



**PHILOSOPHY
HIGHER LEVEL
PAPER 1**

Friday 13 November 2009 (afternoon)

2 hours 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Section A: answer one question.
- Section B: answer two questions, each chosen from a different Optional Theme.

In your answers you are expected to:

- *present an argument in an organized way*
- *use clear, precise and appropriate language*
- *identify any assumptions in the question*
- *develop a clear and focused argument*
- *identify the strengths and weaknesses of your response*
- *identify counter-arguments to your response, and address them if possible*
- *provide relevant supporting material, illustrations and/or examples where appropriate*
- *conclude by making a clear, concise and philosophically informed personal response to the examination question.*

SECTION A

*Answer **one** question from this section. Each question in this section is worth [30 marks].*

Core Theme: What is a human being?

Either

1. Read the following passage and develop your response as indicated below.

Human passions transform man from a mere thing into a hero, into a being that, in spite of tremendous handicaps, tries to make sense of life. He wants to be his own creator, to transform his state of being. Man's passions are not pointless psychological complexes that can be adequately explained by childhood traumas. They can be understood only if one recognizes them for what they are: man's attempt to make sense out of life and to experience the optimum of intensity and strength he can achieve under the given circumstances.

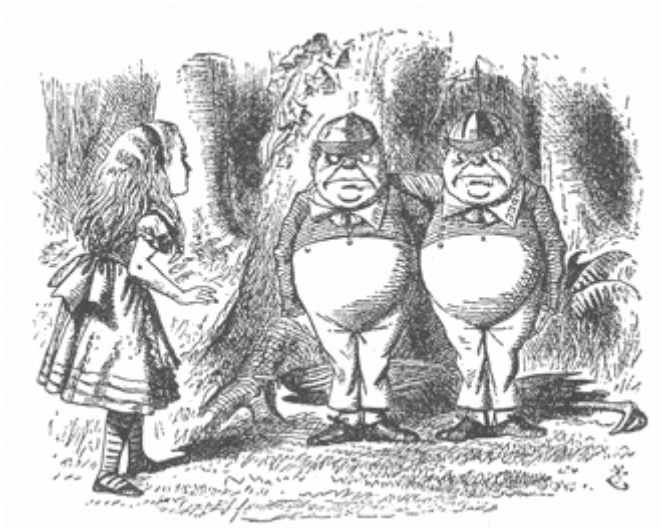
[Source: Adapted from E. Fromm, (2003), "The Anatomy of Human Destruction" in *The Bloomsbury Book of the Mind*, Ed. S. Wilson, Bloomsbury, London]

Write a response (of approximately 800 words) in which you:

- identify a central philosophical concept or philosophical issue in this passage that addresses the question, "what is a human being?"
- explore **two** different philosophical approaches to the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified
- explain and evaluate the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified.

Or

2. Study the following image and develop your response as indicated below.



“tweedledum-and-tweedledee” two fat little men in Lewis Carroll’s “Through the Looking-Glass” (1872)
[Source: www.answers.com/topic/tweedledum-and-tweedledee, March 2008]

Write a response (of approximately 800 words) in which you:

- identify a central philosophical concept or philosophical issue in this image that addresses the question, “what is a human being?”
- explore **two** different philosophical approaches to the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified
- explain and evaluate the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified.

SECTION B

Answer **two** questions from this section, each chosen from a different Optional Theme. Each question in this section is worth [30 marks].

Optional Theme 1: Grounds of epistemology

3. To what extent can empiricism's claim that all knowledge begins in sense experience be reconciled with rationalism's claim that some knowledge can be derived from reason alone?

Or

4. Critically evaluate the philosophical position of the sceptic when he or she denies that we can know things.

Optional Theme 2: Theories and problems of ethics

5. To what extent is impartiality a necessary condition of moral judgments?

Or

6. To what extent does living an ethical life mean living in accordance with the natural environment and living beings?

Optional Theme 3: Philosophy of religion

7. Critically evaluate atheism as a philosophical perspective.

Or

8. Critically evaluate the claim that religious faith is less about doctrine and more about a commitment to a way of life.

Optional Theme 4: Philosophy of art

9. To what extent is the prime function of art a moral one?

Or

10. Explain and discuss the nature and purpose of aesthetic judgment.

Optional Theme 5: Political philosophy

11. Explain and discuss the origin and maintenance of the state according to at least one social contract theory.

Or

12. Critically evaluate the idea that human rights emerge as a natural property of the human condition.

Optional Theme 6: Non-Western traditions and perspectives

13. Explain and discuss the nature of the self in at least one non-Western tradition or perspective.

Or

14. Critically evaluate the moral view of at least one non-Western tradition or perspective.

Optional Theme 7: Contemporary social issues

15. Critically evaluate the philosophical implications of the claim that it is the media that are responsible for stereotypes in society.

Or

16. Evaluate philosophically the impact of technology on improving the quality of human life.

Optional Theme 8: People, nations and cultures

17. Critically evaluate the claim that contributing to world peace is a main responsibility of global citizenship.

Or

18. Explain and discuss the challenges that multiculturalism presents to philosophical reflection.
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