

PHIL 101 Test 4 Study Questions

Our fourth test is scheduled for Friday, April 3. Expect a test composed of 20 true/false questions and 20 multiple-choice questions. Any material covered from our last test through the class meeting of April 1 may appear on the test. Test 4's material includes not only material addressed explicitly in class, but also everything from the assigned readings. I'll very likely focus on what got addressed in class, but anything is fair game.

1. Know what is meant by the following terms, names of views, names of arguments etc.:

argument	the design argument
premise	argument from analogy
conclusion	inference to the best explanation
divine attributes	"design flaws"
theism, atheism, agnosticism	Pascal's wager
the cosmological argument	the problem of evil
the principle of sufficient reason	natural evil
dependent being	moral evil
self-existent being	the free will defense

2. *Philosophy of religion—basic concerns*

- What is meant by 'God'? (Ok, this might mean many different things, but what conception of God were we working with in this section of the course?)
- What is the difference between theism, atheism, and agnosticism? What do atheism and agnosticism have in common?

3. *The cosmological argument*

- State the cosmological argument.
- For the first step of the argument, what role does the principle of sufficient reason play in defending the argument's premises? What objections are there to this step of the argument?
- For the second step of the argument, how might one show that a self-existent being would have to be God? What objections are there to this step of the argument?

4. *The design argument*

- What is the general form of an argument from analogy? What critical questions need to be asked in order to see whether the analogy in question is a good one?
- State the argument from design (as an argument from analogy). (Remember that I gave you two different formulations of it.)
- What is the general form of an inference to the best explanation?
- State the argument from design (as an inference to the best explanation). What other explanations are there for the same data being explained? How does one decide among such competing explanations?
- Critics of the design argument point to "design flaws" in the world, especially with respect to those things that are alive (and the parts of those things too, like the eye). What is the point of making those observations?

5. *Pascal's wager*

- What is Pascal's thesis that he wants us to accept?
- What is the argument Pascal gives for that thesis?
- What objections/critical questions are there against that argument?

6. *The problem of evil*

- What is the problem of evil?
- What solutions might be offered by way of solving that problem in a way that's friendly to theism?
- What criticisms are there of those solutions?

7. Some sample questions

True or false?

- (1) A self-existent being has its existence explained in terms of itself, or in terms of its own nature.
 - (2) If it's possible for something truly random to take place, then the principle of sufficient reason is false.
 - (3) Both premises of step (I) of the cosmological argument are defended by appeal to the principle of sufficient reason.
 - (4) The basic idea behind the design argument is that since the natural world *looks* in many respects as if it is designed, there must then *exist* some kind of intelligent designer.
 - (5) A crucial element of the basic formulation of the problem of evil is the thesis that God would be perfectly *good*.
- (6) Consider the following formulation of Step (I) of the cosmological argument:

- (1) Every being is either dependent or self-existent.
 - (2) It's impossible for every being to be dependent.
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- (3) There must be at least one self-existent being.

Which of the following claims, if true, would be most *damaging* to premise (1) of the argument?

- (a) It is possible for there to be an infinite series of dependent beings.
- (b) It is impossible for there to be an infinite series of dependent beings.
- (c) There must be a sufficient reason, or explanation, for why each and every existing thing exists.
- (d) It is possible for there to be a being with no explanation for its existence.
- (e) all of the above would undermine premise (1)

(7) For the argument in (6) just above, which of the following claims, if true, would provide the most *support* for premise (1) of the argument?

- (a) The principle of sufficient reason is true.
- (b) God exists, but there is no sufficient reason for his existence.
- (c) There is an infinite number of existing things.
- (d) God exists, and is a self-existent being.
- (e) There is at least one dependent being.

(8) Consider the following general form of arguments from analogy:

- (1) X and Y are similar in respects S_1, S_2, S_3, \dots
 - (2) X has characteristic C.
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- (3) Y has characteristic C.

Which of the following claims, if true, would help *strengthen* an argument like this the *most*?

- (a) X and Y are about the same size.
- (b) X and Y both exist.
- (c) X doesn't have characteristic C at all.
- (d) S_1, S_2, S_3, \dots are all relevant to the fact that X has characteristic C.
- (e) S_1, S_2, S_3, \dots are not only shared by X and Y, but also by everything in the universe.

(9) One objection to the so-called *free will defense* is that

- (a) it doesn't handle cases of natural evil
- (b) it doesn't handle cases of moral evil
- (c) it doesn't handle cases of bad things that human beings do to each other
- (d) it presumes that we're not free