According to the passage, materialist solutions to the mind-body problem:

A. Preserve Cartesian dualism

B. Identify mental states with brain states

C. Make everything mental

D. Propose a third substance

PASSAGE 23: Existentialism and Authenticity

Existentialists like Sartre emphasized authenticity—living in accordance with one's freedom and self-created values rather than conforming to external expectations or social roles. "Existence precedes

essence" means we're not born with fixed natures; we create ourselves through choices and commitments. Bad faith involves denying this freedom, pretending we have no choice when we do, or identifying completely with social roles. Yet critics argue that this existentialist emphasis on radical freedom ignores how profoundly social contexts constrain possibilities. We don't choose our language, culture, or initial circumstances. Complete authenticity may be impossible, and the attempt to achieve it might itself be a form of self-deception.

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45. "Bad faith," in existentialist terms, involves:

A. Religious belief

B. Denying one's freedom by conforming to external definitions

C. Making difficult choices

D. Accepting responsibility

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46. Critics of existentialist authenticity argue that:

A. Freedom is completely unlimited

B. Social contexts significantly constrain authentic choice

C. No one ever makes genuine choices

D. Conformity is always desirable

PASSAGE 24: Justice as Fairness

John Rawls proposed the "original position" thought experiment: imagine choosing principles of justice from behind a "veil of ignorance" where you don't know your place in society—your class, talents, or values. Not knowing whether you'll be advantaged or disadvantaged, you would choose principles ensuring basic liberties for all and structuring inequalities to benefit the least well-off. Rawls argued this yields his two principles: equal basic liberties, and inequalities permitted only if they benefit the worst-off and positions are open to all. Critics from the left argue Rawls doesn't challenge capitalism fundamentally enough; critics from the right claim he unjustly favors equality over liberty and property rights.

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47. The "veil of ignorance" in Rawls's theory functions to:

A. Ensure no one knows anything about justice

B. Remove bias from choosing principles of justice

C. Justify existing social hierarchies

D. Prevent all inequalities

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48. According to Rawls, inequalities are justified when they:

A. Benefit the wealthiest members of society

B. Result from free market competition

C. Benefit the least advantaged and are attached to open positions

D. Are chosen by majority vote

PASSAGE 25: Feminist Epistemology

Feminist epistemologists argue that traditional philosophy's claims to objectivity mask masculine perspectives presented as universal. Who counts as a knower, what counts as knowledge, and which questions are worth asking reflect power relations, including gender relations. Standpoint theory suggests that marginalized positions—including women's positions—can provide epistemic advantages, revealing assumptions invisible from dominant perspectives. Critics worry this leads to relativism or privileges identity over argument. Defenders respond that recognizing knowledge's situatedness doesn't eliminate standards but rather makes those standards themselves subject to critical scrutiny, potentially producing more rather than less rigorous inquiry.

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49. Standpoint theory suggests that marginalized positions:

A. Cannot produce knowledge

B. Are irrelevant to truth

C. Can provide epistemic advantages

D. Should be ignored in favor of objectivity

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50. Critics of feminist epistemology worry that it:

A. Preserves too much traditional philosophy

B. Leads to relativism or privileges identity over argument

C. Has no political implications

D. Applies only to natural sciences

PASSAGE 26: The Meaning of Art

Institutional theories of art define artworks not by intrinsic properties but by their place in the "artworld"—the network of artists, critics, galleries, and audiences whose practices constitute art. Something becomes art when it's presented by artists and accepted by the artworld as a candidate for appreciation. This explains how urinals and soup cans can be art: Duchamp and Warhol succeeded in getting the artworld to treat them as art. Critics object that this is circular—art is what the artworld says is art—and provides no standards for distinguishing good art from bad. Defenders respond that art's nature is indeed socially constructed, not fixed by eternal essences, and that institutional theory describes how art actually functions.

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51. According to institutional theory, something becomes art when:

A. It possesses certain intrinsic aesthetic properties

B. It's beautiful or emotionally moving

C. The artworld accepts it as a candidate for appreciation

D. The government officially designates it as art

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52. The circularity objection claims that institutional theory:

A. Provides too many criteria for art

B. Defines art in terms of itself without independent standards

C. Applies only to modern art

D. Contradicts all aesthetic experience

PASSAGE 27: Utilitarian Calculations

Utilitarianism faces the demandingness objection: if we should maximize overall happiness, then spending money on luxuries while others starve is morally wrong. We're obligated to give until we've reduced ourselves to the level where additional sacrifice would cause more harm to us than benefit to others. Most people find this conclusion too demanding—it would require radical lifestyle changes and constant self-sacrifice. Some utilitarians embrace this implication, arguing that common moral intuitions are mistaken. Others modify utilitarianism, distinguishing required acts from supererogatory ones, or accept that their theory's demands exceed what can reasonably be expected, even if they represent the ideal.

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53. The "demandingness objection" argues that utilitarianism:

A. Doesn't provide enough guidance

B. Requires excessive self-sacrifice

C. Permits too much immoral behavior

D. Is too simple to apply

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54. Some utilitarians respond to the objection by:

A. Rejecting their theory entirely

B. Claiming common moral intuitions are mistaken

C. Embracing egoism instead

D. Denying that helping others matters

PASSAGE 28: Hermeneutics

Hermeneutic philosophy, developed by thinkers like Gadamer, argues that understanding always involves interpretation from within a particular tradition and horizon of pre-understanding. We cannot

achieve a "view from nowhere"; we always interpret from somewhere. Rather than seeing this as a limitation to overcome, hermeneutics views it as the condition of understanding itself. The "hermeneutic circle" suggests that we understand parts in terms of wholes and wholes in terms of parts, with each informing the other. This doesn't trap us in relativism; through dialogue and "fusion of horizons," different perspectives can engage and mutual understanding can develop, even without achieving complete objectivity.

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55. According to hermeneutics, understanding always involves:

A. Achieving complete objectivity

B. Eliminating all pre-conceptions

C. Interpretation from within a particular perspective

D. Following fixed rules of interpretation

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56. The "fusion of horizons" refers to:

A. Complete agreement between all parties

B. Elimination of all differences

C. Mutual understanding through dialogue between perspectives

D. Scientific verification of interpretations

PASSAGE 29: Privacy and Surveillance

Digital technologies enable unprecedented surveillance, raising fundamental questions about privacy's value. Some argue privacy is essential to autonomy, intimacy, and democratic citizenship—that constant observation chills free expression and makes authentic self-development impossible. Others contend that privacy concerns are overstated: if you've done nothing wrong, you have nothing to hide. This "nothing to hide" argument misunderstands privacy's function. Privacy isn't primarily about concealing wrongdoing but about controlling information about oneself and maintaining boundaries between different social contexts. Loss of privacy means loss of control over self-presentation and vulnerability to judgment by standards we don't accept.

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57. The passage argues that privacy is important because it:

A. Primarily allows concealment of wrongdoing

B. Has no real value in modern society

C. Enables autonomy, intimacy, and control over self-presentation

D. Only matters for criminals

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58. The "nothing to hide" argument is criticized for:

A. Correctly understanding privacy's function

B. Providing too much protection

C. Misunderstanding privacy as primarily about concealing wrongdoing

D. Being supported by all privacy experts

PASSAGE 30: The Concept of Race

Contemporary scholarship widely accepts that biological race is not a natural kind—genetic variation within supposed racial groups exceeds variation between groups, and racial categories vary dramatically across cultures and historical periods. Yet this doesn't mean race is merely illusory or unimportant. Race is a social construction with real effects: racial categories shape life opportunities, social interactions, and personal identity. Recognizing race as socially constructed enables critical examination of how racial categories are created and maintained, and whose interests they serve. It doesn't eliminate racism by declaring race unreal; rather, it opens possibilities for challenging and transforming racial meanings and structures.

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59. According to the passage, recognizing race as socially constructed:

A. Proves race is completely illusory

B. Eliminates racism automatically

C. Enables critical examination and potential transformation

D. Demonstrates race has no real effects

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60. The passage suggests that genetic evidence shows:

A. Racial categories are biologically natural

B. More genetic variation within than between racial groups

C. Race has no social significance

D. All humans are genetically identical

PASSAGE 31: Moral Luck

Bernard Williams and Thomas Nagel identified "moral luck"—the phenomenon where moral judgments depend on factors beyond the agent's control. Two drivers behave identically—both driving recklessly—but one hits a pedestrian while the other doesn't. We judge them differently, though their actions and intentions were the same. This suggests that luck affects moral responsibility, which seems paradoxical: how can we be responsible for outcomes we don't control? Some philosophers accept moral luck as genuine, revising theories that make responsibility depend only on factors within our control. Others argue that our judgments in such cases confuse moral assessment with emotional or legal responses, and that true moral responsibility excludes luck.

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61. The concept of "moral luck" refers to:

A. The influence of controllable factors on judgments

B. Good fortune in business dealings

C. Cases where moral judgments depend on uncontrollable factors

D. Statistical probabilities in ethics

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62. The paradox of moral luck arises because:

A. All moral judgments are identical

B. We seem to hold people responsible for what they don't control

C. Luck has no role in life

D. Intentions are irrelevant to morality

PASSAGE 32: Communitarianism

Communitarian critics like MacIntyre and Sandel challenge liberal individualism's conception of the self as prior to and independent of its ends. They argue that we're situated selves, constituted by social relationships and communal traditions that aren't merely chosen but form who we are. Liberalism's emphasis on individual rights and neutral principles ignores the thick moral frameworks communities provide and undervalues social bonds. Yet critics of communitarianism worry it could justify oppression of dissenters in the name of community values and lacks resources for criticizing one's own community. The debate concerns how to balance individual autonomy with social embeddedness, and what role communal traditions should play in moral and political life.

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63. Communitarians argue that liberal individualism mistakenly views the self as:

A. Entirely socially determined

B. Prior to and independent of social relationships

C. Having no moral significance

D. Identical across all cultures

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64. Critics of communitarianism worry it could:

A. Provide too much individual freedom

B. Justify oppression in the name of community

C. Eliminate all social bonds

D. Create too much diversity

PASSAGE 33: The Problem of Induction

David Hume argued that inductive reasoning—inferring general conclusions from particular observations—cannot be rationally justified. That the sun has risen every morning doesn't logically

prove it will rise tomorrow. We assume nature is uniform, that unobserved cases resemble observed ones, but this assumption itself requires inductive support, creating circularity. We cannot deduce uniformity from logic alone, nor can we justify it inductively without begging the question. Yet all empirical science depends on induction. Proposed solutions include accepting induction as a basic cognitive practice not requiring justification, or appealing to explanatory virtues like simplicity, though Hume would likely find these responses inadequate.

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65. Hume's problem concerns whether inductive reasoning can be:

A. Taught in schools

B. Rationally justified without circularity

C. Used in mathematics

D. Understood by ordinary people

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66. The circularity in justifying induction arises because:

A. Induction is too complex

B. Justifying induction inductively assumes what needs proving

C. Deduction is always preferable

D. Scientists disagree about methods

PASSAGE 34: Globalization and Culture

Globalization's cultural effects are contested. Some see cultural homogenization—the spread of Western (particularly American) consumer culture erasing local traditions and creating a bland global monoculture. Others emphasize hybridization and appropriation, where global and local mix to create new forms. Korean pop music incorporates Western elements while remaining distinctively Korean; Indian films blend Bollywood traditions with Hollywood techniques. Rather than simple domination or preservation, cultural change involves complex negotiations where power relations matter but don't fully determine outcomes. The concern shouldn't be preserving "pure" cultures (which never existed) but rather ensuring diverse voices have means to produce and circulate cultural forms.

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67. The homogenization view of globalization emphasizes:

A. The creation of new hybrid cultural forms

B. Equal power for all cultural traditions

C. Western consumer culture erasing local traditions

D. Preservation of pure cultures

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68. The passage suggests that cultural change involves:

A. Simple domination by the West

B. Complete preservation of traditional forms

C. Complex negotiations with power relations

D. No role for local agency

PASSAGE 35: Animal Rights

Peter Singer argues that the capacity to suffer, not rationality or species membership, grounds moral consideration. Since animals can suffer, their interests matter morally and must be included in utilitarian calculations. Factory farming causes massive suffering for trivial human benefits (taste pleasure), making it morally indefensible. Critics respond that humans have special moral status based on rationality, language, or moral agency. Singer charges this with "speciesism"—arbitrary discrimination based on species, analogous to racism or sexism. Defenders of human exceptionalism argue the analogy fails: species differences are morally relevant in ways that race or sex are not, grounding legitimate moral distinctions.

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69. Singer's argument against factory farming is based on:

A. Environmental damage only

B. Economic inefficiency

C. Animals' capacity to suffer

D. Religious prohibitions

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70. The concept of "speciesism" suggests that species-based moral distinctions are:

A. Always morally justified

B. Analogous to racism—arbitrary discrimination

C. Scientifically proven

D. Irrelevant to ethics

PASSAGE 36: The Ethics of Belief

W.K. Clifford famously argued that "it is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence." Beliefs influence actions affecting others, so we have moral duties regarding what we believe, not just how we act. Believing without evidence is intellectually irresponsible. William James countered that for some questions—particularly religious ones—evidence may be insufficient while the question is unavoidable and momentous. Withholding belief is itself a choice with consequences. In such cases, James argued, we have the right to believe based on our "passional nature." The debate concerns whether epistemic duties are purely evidential or whether practical considerations can justify belief.

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71. Clifford argues that believing without sufficient evidence is:

A. Always morally acceptable

B. Morally wrong due to beliefs' effects on actions

C. Recommended for happiness

D. Only problematic in scientific contexts

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72. James's response emphasizes that:

A. Evidence is never relevant

B. All beliefs are equally justified

C. For some questions, withholding belief itself has consequences

D. Morality is unrelated to belief

PASSAGE 37: Modernism vs. Postmodernism

Modernist art and literature embraced fragmentation and difficulty, but believed in underlying order and meaning accessible through artistic innovation. Joyce's Ulysses is difficult but rewards interpretive effort with coherent significance. Postmodernist works like Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow resist such coherence, offering multiple, incompatible interpretations without privileging any. Where modernism sought new forms to represent fractured modern experience, postmodernism questions whether representation itself is possible or desirable. This shift reflects changing views about language, meaning, and truth. Yet the boundary between modernism and postmodernism remains contested, with some seeing continuity rather than rupture.

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73. According to the passage, modernist works like Ulysses:

A. Avoid all difficulty and fragmentation

B. Present simple, straightforward narratives

C. Are difficult but offer coherent underlying meaning

D. Reject all interpretation

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74. Postmodernism differs from modernism primarily in:

A. Being easier to understand

B. Questioning whether coherent representation is possible

C. Avoiding all innovation

D. Using traditional forms exclusively

PASSAGE 38: The Gig Economy

The rise of platform-based gig work—Uber drivers, TaskRabbit workers, freelance contractors—is hailed by some as offering flexibility and autonomy, criticized by others as creating precarious

employment without benefits or protections. Workers are classified as independent contractors rather than employees, shifting risks and costs to individuals. This arrangement suits some workers but disadvantages others who need stability and cannot access employer-provided healthcare or retirement benefits. The debate involves competing values: entrepreneurial freedom versus economic security, flexibility versus stability. Policy responses must balance these values while addressing power asymmetries between platforms and workers.

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75. The passage presents gig work as involving a tension between:

A. Technology and tradition

B. Flexibility and economic security

C. Urban and rural employment

D. Public and private sectors

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76. The classification of gig workers as independent contractors:

A. Provides all workers with maximum benefits

B. Shifts risks and costs to individuals

C. Has no practical implications

D. Applies only to high-paid professionals

PASSAGE 39: Quantum Mechanics and Reality

Quantum mechanics' implications for the nature of reality remain philosophically puzzling. The measurement problem asks why definite outcomes emerge from superpositions of possibilities. The Copenhagen interpretation treats measurement as fundamental but leaves the observer's role mysterious. Many-worlds interpretation avoids measurement's special status by proposing all possibilities occur in branching universes. Hidden variable theories attempt to restore determinism. Each interpretation faces conceptual difficulties. Some physicists embrace instrumentalism—treating quantum mechanics as a tool for predictions without worrying about underlying reality. Yet science has traditionally aimed not just for predictive success but for understanding nature's fundamental structure, suggesting instrumentalism is an unsatisfying philosophical retreat.

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77. The measurement problem in quantum mechanics concerns:

A. The cost of laboratory equipment

B. Why definite outcomes emerge from superpositions

C. How to teach quantum physics

D. Training scientists properly

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78. According to the passage, instrumentalism treats quantum mechanics as:

A. Describing ultimate reality

B. A tool for predictions without ontological commitment

C. Completely false

D. Only applicable to microscopic systems

PASSAGE 40: Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Forgiveness involves overcoming resentment toward wrongdoers, but does this require reconciliation—restoring the relationship? Some argue genuine forgiveness demands reconciliation; others contend forgiveness is an internal attitude change that can occur without reconciliation or even without the wrongdoer's repentance. Holocaust survivor Simon Wiesenthal recounted being asked by a dying Nazi soldier for forgiveness; Wiesenthal refused, later questioning whether he'd been right. Responses divided: some argued only victims can forgive and that forgiveness without repentance cheapens wrong suffered; others held that forgiveness benefits the forgiver by releasing resentment. The disagreement reflects different views of forgiveness's purpose and moral requirements.

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79. The passage suggests that views on forgiveness differ regarding whether it:

A. Is possible at all

B. Requires reconciliation with the wrongdoer

C. Is always morally required

D. Only applies to minor offenses

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80. The debate over Wiesenthal's refusal to forgive concerns whether:

A. The Holocaust actually occurred

B. Forgiveness without repentance is appropriate

C. Any forgiveness is ever justified

D. Only religious people can forgive

PASSAGE 41: Intellectual Property

Intellectual property law grants temporary monopolies on ideas, expressions, and inventions to incentivize creation. Yet some argue that ideas are non-rivalrous—my use doesn't prevent yours—so restricting them reduces overall welfare. Copyright and patents balance creators' incentives against public access to knowledge and culture. Digital technologies intensify this tension: copying is nearly costless, yet creators need compensation. Some propose abandoning or radically restricting intellectual property; others advocate stronger protections. The debate involves both consequentialist questions (what produces the best outcomes?) and rights-based questions (do creators have natural rights to their intellectual products?).

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81. The passage notes that ideas are "non-rivalrous," meaning:

A. They cause conflict between users

B. One person's use doesn't prevent another's

C. They have no value

D. They cannot be created

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82. The intellectual property debate involves questions about both:

A. Consequences and creators' rights

B. Technology and tradition only

C. Politics and religion

D. Age and gender

PASSAGE 42: Medical Paternalism

Medical paternalism—physicians making decisions for patients "for their own good"—was once standard practice. Informed consent doctrine now requires patient autonomy in medical decisions, but tensions remain. What if patients choose treatments physicians believe are harmful or refuse treatments likely to help? Should physicians override patient wishes or respect autonomy even when it leads to bad medical outcomes? Libertarians emphasize autonomy absolutely; others argue that some paternalistic intervention is justified when patients lack capacity for informed decision or face life-threatening situations. The balance between respecting autonomy and ensuring patient welfare remains contested.

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83. Informed consent doctrine emphasizes:

A. Physicians making all medical decisions

B. Patient autonomy in medical choices

C. Eliminating all medical treatment

D. Government control of healthcare

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84. The passage suggests that the autonomy-welfare tension arises when:

A. All patients agree with physicians

B. Patient choices may lead to harmful outcomes

C. Medical treatment is always beneficial

D. No ethical principles apply

PASSAGE 43: Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism

Nationalists argue that we have special obligations to co-nationals that we don't have to outsiders. These obligations arise from shared identity, reciprocity, or the state's role in enabling our lives. Cosmopolitans counter that all humans have equal moral status; national boundaries are morally arbitrary, like race or

sex. We should be "citizens of the world," with obligations extending globally. Yet complete cosmopolitanism seems to demand either eliminating nations or treating them as purely instrumental. Moderate positions suggest that special national obligations exist but are limited by universal human rights that constrain what nations may do to pursue national interests.

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85. According to the passage, cosmopolitans argue that national boundaries are:

A. The most important moral considerations

B. Morally arbitrary, similar to race or sex

C. The basis of all ethics

D. Scientifically determined

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86. Moderate positions on nationalism and cosmopolitanism might hold that:

A. National obligations are unlimited

B. No national obligations exist

C. National obligations exist but are constrained by universal rights

D. Global obligations are impossible

PASSAGE 44: Artificial Intelligence and Consciousness

If we created artificial intelligence exhibiting all behavioral markers of consciousness—responding to stimuli, reporting experiences, exhibiting preferences—would it be genuinely conscious or merely simulating consciousness? Behaviorists argue the question is meaningless: consciousness is defined by behavior. Functionalists say consciousness is defined by functional roles; if AI performs the same functions as human consciousness, it is conscious. Critics invoke thought experiments: could a system mechanically following rules (like Searle's Chinese Room) be conscious despite behavioral indistinguishability from conscious beings? The problem is that we lack direct access to others' consciousness—human or artificial—yet must make moral and practical decisions based on consciousness attributions.

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87. According to functionalism, consciousness is defined by:

A. Physical substrate (biological neurons)

B. Functional roles and relationships

C. Divine creation

D. Social conventions exclusively

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88. The Chinese Room thought experiment questions whether:

A. Computers can follow rules

B. Behavioral indistinguishability guarantees consciousness

C. Language learning is possible

D. Consciousness exists at all

PASSAGE 45: Historical Progress

Does history show progress? Enlightenment thinkers believed human reason would gradually improve society, increasing knowledge, freedom, and welfare. The 20th century's wars and genocides challenged this optimism. Some embrace historical pessimism or cyclical views where civilizations rise and decline. Others defend progressive views while acknowledging setbacks, pointing to moral progress (abolition of slavery, extension of rights) and technological advancement. Critics respond that moral "progress" reflects Western values being universalized, not objective improvement. The very concept of progress presupposes standards for evaluation—standards that are themselves historically variable and culturally contested.

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89. The passage suggests that judging historical progress requires:

A. No standards at all

B. Standards that are themselves historically and culturally contested

C. Universal agreement on all values

D. Ignoring all evidence

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90. Critics of the progress view argue that apparent moral progress may reflect:

A. Objective improvement

B. Westernization of values

C. Divine intervention

D. Biological evolution

PASSAGE 46: The Hedonic Treadmill

Research suggests humans adapt quickly to changed circumstances, returning to baseline happiness levels—the "hedonic treadmill." Lottery winners and accident victims show surprisingly similar happiness levels within a year. This challenges the assumption that material prosperity increases well-being. Yet critics note that some conditions—chronic pain, poverty, oppression—do reduce well-being persistently. The treadmill effect varies across domains and individuals. Philosophical implications include questioning whether satisfaction of desires constitutes well-being if adaptation prevents lasting satisfaction. Perhaps well-being involves activities and relationships rather than states of pleasure, suggesting ancient eudaimonic theories were correct against hedonistic ones.

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91. The hedonic treadmill phenomenon suggests that:

A. Material changes permanently increase happiness

B. Humans adapt to circumstances, returning to baseline happiness

C. Happiness is impossible

D. Poverty has no effect on well-being

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92. The passage suggests the treadmill effect implies:

A. All ethical theories are equivalent

B. Well-being may involve activities rather than just pleasure states

C. Happiness is the only value

D. Adaptation never occurs

PASSAGE 47: Civil Disobedience

Thoreau and King defended civil disobedience—deliberate law-breaking for moral or political purposes. They distinguished this from ordinary criminality: civil disobedience is public, non-violent, and accepts legal consequences. It appeals to higher law or justice against unjust positive law. Critics argue this undermines legal order and democratic processes—if citizens disobey laws they dislike, chaos results. Defenders respond that civil disobedience strengthens democracy by making moral demands visible and engaging public conscience when normal channels fail. The practice raises questions about law's legitimacy, democracy's scope, and the relationship between legal and moral obligation.

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93. According to the passage, civil disobedience differs from ordinary criminality in being:

A. Violent and secretive

B. Public, non-violent, and accepting consequences

C. Purely selfish

D. Supported by all citizens

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94. Critics of civil disobedience worry it will:

A. Have no effect

B. Strengthen legal order

C. Undermine democratic processes

D. Prevent all social change

PASSAGE 48: Linguistic Prescriptivism vs. Descriptivism

Linguistic prescriptivists believe language has correct and incorrect forms that should be taught and maintained. Descriptivists argue linguistics should describe how language is actually used without imposing standards. Prescriptivism risks elitism, stigmatizing non-standard dialects often associated with marginalized groups. Yet complete descriptivism seems to eliminate the possibility of grammatical instruction or editing. Most linguists adopt methodological descriptivism (describing actual usage) while

acknowledging that social contexts sometimes require standard forms. The debate involves both empirical questions about language change and normative questions about linguistic authority and equality.

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95. Prescriptivists believe language has:

A. No rules at all

B. Correct forms that should be maintained

C. Purely descriptive standards

D. No social implications

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96. The passage suggests complete descriptivism would:

A. Improve language instruction

B. Eliminate inequality

C. Make grammatical instruction impossible

D. Preserve all traditional forms

PASSAGE 49: The Trolley Problem

The trolley problem presents a dilemma: a runaway trolley will kill five people unless you redirect it, killing one person instead. Most say you should redirect. But what if instead you could push a large person off a bridge, stopping the trolley and killing him but saving five? Most say no. Yet the outcomes are identical: one dies, five live. Deontologists explain the asymmetry through the doctrine of double effect: redirecting foresees but doesn't intend the one death, while pushing intends it. Consequentialists struggle to explain our different intuitions. The problem tests whether moral principles can be systematized consistently or whether context-dependent judgments resist principled explanation.

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97. The trolley problem is puzzling because:

A. No one knows what a trolley is

B. Identical outcomes in different scenarios elicit different judgments

C. All philosophers agree on the answer

D. It involves no moral considerations

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98. Deontologists appeal to the doctrine of double effect, which distinguishes:

A. Intended from merely foreseen consequences

B. Good people from bad people

C. Easy from difficult decisions

D. Ancient from modern ethics

PASSAGE 50: Pragmatism and Truth

Classical pragmatists like James and Dewey proposed that truth is not correspondence to reality but rather what "works" or proves useful in practice. True beliefs are those that successfully guide action and prediction. Critics object that this conflates truth with utility: astrology might be useful (comforting) without being true. Pragmatists respond that ultimate usefulness—surviving sustained inquiry and experimentation—does track truth. They reject the correspondence theory not because truth is unimportant but because the notion of comparing beliefs directly to reality is incoherent: we only ever compare beliefs with other beliefs, never with unconceptualized reality itself.

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99. Pragmatists define truth in terms of:

A. Correspondence to unconceptualized reality

B. What proves useful in practice

C. Majority opinion

D. Religious authority

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100. The pragmatist criticism of correspondence theory argues that:

A. Truth is unimportant

B. We can directly compare beliefs to unconceptualized reality

C. We cannot compare beliefs directly to unconceptualized reality

D. All beliefs are equally true

Answer Explanations

1. B - The difficulty explaining why physical processes produce subjective experience

The passage defines the "explanatory gap" as the challenge in explaining "why particular neural patterns produce specific conscious experiences rather than others, or indeed, why they produce any experience at all." This gap exists between physical brain descriptions and subjective experiential qualities.

2. C - Neural activity alone provides insufficient explanation for conscious experience

Dualists argue that "subjective experience—what it feels like to see red or taste chocolate—possesses qualities that cannot be captured by physical descriptions alone." This is the core dualist position: physical/neural descriptions are insufficient to fully explain conscious experience. Even complete knowledge of brain states wouldn't explain the qualitative, subjective "what it's like" aspect of experience.

3. A - Develop critical thinking and deliberative capacities

Dewey believed education should "cultivate habits of inquiry, teaching students to examine evidence, question assumptions, and engage respectfully with opposing viewpoints." The focus is on developing intellectual skills for democratic participation, not just transmitting information.

4. C - Lacks reasoned deliberation

The passage states democracy "risks degenerating into mere majoritarianism, where numerical superiority replaces reasoned deliberation." Majoritarianism involves decisions based solely on numbers without the critical examination and discussion genuine democracy requires.

5. B - The tension between therapeutic effectiveness and patient deception

The ethical dilemma centers on whether doctors should prescribe placebos when they work therapeutically but require deceiving patients. The passage asks: "doesn't doing so require deception, undermining the trust essential to the doctor-patient relationship?"

6. C - Informing patients while still potentially producing therapeutic effects

Open-label placebos tell "patients know they're receiving inert substances but are told that placebos often work anyway"—preserving honesty while potentially maintaining effectiveness.

7. D - Subjective yet claiming universal agreement

Based on the passage, the correct interpretation: Kant saw aesthetic judgments as **subjectively based yet claiming universal validity** - they arise from individual sensibility but assert others should agree.

8. C - The paradoxical combination of subjectivity and claimed universality

The passage explicitly states: "This tension—between the subjective basis of aesthetic judgment and its claim to universal validity—defines what Kant called the 'antinomy of taste.' Beauty requires both individual sensibility and something approaching objective standards."

9. B - Work within an established paradigm

Kuhn defined "normal science" as work operating within the framework of an accepted paradigm - the routine puzzle-solving that uses established theories and methods rather than questioning fundamental assumptions.

10. C - Competing paradigms are incommensurable

The passage states paradigm shifts "involve partly subjective choices between incommensurable worldviews." Incommensurability means paradigms cannot be directly compared using neutral standards, requiring choices that aren't purely objective.

11. B - Relationships and contextual factors

The ethics of care "prioritizes relationships, responsibilities, and contextual understanding over universal rules." While justice ethics asks about rights, care ethics asks "who will be affected and how can harm be minimized?"

12. C - May reinforce stereotypes or lack clear guidance

Critics worry the care approach "risks reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes or providing insufficient guidance for resolving conflicts." These concerns question whether care ethics provides adequate moral direction.

13. B - How we approach contemporary action and agency

The passage states: "This debate matters not just for understanding the past but for acting in the present: if individuals shape history, heroic action makes sense; if vast impersonal forces dominate, such action may be futile."

14. D - Economic conditions and social structures

The materialist view "emphasizes economic conditions and class structures" as the driving forces of historical change, contrasting with individual-focused or contingency-based explanations.

15. B - Correlations between linguistic categories and perception

Evidence for linguistic relativity comes from "differences in how languages categorize colors, space, and time, correlating with differences in speakers' perceptual discriminations and memory."

16. C - Language completely determines thought

The strong version claims "language determines thought entirely" rather than merely influencing it. This is the extreme form of linguistic determinism contrasting with weaker versions.

17. C - Proportionate punishment for past wrongs

Retributivists argue "wrongdoers deserve punishment proportionate to their crimes, regardless of future consequences." The focus is backward-looking at what offenders deserve, not forward-looking at prevention.

18. C - Might justify punishing innocent people

The passage states "pure consequentialism might justify punishing the innocent if doing so prevented greater harm." If only outcomes matter, punishing an innocent person to deter others could be justified.

19. C - Possessing intrinsic value and spiritual significance

Romantics viewed nature as "possessing intrinsic value and even spiritual significance" with capacity to "elevate and heal the human spirit," contrasting with the Enlightenment view of nature as mechanism for control.

20. C - Overlooked human influence on landscapes

Romantic idealization "often ignored that landscapes are shaped by human activity and that 'pristine' nature is partly a cultural construct," treating as natural what was actually already modified by humans.

21. D - Unlimited tolerance may enable intolerance to triumph

Popper's paradox arises because "unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance itself. If we tolerate the intolerant, those who would destroy tolerant society if given power, then tolerance becomes a tool for its own destruction." Unlimited tolerance paradoxically allows intolerant movements to gain power and eliminate tolerance entirely.

22. B - It creates exceptions that could justify suppressing dissent

Critics worry that "this creates a dangerous exception to tolerance, potentially justifying suppression of unpopular views" - the exception principle could be abused to silence legitimate opposition.

23. B - The unique presence and traditional context of originals

Benjamin's "aura" refers to the artwork's "unique presence in time and space, its connection to tradition and ritual" - qualities lost through mechanical reproduction.

24. D - It democratizes art while potentially commodifying it

Reproduction "democratize[s] art, making it accessible to masses" but also "commodif[ies] it, stripping away contemplative engagement." It both liberates art from elitism and subjects it to commercial exploitation.

25. B - Actions flowing from one's own desires without external compulsion

Compatibilists define freedom as acting "according to our desires and choices without external constraint or compulsion," not requiring that actions be uncaused.

26. C - If desires are determined, the sense of freedom is illusory

Critics argue that "if our desires themselves are determined by factors beyond our control, in what sense are we truly free?" Even if we act on our desires, if those desires are determined, freedom seems compromised.

27. B - Ecocentrism justifies preservation even against human interests

The key practical difference: "If ecocentric views are correct, we have duties to preserve nature even when doing so conflicts with human welfare." Ecocentrism doesn't require showing human benefits.

28. C - Benefits and services wilderness provides to humans

Anthropocentric arguments "emphasize ecosystem services, recreational opportunities, and aesthetic experiences wilderness provides" - focusing on value to humans rather than nature's intrinsic worth.

29. C - Human nature in the state of nature

The passage concludes that "the conclusions drawn from social contract thought depend heavily on initial assumptions about human nature"—Hobbes's warlike humans versus Locke's rights-bearing individuals versus Rousseau's innocent humans.

30. D - Protecting pre-existing natural rights

Locke's contract has "government's purpose being to protect these pre-political rights" - individuals possess natural rights before government, which exists to secure them.

31. C - Interpretive construction constrained by facts and culture

Narrative identity involves "an interpretive activity" that isn't "neutral description" but also isn't completely free—narratives are "constrained by facts, shaped by cultural resources, and must be recognizable to others."

32. B - Influencing who we become through interpretation

"The stories we tell about ourselves shape who we become, making identity partly self-created." Narratives aren't just descriptions but actively shape future identity through interpretation.

33. C - God's attributed qualities and evil's existence

The theodicy problem arises from apparent contradiction: "If God is all-powerful, He could prevent evil; if all-knowing, He would know evil exists; if perfectly good, He would want to prevent it. Yet evil exists."

34. C - Evil results from valuable free choice

The free will defense argues "evil results from human free choice, which God values despite its risks" - God permits evil to preserve freedom's value.

35. C - Entangled with social perspectives and power

Postmodernists argue that "what counts as 'truth' or 'knowledge' is socially constructed, inseparable from power relations. Science...embodies particular perspectives and serves particular interests."

36. B - Applying its skepticism to itself undermines its own claims

The self-defeat objection: "If all truth claims are merely power plays, why accept postmodern claims themselves?" Postmodernism's own assertions would be just power plays, undermining their validity.

37. C - Character traits and human flourishing

Virtue ethics "focuses on character" and asks "What kind of person should I be?" emphasizing "character traits—courage, honesty, compassion—enabling human flourishing."

38. C - Lacks clear prescriptions for specific moral dilemmas

Critics note virtue ethics "seems to offer insufficient guidance for specific dilemmas: how does being virtuous tell us whether to lie to prevent harm?" Character traits don't clearly dictate specific actions.

39. C - The present is objectively privileged

The A-theory "holds that the present is objectively real and privileged; events become real as they occur, then recede into the fixed past."

40. B - Physical theory and lived experience

The tension exists between physics (B-theory seeming to "accord with physics, particularly relativity") and "our lived experience of time passing and the future's openness."

41. B - It claims universal truth while denying universal truths

The paradox: "cultural relativism itself claims to be a universal truth transcending cultures, which contradicts its own premise" of denying universal truths.

42. D - Condemning practices like slavery cross-culturally

Complete relativism means "we cannot condemn practices like slavery or genocide in other cultures" since morality is defined by each culture's norms.

43. C - How fundamentally different substances causally interact

The interaction problem: "if mental and physical are fundamentally different, how do they causally interact?" Different substances interacting seems mysterious.

44. B - Identify mental states with brain states

Materialist solutions "eliminate the problem by identifying mental states with brain states" - making mental and physical the same eliminates the interaction puzzle.

45. B - Denying one's freedom by conforming to external definitions

Bad faith "involves denying this freedom, pretending we have no choice when we do, or identifying completely with social roles" - refusing to acknowledge responsibility for choices.

46. B - Social contexts significantly constrain authentic choice

Critics "argue that this existentialist emphasis on radical freedom ignores how profoundly social contexts constrain possibilities. We don't choose our language, culture, or initial circumstances."

47. B - Remove bias from choosing principles of justice

The veil of ignorance ensures choosing principles "from behind a 'veil of ignorance' where you don't know your place in society" - removing self-interested bias.

48. C - Benefit the least advantaged and are attached to open positions

Rawls's difference principle permits "inequalities permitted only if they benefit the worst-off and positions are open to all."

49. C - Can provide epistemic advantages

Standpoint theory suggests "marginalized positions...can provide epistemic advantages, revealing assumptions invisible from dominant perspectives."

50. B - Leads to relativism or privileges identity over argument

Critics worry feminist epistemology "leads to relativism or privileges identity over argument" - potentially replacing reasoned evaluation with identity claims.

51. C - The artworld accepts it as a candidate for appreciation

Institutional theory defines art as "presented by artists and accepted by the artworld as a candidate for appreciation" - membership in art practices, not intrinsic properties.

52. B - Defines art in terms of itself without independent standards

The circularity objection: "art is what the artworld says is art" - defining art through the artworld which is defined through art, lacking external standards.

53. B - Requires excessive self-sacrifice

The demandingness objection notes utilitarianism "would require radical lifestyle changes and constant self-sacrifice" - demanding we sacrifice until doing so causes equal harm.

54. B - Claiming common moral intuitions are mistaken

"Some utilitarians embrace this implication, arguing that common moral intuitions are mistaken" - accepting the demanding requirements and rejecting contrary intuitions.

55. C - Interpretation from within a particular perspective

Hermeneutics argues "understanding always involves interpretation from within a particular tradition and horizon of pre-understanding. We cannot achieve a 'view from nowhere.'"

56. C - Mutual understanding through dialogue between perspectives

"Fusion of horizons" occurs through "dialogue" where "different perspectives can engage and mutual understanding can develop" - not complete agreement but enhanced understanding.

57. C - Enables autonomy, intimacy, and control over self-presentation

The passage argues privacy is "essential to autonomy, intimacy, and democratic citizenship" and involves "controlling information about oneself and maintaining boundaries between different social contexts."

58. C - Misunderstanding privacy as primarily about concealing wrongdoing

The "nothing to hide" argument "misunderstands privacy's function. Privacy isn't primarily about concealing wrongdoing but about controlling information about oneself."

59. C - Enables critical examination and potential transformation

Recognizing race as constructed "enables critical examination of how racial categories are created and maintained, and whose interests they serve" and "opens possibilities for challenging and transforming racial meanings."

60. B - More genetic variation within than between racial groups

"Genetic variation within supposed racial groups exceeds variation between groups" - undermining biological race categories.

61. C - Cases where moral judgments depend on uncontrollable factors

The passage defines moral luck as "the phenomenon where moral judgments depend on factors beyond the agent's control." The example illustrates this: "Two drivers behave identically—both driving recklessly—but one hits a pedestrian while the other doesn't. We judge them differently, though their actions and intentions were the same."

62. B - We seem to hold people responsible for what they don't control

The passage explicitly states the paradox: "This suggests that luck affects moral responsibility, which seems paradoxical: how can we be responsible for outcomes we don't control?"

63. B - Prior to and independent of social relationships

Communitarians challenge "the self as prior to and independent of its ends" - arguing instead we're "situated selves, constituted by social relationships."

64. B - Justify oppression in the name of community

Critics worry communitarianism "could justify oppression of dissenters in the name of community values" - community standards overriding individual rights.

65. B - Rationally justified without circularity

Hume's problem: "inductive reasoning...cannot be rationally justified" without circular reasoning - we can't prove induction works without using induction.

66. B - Justifying induction inductively assumes what needs proving

"We cannot...justify it inductively without begging the question" - using induction to justify induction is circular.

67. C - Western consumer culture erasing local traditions

The homogenization view sees "cultural homogenization—the spread of Western (particularly American) consumer culture erasing local traditions and creating a bland global monoculture."

68. C - Complex negotiations with power relations

The passage argues cultural change "involves complex negotiations where power relations matter but don't fully determine outcomes" - neither simple domination nor preservation.

69. C - Animals' capacity to suffer

Singer argues "the capacity to suffer, not rationality or species membership, grounds moral consideration. Since animals can suffer, their interests matter morally."

70. B - Analogous to racism—arbitrary discrimination

Singer charges opponents with "speciesism"—arbitrary discrimination based on species, analogous to racism or sexism" - morally arbitrary distinctions.

71. B - Morally wrong due to beliefs' effects on actions

Clifford argued "it is wrong...to believe anything upon insufficient evidence" because "beliefs influence actions affecting others, so we have moral duties regarding what we believe."

72. C - For some questions, withholding belief itself has consequences

James countered that "for some questions...evidence may be insufficient while the question is unavoidable and momentous. Withholding belief is itself a choice with consequences."

73. C - Are difficult but offer coherent underlying meaning

Modernist works like Ulysses are "difficult but reward interpretive effort with coherent significance" - fragmented but ultimately meaningful.

74. B - Questioning whether coherent representation is possible

Postmodernism "questions whether representation itself is possible or desirable" unlike modernism which sought new representational forms.

75. B - Flexibility and economic security

The debate "involves competing values: entrepreneurial freedom versus economic security, flexibility versus stability."

76. B - Shifts risks and costs to individuals

Classifying workers as contractors rather than employees "shift[s] risks and costs to individuals" who lose benefits and protections.

77. B - Why definite outcomes emerge from superpositions

The measurement problem "asks why definite outcomes emerge from superpositions of possibilities" - how quantum indeterminacy becomes classical definiteness.

78. B - A tool for predictions without ontological commitment

Instrumentalism treats quantum mechanics "as a tool for predictions without worrying about underlying reality" - avoiding metaphysical questions.

79. B - Requires reconciliation with the wrongdoer

Views differ on whether "genuine forgiveness demands reconciliation" or can be "an internal attitude change that can occur without reconciliation."

80. B - Forgiveness without repentance is appropriate

Debate over Wiesenthal's case concerns "whether forgiveness without repentance cheapens wrong suffered" or whether forgiveness can proceed independently.

81. B - One person's use doesn't prevent another's

Ideas are "non-rivalrous—my use doesn't prevent yours" unlike physical goods where consumption is exclusive.

82. A - Consequences and creators' rights

"The debate involves both consequentialist questions (what produces the best outcomes?) and rights-based questions (do creators have natural rights to their intellectual products?)."

83. B - Patient autonomy in medical choices

"Informed consent doctrine now requires patient autonomy in medical decisions" - patients, not physicians, make final choices.

84. B - Patient choices may lead to harmful outcomes

Tension arises "what if patients choose treatments physicians believe are harmful or refuse treatments likely to help?" - autonomy versus welfare conflict.

85. B - Morally arbitrary, similar to race or sex

Cosmopolitans argue "national boundaries are morally arbitrary, like race or sex" - lacking moral significance in themselves.

86. C - National obligations exist but are constrained by universal rights

Moderate positions suggest "special national obligations exist but are limited by universal human rights that constrain what nations may do."

87. B - Functional roles and relationships

Functionalists say "consciousness is defined by functional roles; if AI performs the same functions as human consciousness, it is conscious."

88. B - Behavioral indistinguishability guarantees consciousness

The Chinese Room questions "could a system mechanically following rules...be conscious despite behavioral indistinguishability from conscious beings?"

89. B - Standards that are themselves historically and culturally contested

"The very concept of progress presupposes standards for evaluation—standards that are themselves historically variable and culturally contested."

90. B - Westernization of values

Critics say apparent progress "reflects Western values being universalized, not objective improvement" - imposing one culture's standards.

91. B - Humans adapt to circumstances, returning to baseline happiness

The hedonic treadmill describes how "humans adapt quickly to changed circumstances, returning to baseline happiness levels."

92. B - Well-being may involve activities rather than just pleasure states

The treadmill suggests "perhaps well-being involves activities and relationships rather than states of pleasure."

93. B - Public, non-violent, and accepting consequences

Civil disobedience is distinguished by being "public, non-violent, and accepts legal consequences" unlike secretive criminal acts.

94. C - Undermine democratic processes

Critics argue "this undermines legal order and democratic processes—if citizens disobey laws they dislike, chaos results."

95. B - Correct forms that should be maintained

"Linguistic prescriptivists believe language has correct and incorrect forms that should be taught and maintained."

96. C - Make grammatical instruction impossible

"Complete descriptivism seems to eliminate the possibility of grammatical instruction or editing" if all usage is equally valid.

97. B - Identical outcomes in different scenarios elicit different judgments

The puzzle: "the outcomes are identical: one dies, five live" but "most say you should redirect...most say no" to pushing - same results, different intuitions.

98. A - Intended from merely foreseen consequences

Double effect "distinguishes redirecting foresees but doesn't intend the one death, while pushing intends it" - intention versus foresight distinction.

99. B - What proves useful in practice

Pragmatists propose "truth is not correspondence to reality but rather what 'works' or proves useful in practice."

100. C - We cannot compare beliefs directly to unconceptualized reality

Pragmatists argue "the notion of comparing beliefs directly to reality is incoherent: we only ever compare beliefs with other beliefs, never with unconceptualized reality itself."