

EPISTEMOLOGY

Question Bank

1. Epistemic naivety and awareness
2. Plato's two realms of knowledge
 - According to Plato, there are two general realms of knowledge.
 - First, THE TRANSCENDENT (NOUMENAL) world of absolute, Perfect, unchanging Ideal Forms of which THE GOOD (the supreme Idea) is the primary one (usually interpreted as including BEAUTY and TRUTH) and the source of all the others such as Justice, Temperament and Courage.
 - This world of eternal Forms is the realm of true, permanent being grasped by the intellect.
 - Abstractions, such as of equality, circularity, redness, humanness that one can conceive and recognize in a variety of things provide simple indications that Forms exist.
 - True knowledge as opposed to illusionary knowledge of the senses, is derived occasionally from an awareness of the eternal Forms.
 - Second, THE PHENOMENAL WORLD (the world of appearances) is composed of things in a state of flux. Attempting unsuccessfully to emulate (imitate, participate in, partake of) the Ideal world. The love (attraction, affinity, tendency) that things have for the perfection inherent in these Ideal Forms inspire (cause, motivate) things in the phenomenal world to change, move, act, seek goals.
3. Skepticism and relativism
 - *Skepticism comes from Greek word skeptikos, which means reflective. The word skeptesthai means to consider, to reflect on, to examine. And thus we can derive the meaning: to doubt, in the sense that one considers and looks carefully.*
 - *A skeptic is one who doubts, disbelieves or disagrees with generally accepted conclusions. He suspends judgment on something because of doubt or because he is waiting for more evidence. His attitude is critical and can be destructive.*
 - *Skepticism is the doctrine that absolute knowledge is unattainable, and that judgment must be continually questioned and doubted in order to attain approximate or relative certainty which is opposed to dogmatism.*
 - *Relativism is the view that knowledge is entirely dependent on and varies with the limited ability of each mind and its condition of knowing. It is the denial that there are certain kinds of absolute, objective and universal truths. It holds that truth depends upon one's point of view and upon one's*

presuppositions.

4. Phronesis and Sophia

- *Phronesis refers to practical wisdom. It derives its meaning from praktike (praxis). Praxis means "doing" "an action" or "an activity", "practical ability or manual skills". It is knowledge pursued for the sake of actions as the study of ethics and politics.*
- *Sophia refers to the Theoretical wisdom. When we talk of Sophia, we have in mind NOUS, EPISTEME. It is knowledge pursued for its own sake as in the study of metaphysics, physics or mathematics. It derives its meaning from Theoretike (theoria). It is abstract intellectual knowledge as contrasted with "praxis" or "poiesis". It means "beholding", "a looking at", "speculation", or "rational contemplation"*

5. Subjective Idealism

- The theory was first developed by George Berkeley.
- He was of the opinion that the skeptic would remain invincible as long as we distinguish between a) ideas (mental objects) and b) material things and then tried to explain how we could get from one to the other.
- The solution lies in rejecting the distinction and arguing that the only thing that exist are ideas in the mind. Hence the term "idealism". In addition, Berkeley recognized the existence of minds (subjects) that perceive the ideas, and hence the term subjective.

6. A Posteriori Knowledge

- *This comes from our sense experience. Because it applies to what we observe, it is never universally or necessarily true. From experience, one can say that a building is tall, or the dog has a shabby hair. But one cannot conclude that all buildings are tall, all dogs are of shabby hair.*

7. A Priori Knowledge

- *That which reason can know without the help of sense experience. It is universally and necessarily true; hence its denial leads to a contradiction.*

8. Philosophic Rationalism

9. Empirical Principle

- The fundamental principle that Hume sees that he has established is this:
- "All our simple ideas in their first appearance are derived from simple impressions which are correspondent to them and which they exactly represent"
- Hume will use it to analyze and demolish a number of ideas. All he need to ask is from which impression does this idea come? If from no immediate impression the idea is meaningless. Where there is no impression, there is no adequate idea. Where there is no impression, the idea is meaningless.

- Substance does not exist because we have no impression of physical substances. We only have impression of qualities such as colour, size, shape etc.

10. Naïve Realism

- It is nothing more or less than the pre-critical commonsense acceptance of what is (or at least seems to be) directly presented to us through the senses, namely a world of physical objects which are there and are what they seem to be.
- These objects exist in themselves independently of our sensing them, and exactly as they are sensed. The total “objectivity” of sensuous presentation is taken for granted.
- There is no discrepancies between appearance and reality, since such discrepancies are not the usual situation of our conscious interaction with the world.

11. Contingent Truth

12. Ontological Truth

- There is truth in things. We have a very definite notion of a metal called gold. This notion or idea of gold involves a number of subordinate ideas regarding the colour, the specific gravity, the malleability, the hardness, the chemical constitution of gold.
- And this corresponds with reality, the test of truth is to observe the reality and see if the proposition corresponds.
- Procedure for verification of propositions about less obvious matters may be more complicated.

13. Abstraction

- *To abstract means to remove or separate something from another thing.*
- *In the epistemological context, what is being abstracted is a common nature; and that from which it is being abstracted are the particular and varying instances of it.*
- *In abstracting the universal human being from Socrates... the individual and peculiar features are left out and their common and essential feature is grasped: human being.*

14. Necessary Truth

15. Solipsism

- *Belief that a person exists alone and the external world is merely a projection of one's own inner experiences.*
- *It is a belief that only the self can be known.*

16. Impulse and Reason

17. Belief and Knowledge

- *Plato defines knowledge as “justified true belief”.*
- *Knowledge always involves belief in the sense of a firm conviction. It presupposes that what is believed is in fact true, in the case.*
- *But since one might, by chance or lucky guess holds to be true a belief which is in fact true.*
- *In order to claim knowledge in the matter, one will be expected to provide sufficient evidence for the belief.*
- *Plato thus distinguishes true opinion (doxa) from knowledge (episteme).*
- *Knowledge then constitutes those claims that are ultimately defensible, while opinions or beliefs constitute those claims for which justification is possible, but not a complete defense.*

18. Cartesian circle

- *Descartes’ strategy to use the proof that a perfect, non-deceiving God exists in order to establish that I can trust my clear and distinct ideas and thus move beyond Cogito to other certain truths.*

19. Error

- Berkeley can accept what science reports about physiological distortion, etc., but he would insist upon translating all of this into a sequence of ideas. According to him, there are two criteria for determining the correctness of a perceptual report: CONSISTENCY and BEING PUBLIC.
- A report is consistent if it allows us to predict correctly how one idea will follow another.
- Example: if I say that I see a red book on the table (visual idea) and if I can then go up to the table and touch the red book (tactile idea), my original report is consistent and correct.
- A report is public if other people report (verbally agree to) seeing the same thing. It is not enough for one person to see it, since he might be suffering from hallucination.

20. Doubt

- Doubt is defined as a suspension of assent with regard to an enunciable, that is, the intellect is indetermined as to affirming or denying the enunciable. As long as we doubt, we give no assent, that is, we do not make an actual judgment act; we do not determine our intellect or “make up our mind”.
- The intellect may be indetermined because NO evidence is seen on either side. Thus, for example, there is no evidence at all regarding whether the number of the stars is even or odd. This is called NEGATIVE DOUBT.
- But more often, in matters that concern or interest us, we see reasons for both sides but no compelling objective evidence for either side. The

reasons are practically equal weight for or against either side, thereby making a decisive judgment impossible and leading to suspension of judgment. This sort of doubt is called POSITIVE DOUBT.

21. Intuition

- *This means our understanding of self-evident principles, such as the axioms of geometry (a straight line is shortest distance between two points). These statements are self-evident in that they prove themselves to reason: To understand them is to know that they are absolutely true; no rational mind can doubt them.*

22. Tabula Rasa

- At birth the mind is a blank tablet; no one is born with innate ideas.
- All our ideas come from experience, either from sensation or by reflection.
- All simple, uncompounded ideas come from experience; and the mind by combining simple ideas, form new complex ideas.

II. Medium Length Questions

1) What is epistemology all about?

- *The word epistemology is derived from the combination two Greek words: episteme (true and scientific knowledge as opposed to "doxa", which means opinion); an organic body of knowledge, a science; theoretical knowledge (opposed to poietike and praktike). Logos means the study of, theory of, the science of; a reflective treatment of the subject to which it is referred.*
- *Hence all that epistemology stands for is a reflective treatment of knowledge or the theory of knowledge or the philosophic inquiry into knowledge.*
- *It is the study of the origin, presuppositions, the nature, the extent, and the veracity (truth, reliability, validity) of knowledge.*
- *It is the branch of philosophy which asks questions such as: What is knowledge? Where does knowledge come from? Is sense experience necessary for all types of knowledge? What part does reason lay in knowledge? Is there knowledge derived only from reason? What is the connection between knowledge, evidence and certitude?*
- *Epistemology is more than just a branch of philosophy. It is of great practical relevance. A man's theory of knowledge determines what policies he pursues in the acquisition of further knowledge, and in using the knowledge already at his disposal.*
- *It is a discipline concerned with prescribing norms or guidelines for the use of knowledge and claims to knowledge; Plato considered the 'Good'*

as the highest object of knowledge; Alfred Jules Ayer has compared the word "knowledge" to "good" and he claims that knowing gives one the right to be sure.

- *Epistemology enhances the ability to understand philosophical controversies, hence active participation in the philosophical analysis of human knowledge.*

2) What is a proposition? Discuss its salient features.

- *A statement about the real world is one that asserts that something is the case, which some state of affairs obtains. If what it asserts really is the case, then it is a true statement; if not, it is false.*
- *Propositions are expressed in syntactically correct and semantically meaningful sentences of some language or the other.*
- *They are either true or false. They have to be one or the other.*
- *Any sentence which pretends to state a proposition which is neither true nor false is without meaning.*
- *In so far as propositions have meaning, they can be thought about, doubted, entertained as hypotheses, believed as well as known.*
- *In so far as propositions are either true or false, they can be asserted or denied, and such an assertion or denial is justified or not depending upon evidence. This act assertion or denial is called judgment, and it is only at this level of intellectual activity that the questions of truth and certitude arise. Therefore, it is only at this level that the question of knowledge ("knowing that") is posed.*

3) Where did Pyrrho look for justification for his skepticism? Discuss

4) What is skepticism? Discuss all its types

- *The word skepticism comes from a Greek word "skeptikos" which means reflective. The verb "skeptesthai" means, in the first place, "I consider carefully" or "I look carefully," and in a derived sense "I doubt".*
- *So a skeptic is someone:*
 - o *who doubts, disbelieves, or disagrees with generally accepted conclusions in science, philosophy*
 - o *who suspends judgment about something because of doubt and/or because he is waiting for more or better evidence*
 - o *whose attitude is critical and usually destructively too*
 - o *Who by nature doubts or questions what he hears, reads etc*
 - o *Who is an adherent of any philosophical school of skepticism*
- *In general, skepticism is the doctrine that absolute knowledge is unattainable, and that judgments must be continually questioned and doubted in order to attain approximate or relative certainty which is*

opposed to dogmatism.

- *Varieties of skepticism:*
- *Common-sense skepticism: - if a skeptic is someone who at one time or another has doubts or who suspends judgment about something, then all of us are skeptics. None of us can know everything, and you yourself would surely be skeptical about someone who claimed that he or she did.*
- *Methodological Skepticism: - attributed mainly to Descartes and consists of doubting everything until something is reached that cannot be doubted. Descartes' skepticism is based on two fundamental questions: a) what do I in fact know clearly and distinctly that is so absolutely certain beyond any doubt whatsoever? b) What further knowledge is it possible to derive from this certainty?*
Descartes believed it is possible to rise above skeptical doubt and find knowledge that is absolute, certain, necessary, and self evident, which serves as the ground for all other knowledge and for knowledge of all reality.
- *Philosophical skepticism: - This is not meant for any particular position or movement in philosophy, but the tendency of some philosophers to deny or doubt the more cherished philosophical claims like: every event must have a cause; God exists; there are underlying substances.*
- *Absolute skepticism: - What is denied or doubted here is the very possibility of knowledge itself.*

5) Who were the skeptics? What was their quest in life and how did they find it?

6) 'The cognitive structure is dynamic.' Elaborate

7) 'A knower goes through three levels of consciousness which are distinct but related.' Discuss.

- *The first state of awareness/consciousness is called "jagrdavastha" (wakeful state); in this state the mind cognizes the external objects.*
- *The second state is "suapnavastha" (dreamfulness state of mind); in this state the mind cognizes the internal objects with the help of "light" (tājasa).*
- *The third state is "susuptavastha" (dreamless state of mind); in this state of mind there is no desire, nor the duality of 'I' and 'the world', since this state is true the consciousness is present; it is called "prajna" (the term used for the intellect).*
- *In all the above stages of consciousness the experience is indicated by the term "bhuk" (enjoyment): in the first stage there is the experience of the gross world; in the second stage it is the experience of the subtle world; in the third stage it is the experience of bliss.*

- *In the seventh verse the 'fourth' state of consciousness is explained without giving any name or what is the object of experience. The 8th verse explains it. This state is neither cognitive nor non-cognitive, it cannot be spoken of, it is the essence of the knowledge of the self, it is peaceful (santam), benign (sivam), non-dual (advaitam).*
- *The verses from 9-11 the ¾ of consciousness are explained as the three letters of the AUM. Letter is mantra and thus three states of consciousness are equated with mantras of the sacred syllable.*
- *The 4th state is called "turiya" by other Upanishads; it is the experience of pure consciousness; it underlies and transcends the three common states of consciousness. The experience of the three states of consciousness is by the three bodies a) Gross body b) Subtle body c) Causal body. The 4th is the state of illumination.*
- *The ultimate knowledge is the realization of the 4th state of consciousness, actually it not a state but the background for all the states; the other three states appear and disappear but the fourth remains throughout.*

8) What is consciousness? Discuss

- *In the loose usage consciousness is equivalent to awareness, knowledge. In this sense all knowledge is awareness.*
- *There is a pure awareness that is called consciousness. It is awareness of oneself or some aspect of oneself. It is the awareness of our mental acts. It always involves a subject positing the conscious act and the object which the act intends or is about.*
- *Consciousness is always relational. There is no such thing as pure consciousness. Because consciousness is relational-consciousness of something-consciousness and knowledge can be identified when the latter is taken broadly and its active sense as knowing.*
- *It is the awareness of "I" states. Such states may be:*
 - o *Cognitive as when am aware of seeing something colored or of hearing a sound...*
 - o *Affective as when I am aware of an emotional state such as being happy or sad.*
 - o *Conative as when I am aware of desiring refreshment and of willing to obtain it.*
- *Consciousness is not an operation in addition to the operations of sensing, thinking, and willing. It is properly not an operation at all; it is the luminosity concomitant with operations.*
- *Human intellectual consciousness is transparent to itself; we can perform perfect reflection which can proceed indefinitely.*

- *Consciousness is the basis of knowledge. That there can be no unconscious knowledge is readily admitted.*
- 9) Discuss with examples the different meaning of the term 'rationalist'
- In the loose sense, rationalism is a dominating interest in reasoning, reflecting, criticizing, examining and so on. This is what is meant when philosophy is defined as 'the attempt to provide, within reasonable limits, an essentially rational interpretation of reality as a whole, and when all philosophers are characterized as rationalists.
 - In a stricter sense, rationalism is an epistemological theory, specifically, a theory about the origin/basis of knowledge.
 - While a rationalist in the strict sense is necessarily a rationalist in the loose sense, it is not necessarily the case that a rationalist in the loose sense will be a rationalist in the strict sense-he/she may, rather, be an empiricist.
 - As a term designating a theory about the basis of knowledge, rationalism is at par with empiricism. Both empiricism and rationalism, in the technical sense answer the question, "What is the basis of knowledge?" though in radically different ways.
- 10) For Plato, all learning or knowledge is merely a matter of remembering. Discuss.
- In order to account for the innate ideas, Plato appeals to a prior existence of the mind in the world of Ideas or Forms. He suggests that prior to birth the soul enjoyed fullness of knowledge but that, when it was conjoined with the body, the soul lost consciousness of ideas it once had. Since union with the body induces in the soul a general state of forgetfulness, it is the role of the sensible things to stimulate and thus occasion our recollection of the Ideas we possess in our subconscious.
 - It is for this reason that Plato was able to say that all learning is merely a matter of remembering, and that, consequently, knowledge leads back to the world of prior existence, where the mind or soul enjoyed an unlimited vision of truth and goodness.
 - Because of this Plato has Socrates announce in Phaedo that not only do real philosophers have no fear of death, but they actually desire and look forward to it. This is prompted by the understanding that their constant distraction from the higher pursuit of knowledge.
 - As long their souls are imprisoned in their bodies, the philosophers have the tendency to peer out, as it were, through the only windows of the prison, the five senses. This leads to the contamination of their souls by the distortions, illusions, and relativities of the sensible world.
 - Plato's theory of the origin of knowledge is heavily intellectualist and that it contributes minimal importance to the body and the world of sensible things. Indeed, Plato views the body as an obstacle to the life of the soul, a kind of

prison from which the soul is constantly trying to escape through the acquisition of knowledge.

11) What is the theory of illumination and why is it important for St. Augustine?

- The eternal, immutable, necessary truths are supersensible. We cannot perceive immutable truth of things, says Augustine, unless they are illuminated by the sun.
- The sun is the divine light which illumines the mind, comes from God who is "intelligible light", in whom, by whom all things and by whom all those things which are luminous to the intellect become luminous.
- Augustine rejected outright the Platonic doctrine of Reminiscence, because it required the non-Christian belief in the pre-existence of the soul.
- Neither did he accept the doctrine of light accept the doctrine of innate ideas which was later adopted in the 17th century. In the doctrine of light, Augustine makes use of a Neoplatonic theme which goes back to Plato's comparison of the idea of Good with the sun, the idea of Good radiating the subordinate intelligible objects. For Plotinus the One or God is the sun, the transcendent light.
- The use of the light metaphor, however, does not by itself tell us very clearly what Augustine meant. These words seem to show that the illumination in question is a spiritual illumination which performs the same function for the objects of the mind as the sun's light performs for the objects of the eye. In other words, as the sunlight makes corporeal things visible to the eye, so the divine illumination makes eternal truths visible to the mind.
- It would therefore appear that it is not illumination itself which is seen by the mind, nor the intelligible Sun, God, but the characteristics of necessity and eternal truths are made visible to the mind by the activity of God.
- We need, therefore divine illumination in order to enable us apprehend what transcends our minds 'for no creature, however rational and intellectual, is lighted of itself, but is lighted by participation of eternal truth.

12) What was Descartes's vision for philosophy? How did he prepare himself to actualize it?

- His vision was a plan for a single, unified science in which philosophy and all the sciences would be interconnected in one systematic totality. All qualitative differences of things would be treated as quantitative differences, and Mathematics would be the key to all problems of the universe.
- BY CONTRAST WITH Plato, who saw the unity of all sciences in the mystical idea of the Good, for Descartes the unity of science was a rationalistic and mathematical unity based upon mathematical axioms.
- By contrast with medieval Aristotelianism, explaining change teleologically as the movement of matter toward actualization of form, for Descartes all change is explained mechanically, as the movement of bodies according to the laws of

physics.

- But how can such a belief be found? Descartes answers that it can be found by the method of doubt.
- Skepticism is the name for philosophic position of doubt concerning the reliability of knowledge. Descartes's type of belief is called methodical, or methodological skepticism, defined as the use of doubt methodically in order to arrive at true and certain knowledge.
- Meditation I is entitled "Of the things Which We may Doubt". Instead of examining each one he first classifies or groups them. Then, he examines each group of beliefs to see if there is any that defies doubt by meeting the three criteria: a) that the proposition be impossible to doubt b) that it can be an ultimate truth; and c) that it can be about something that exists.
 - The first to be examined are the beliefs of sense perception. Clearly, says Descartes, senses are untrustworthy as a source of certainty. What has deceived me once may deceive me again. But surely, insists Descartes, I cannot doubt my senses telling me that "I am here..."
 - What about the belief in material things? These must also be doubted because they are based upon sense perception, which has been shown to be deceptive and therefore lacking certainty.
 - What about the belief in the natural sciences? Physics, chemistry, and biology may be scientific as the study of unicorns and mermaids. Such sciences could be exact and precise, and still be only about illusory or fictitious objects that do not in fact exist. And so, these too must be doubted.
 - Then, Descartes moves on to mathematical belief. Why does he doubt these? He has always regarded mathematics as the very model of certainty, as completely certain in its propositions. These beliefs are known by reason, not by the senses. Mathematics, he reflects, fall into error sometimes.

13) What does Mathematical method consist of? Why did Descartes follow it?

- In his Rules for the direction of the Mind, Descartes tells that Mathematics consists in the use of only two mental operations by which true knowledge can be achieved: intuition and deduction.
- By deduction he means understanding of self-evident principles, such as the axioms of geometry (a straight line is the shortest distance between two points). Such statements are self-evident in that they prove themselves to reason: To understand them is to know that they are absolutely true; no rational mind can doubt them.
- By deduction he means orderly, logical reasoning or inference from self-evident propositions, as all geometry is reasoned in order by deduction from its self-evident axioms and postulates.
- The entire series of Descartes' six meditations is a single sustained effort of a)

reconstructing philosophy b) finding for philosophy the certainty of a Mathematical proof.

- Descartes then lays down three requirements the foundational belief must meet:
- ✓ Its certainty must be such that it is impossible to doubt, is self-evident to reason, is clear and distinct.
- ✓ Its certainty must be ultimate and not dependent upon certainty of any other belief.
- ✓ It must be something that exists.

14) Critically discuss Descartes' third proof of God's existence?

- This criticism is known as the Cartesian Circle.
- Descartes' strategy is to use the proof that a perfect, non-deceiving God exists in order to establish that I can trust my clear and distinct ideas and thus move beyond the Cogito to other certain truths. But is this not a vicious circle?
- In order to prove that God exists, Descartes had to use the very clear and distinct ideas (substance, cause, the effect cannot be greater than the cause) that God's existence was supposed to guarantee. And so God guarantees my clear and distinct ideas; but my clear and distinct ideas are what guarantee the existence of God.
- In proving God's existence, Descartes relies on the truth of clear distinct ideas that God's existence was supposed to guarantee.

15) What is the theory of innate ideas? Did Locke accept it? Discuss.

- This theory asserts that clear and distinct are innate in the sense that they are "born with us," that our knowledge is based upon the principles that are supposed to be "stamped upon the mind of man".
- Locke severely criticized this theory, he insisted that the adherents of this theory had maintained that the universal agreement of humankind regarding certain principles showed that these must be innate. Locke argued in opposition that the fact of agreement would be insufficient evidence as to the source of the principles in question.
- He also argued that there are no principles that are universally agreed to, since children and idiots do not seem to know or believe the principles that are usually cited as examples of innate ideas (the law of identity & the law of non-contradiction). The way children acquire knowledge about the principles in question, through the learning process, further indicates that they are not born with innate ideas.

16) Discuss Locke's/ Hume's theory of knowledge.

Locke

- He contended that our minds, at the outset, are no more than "white paper, void of characters, without ideas," just a blank tablet (a tabula rasa). The mind

therefore gets ideas from experience. Thus, there are only two sources of our ideas and what we know about them: sensation & reflection.

- ✓ Sensation: We receive most of our ideas when our senses are affected by external objects. Sensation provides us with ideas of qualities, such as the ideas of hot, cold etc
- ✓ Reflection: This is the internal experience we have of the operations of our minds. Reflection provides us with ideas such as those of thinking, willing, doubting, believing, affirming, denying and comparing.
- ✓ Both of these are kinds of experience-reflection on what is going on inside no less than sensation of what is going on outside-and these are two and only means by which ideas become inscribed on the blank tablet of our mind.

Hume

- Human understanding is limited-and the things that metaphysics seeks to know, we can never know. Metaphysics must be shown to be pretentious nonsense, along with the doctrine on which it rests-that there are two kinds of knowledge, ordinary knowledge by sense perception and superior metaphysical knowledge by reason.
- Sense perception is the only source of knowledge that we have, and to which all human beings can ever know is limited. These perceptions are the contents of consciousness.
- Hume divides perceptions into impressions and ideas.
- By the term 'impression,' then, I mean all our more lively perceptions, when we hear, see, or feel etc. Put differently, impressions are our immediate sensations, passions and emotions.
- Ideas or thoughts are copies or faint images of impressions, such as we have in thinking about or recalling any of our immediate impressions.
- The difference between impressions and ideas is in the greater force and liveliness of impressions that enter our consciousness with more "force and violence". By contrast, ideas are only images of our impressions that occur in our thinking, reasoning, and remembering.
- Hume looks at his room and says, "When I shut my eyes and think of my chamber, the ideas I form are the exact representations of the impressions (chairs, tables) I felt.

17) Critically evaluate the representational theory put forward by Locke.

- Locke believed that the causes of our sensations are external to us. We do not know the nature of these causes immediately, but we infer this from our ideas, which are representations of the external causes.
- In this view there are Two factors involved in knowing: a) the mind which does the knowing b) ideas which are known c) the object in the external world that is

known by means of ideas.

- Thus Locke believed that our ideas represent those objects, and therefore really inform us about the external world. It is claimed that a) our perception of an object, and b) the object itself are two distinct entities rather than one and the same thing.
- Locke's analysis of perception tells us that:
 - ✓ what we know are our sensations or 'ideas'
 - ✓ these sensations are produced in us by physical objects external to us
 - ✓ there is a correspondence between our perceptions and these external causes.

Problem

- The trouble arises when we ask about this relation, or correspondence, of the perceived idea to anything 'out there' external in the world. Any representative theory of knowledge, according to which objects of the external world are represented to us by our ideas, immediately falls prey to the egocentric predicament, our hopeless inability to get outside our minds.
- If all we can directly know is our own ideas, if all our knowledge is restricted to ideas, then how could we now whether our ideas correspond to anything, or even approximate anything "out there".
- There is no standpoint from which we can look at an object in the external world and then look at our ideas in our minds.
- For on Locke's view, all we can perceive are our own ideas. That there is an external world we know from passivity of our perception—our ideas simply confront us independently of our will.

18) How is the mind, according to Locke, active and/or passive?

- In so far as the mind receives the simple ideas contributed by sensation and reflection, it is considered to be passive. For objects of our sense do, many of them, intrude their ideas upon our minds whether we will or not.
- Its active side becomes clear when it constructs complex ideas out of simple ones by means of comparing, combining, and abstracting. For instance, after I have become used to eating apples, I think, "Now, I am eating an apple." I have formed a complex idea of an apple.
- Complex ideas are divided into ideas of substances— the idea of a man; of collective substances— the idea of an army; of modes or modifications— the idea of figure or thinking or running; and of relations— considering one idea in relation to another.
 - ✓ The mind may combine simple ideas into compound ones, thus complex ideas are made. For example, we combine the simple ideas of whiteness, sweetness and hardness to form the complex idea of a lump of sugar.
 - ✓ The mind can bring together two ideas, whether simple or complex, and compare them with one another without uniting them into one. And thus it obtains its

ideas of relations.

- ✓ The mind can separate ideas from all other ideas that accompany them in their real existence: this is called abstraction.

19) Discuss Hume's Association of Ideas.

- According to Hume, there are some universal principles in our thinking which operate within us, not with necessity, but nevertheless as a force of impulse as "a gentle force, which commonly prevails. The association of ideas is based upon three qualities of our ideas that tend to lead the mind from one idea to another, to connect one idea with another. These qualities are the three laws of association of ideas.
- ✓ Resemblance: Our minds easily run from one idea to another that resembles it. Hume gives an example that "a picture easily leads our thought to the original."
- ✓ Contiguity: Our minds tend to associate one idea with another that is physically or temporally adjoining it. Mentioning one apartment in a building "naturally leads us to think about the others."
- ✓ Causality: Our minds seem impelled to associate a cause with the effect it brings about. "If we think of a wound, we can scarcely keep ourselves from reflecting on the pain which follows it." The idea of the wound leads us by this law of association of ideas to the idea of the effect of the wound, the resultant pain.
- ✓ Of the three laws of association of ideas by cause and effect. Says Hume, is the most powerful connection between our ideas.

20) Hume's theory of knowledge boils down to just two kinds of propositions. Which are they? Discuss its implications.

- Matters of fact: This consists in our impressions and ideas. There is no necessity that any particular impression will follow any other impression. How do we know, Hume asks, that the sun will rise tomorrow? No necessary causal law guarantees it. It is just intelligible and without any logical contradiction to say, "The sun will not rise tomorrow."
- Relations of ideas: Logic and Mathematics give knowledge of the relations of ideas. This is the domain of certainty. The propositions of mathematics are either self-evidently or intuitively certain, or they can be demonstrated by deductive reasoning to have complete certainty.
- ✓ The truths of mathematics assert relationships between ideas, between abstract symbols. They are formal abstract truths. They tell us nothing about matters of fact, on the other hand, matters of fact cannot refute them.
- ✓ The truth $2+2=4$ is a formal truth. It is true, independent of any experience we might have. In addition, one cannot, without contradiction deny a proposition which states a mathematical relation between ideas. But one can deny that the sun will rise tomorrow without a contradiction.
- Statements about formal relations of ideas, like $2+2=4$, give us knowledge which

has certainty, but on the other hand, it is merely formal truth, empty, abstract; it gives no information about existence. Statements of fact, on the other hand, give us information about facts, about existence, but provide no certainty, not even a basis for probability.

21) Discuss the limits of human knowledge according to Hume.

Atomistic impressions and their corresponding ideas

- These impressions and ideas appear repeatedly in our experience and there is no way of knowing their cause.
- We have no sensory impressions of the existence of the world, God and physical substances. These deceptive and meaningless ideas are the work of our imagination.
- However, we can reason mathematically and logically about the relations that hold between formal ideas.
- Therefore, metaphysics, which is concerned with the ultimate nature of reality, is impossible; it attempts to transcend the limits of our understanding, to know that which we cannot know, that of which there are no possible impressions.

Impossibility of science

- The causal laws of science have to be reduced to the psychological laws of association of ideas.
- There is no necessary connection between cause and effect.
- Science cannot provide objective causal explanations of events or predict the future, since there is no justification for the assumption that regularities observed in the past will continue in the future.

Impossibility of commonsense

- The necessary connections of common sense are reduced to psychological associations of ideas; there is no justification for their providing explanations or predictions of events.

22) What does Kant's Copernican Revolution consist in?

- Kant's Copernican Revolution consisted in the startling announcement that ideas such as substance and causality do not make their way into our minds through experience, but are a priori categories (cognitive forms) of the understanding which and shape, in fact constitute our experience.
- It does not imply the view that reality can be reduced to the human mind and its ideas. Neither is he saying that the human mind creates things, as far as their existence is concerned, by thinking them.
- He suggested that we cannot know things, that they cannot be objects of knowledge for us, except in so far as they are subjected to a priori conditions of knowledge on the part of the subject.
- The certain ways in which things appear to the human subject (as spatially co-

ordinated and as connected with one another by necessary causal relations) are due to subjective a priori conditions of knowledge in himself.

- Man will not know things apart from their subjection to these a priori conditions or forms; but will know why the empirical world is what it is for his consciousness.

23) 'What we know are only phenomena,' according to Kant. Discuss.

- Kant argued that we can never know the real nature of the external world or any object within it, by the term 'external world' he meant the world as it exists independently of human knowledge.
- Things-in-themselves (noumena), are unknowable and forever hidden from us.
- What we know are things as they are presented to us; that is, their appearances, for what is present in our consciousness is the data of experience, ordered and arranged according to the structure of the mind. This structured experience he refers to as the phenomena.
- These are produced by the operation of the forms (concepts & categories) of the mind upon the unknowable external world.
- The mind transforms things-in-themselves in such a way as to make them intelligible
- Our consciousness extends merely to the world of appearances only. Behind those appearances the understanding can never penetrate.

24) What is metaphysical/physical/moral certitude?

25) Critically discuss induction/ deduction as a method of knowledge

Induction

- It is the procedure of developing general explanatory hypotheses to account for a set of facts. In scientific induction one projects universal principles-for instance, concluding that all planetary orbits are parabolic, all cats are black-after having actually examined only a few cases.
- When using inductive reasoning one's working hypothesis is always tentative; it is always subject to change whenever further facts are obtained.
- The weakness of induction results mainly from the failure to realize that it always gives us probable knowledge and never certain knowledge.
- The induction problem forever haunts. How many instances of a class must be observed before one can be really sure?

Deduction

- It is sometimes defined more narrowly as the inference from a general premise to a particular conclusion by means of a syllogism / it is the process of drawing out the implications of one or more premises of fact.
- A deductive argument is said to be sound if two conditions are met" i) the argument form is valid ii) the premises are true

- In deduction, the conclusion merely makes explicit what was implicit in the conjunction of the premises. Hence it is said that deduction is not a source of knowledge; conclusion merely states what we already know from the premises.
- Deductive procedure applies primarily to Mathematics, Geometry, and to systems of logic with clearly defined terms.
- In deduction the conclusion necessarily follows from the premises.
- The deductive reasoning guarantees that the conclusion shall be as certain as the premises.

26) Discuss anumana as an instrument of knowledge.

III. Questions for long answers:

27) Discuss the four ways in which the verb 'to know' is used. Which way is most important from the point of view of the theory of knowledge? Why?

28) Discuss with appropriate examples Aristotle's division of episteme.

29) What do you understand by 'cognitive structure'? What are its constituent elements? Discuss.

30) What is absolute skepticism? Is it sustainable? Discuss.

31) Define and critically evaluate relativism.

32) For St. Augustine, 'sense knowledge' is the lowest level of knowledge. Discuss.

33) How did Descartes find his foundational principle to build philosophy on? Does it meet the three conditions he laid down? Discuss.

34) Why did Descartes take upon himself the burden of proving God's existence?

35) Critically discuss Descartes' first proof of God's existence.

36) How did Descartes prove the existence of the material substance?

37) What does an idea mean for Descartes? Discuss the three kinds of ideas from the points of view of their origin, reality and objectivity.

38) How does Hume refute the element of necessity in the principle of causality?

39) Explain Kant's theory of knowledge.

40) Which and what are Kant's categories of understanding?

41) Critically evaluate authority/intuition as a source of knowledge.

42) Explain with examples the meanings of the word 'true' or 'truth'.

43) Critically examine the correspondence/ coherence/pragmatic theory of truth.

44) Compare and contrast 'doubt' and 'opinion' as the states of mind.

45) What is meant by 'evidence'? Discuss its types.

46) How are truth, evidence and certitude inter-related?