

Philosophy
Higher level
Paper 1

Wednesday 16 November 2016 (morning)

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.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[75 marks]**.

Section A

Answer **one** question from this section. Each question in this section is worth [25 marks].

Core theme: Being human

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

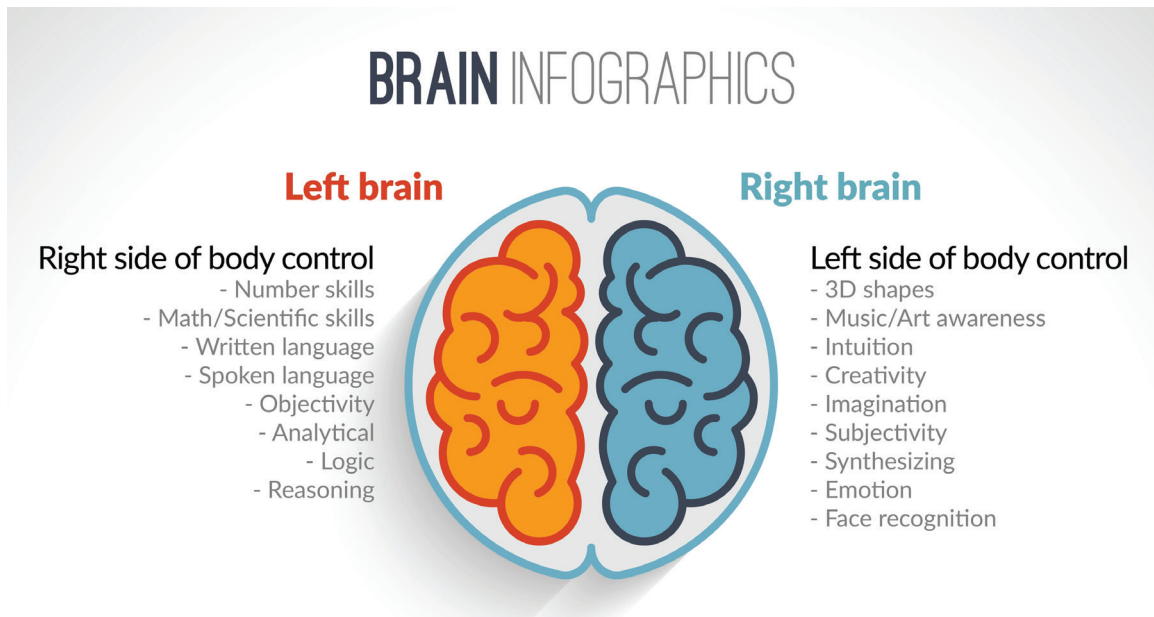
In this extract the character is describing how he and others were trying to bring down a hot air balloon from the air with people in it that had lost control, and they were tugging on a rope together to attempt to get the balloon grounded in the field.

I didn't know who let go first... What is certain is that if we had not broken ranks, our collective weight would have brought the balloon to earth a quarter of the way down the slope a few seconds later as the gust subsided. [T]here was no team, plan, or agreement to be broken. So can we accept that it was right, every man for himself? Was this a reasonable course? We never had that comfort, for there was a deeper covenant, ancient and automatic, written in our nature. Cooperation – the basis of our earliest hunting success, the force behind our evolving capacity for language, the glue of our social cohesion. Our misery in the aftermath was proof that we knew we had failed ourselves. But letting go was in our nature too. Selfishness is written in our hearts. This is our mammalian conflict – what to give to others and what to keep for yourself.

[Source: adapted from Ian McEwan (2006) *Enduring Love*]

With explicit reference to the stimulus and your own knowledge, discuss a philosophical issue related to the question of what it means to be human.

2. Look at the following picture and develop your response as indicated below.



[Source: Macrovector/Shutterstock.com]

With explicit reference to the stimulus and your own knowledge, discuss a philosophical issue related to the question of what it means to be human.

Section B

Answer **two** questions from this section, each chosen from a different optional theme. Each question in this section is worth [25 marks].

Optional theme 1: Aesthetics

3. Explain and discuss Picasso’s claim about the function of art, that “[a] painting is not made to decorate apartments. It’s an offensive and defensive weapon against the enemy.”
4. To what extent does technology change art, the artistic process and production?

Optional theme 2: Epistemology

5. Evaluate the claim that knowledge of our world gained through our senses is unreliable.
6. Evaluate the claim that all knowledge should be freely available to all groups within a population.

Optional theme 3: Ethics

7. “Moral claims are not true or false; they are just expressions of approval and disapproval.” Discuss and evaluate this claim.
8. “Always act so as to produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number.” With reference to one or more example(s) of applied ethics, discuss and evaluate whether this principle is a legitimate way to make moral decisions.

Optional theme 4: Philosophy and contemporary society

9. Explain and discuss the philosophical implications of showing tolerance towards minority groups or individuals.
10. “The prime application of technology is as a tool for assisting human work.” To what extent can this claim be justified?

Optional theme 5: Philosophy of religion

11. Evaluate the claim that essential attributes of God’s nature such as goodness, omnipotence and omniscience can be known through reason.
12. Evaluate the claim that if one accepts pluralism (as the view that a single, ultimate religious reality is being differently experienced and understood in different religions, offering equally effective paths to salvation or liberation), then each person would be justified in upholding his/her own religion.

Optional theme 6: Philosophy of science

13. “Contempt for experience has had a tragic revenge in experience; it has cultivated disregard for fact and this disregard has been paid for in failure, sorrow and war.” Discuss and evaluate Dewey’s claim.
14. Discuss and evaluate the claim that “biology gives you a brain. Life turns it into a mind” with reference to the relation between neuroscience and consciousness.

Optional theme 7: Political philosophy

15. Evaluate the claim that the state has the right to wage war against its own citizens.
 16. To what extent can a government legitimately intervene to favour different people in order to guarantee equality of opportunity?
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