



Dr. Perez IB Philosophy

Synthesis of Paper 1

Prompt form the 2015 IB Philosophy Exam

“Animal” is a negative term, but only because man has been made inappropriately privileged. It has been argued that whereas the traditional view supports Hamlet’s exclamation, “How like a god,” Pavlov emphasizes “How like a dog.” But is that a step too far? A god is the archetypal pattern of an explanatory fiction, of a miracle-working mind, of the metaphysical. Man is much more than a dog, but like a dog he is within the range of scientific analysis. [Source: adapted from B F Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (1971), pages 200–201]

If you opt for the stimulus (passage previous slide and this image) for your prompt.

What do you do?



In your answers you are expected to:

- argue in an organized way using clear, precise language, which is appropriate to philosophy
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of appropriate philosophical issues
- analyze, develop and critically evaluate relevant ideas and arguments
- present appropriate examples providing support for your overall argument
- identify and analyze counter-arguments
- provide relevant supporting material, illustrations and/or examples
- offer a clear and philosophically relevant personal response to the examination question.
- 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?”
 - investigate two different philosophical approaches to the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified
 - explain and evaluate the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified.

REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- ▼ 1) What issue or controversy does the stimulus bring up? In other words: what is going on in the picture or prompt? Is there a message, or what can you make the photographer say? Clearly, it is saying that humans are better than dogs.

2) What can you argue here? If you know the message, what is your take on it? You are most likely correct. Go with it. You can say that identity is... As long as you can defend it, you can use it. This is going to eventually be a thesis, so write it down!



3) What philosophies can you use? Here is the place where most people immediately jump. They tend to go straight for the philosophies without forming an opinion. These papers are NOT notes! Do not treat them as such! Now, think outside the box on this if you want. You can also use a few standbys, like determinism or existentialism (see? Useful stuff, you can almost always use it on this paper!) but if you feel comfortable with ethics, you can talk about that too. Ethics are very flexible.

4) **What counter arguments can you use?** always think of the counterarguments first. You can get away with a flimsy counter argument as long as you have some, so while you're in the early thinking stages, get those counters going. Also, you have a pretty good idea of what your stance is, and counterarguments are good for cleaning up those fuzzy lines a little. I always find that it is much harder to write a paper if I have no idea what the weaknesses are.



5) Plan your claims. Yes. Philosophy papers are a little different than analytical, English papers, but not by much. An English paper has a 5-paragraph format, while the philosophy paper typically has a 6 paragraph structure.

I)Intro,
II)claim,
III)counterclaim,
IV)claim,
V)counterclaim,
VI)conclusion.

6) After writing the paper go back and Revise & Edit. You do NOT want any spelling or grammatical flaws. Any mistakes impact your credibility; they instantly make your paper look bad. Furthermore do not use any colloquialisms or clichés. If you have even one, you aren't making the paper more relatable, you're turning into garbage.

You should *never* have a paragraph talking only about the philosophies. Repeat. Never have a paragraph talking about the philosophies. If there isn't an argument in the paragraph then add one or take the paragraph out.

Philosophy

realism - Plato (as in Platonic realism - forms)

logic- Aristotle

ethics – Aristotle

consciousness - Kant & Descartes

determinism

existentialism