1. What is the study of metaphysics?

2. Plato maintained that there were two hierarchies of reality, the World of Becoming (The Realm of appearances) and the World of Being (The Realm of the Forms). Explain the difference between the two.

3. Why does Plato reject the material world as ultimately or independently real? Include in your answer the problem of change & the problem of perfection.

4. Explain Plato’s Forms (Eidos). What are they and what is included in this realm?

5. Do the Eidos exist only as ideas in our minds? If all the Eidos are perfect, and the natural world depends on the Eidos to exist, how does Plato explain the existence of imperfection in the natural world?

6. Explain Plato’s, “ Allegory of the Cave” as a metaphor for why we might be confused about the true nature of reality. Explain why Plato argued that the World of Becoming is dependent on the World of Being. In your explanation, include a description of his allegory of the cave. Is this a problematic relationship? Why or why not?

7. How does Plato argue for the Forms as innate knowledge? Why change and illusion a problem for the kind of knowledge Plato is was looking for? Explain Plato’s story of the “Divided Line” as an illustration of why knowledge must be innately born.

8. How is it that our knowledge of horses in the natural world somehow depends on our innate knowledge of the Eidos Horse, according to Plato?

9. Explain Plato’s distinctions between knowledge of “first principles,” understanding, reason, belief, and opinion? Why does our understanding of the visible realm fall short of “a genuine grasp of reality?”

10. Why must the soul be immortal according to Plato? (Hint: it has to do with the nature of the realm of the Forms.)

11. Plato argued that art and theatre are not good pursuits for the true lover of wisdom. Given your understanding of his theory of the Forms and what we ought to pursue, why do you think he would say that? (Hint: It has to do with the fact that art and theater are symbolic representations of the empirical/natural world.)

12. Why did Aristotle call Plato’s notion that things in the material world “participate” in their corresponding Forms, “a mere empty phrase and poetic metaphor?”

13. What is “being qua being” and why did Aristotle argue that it was the most important branch of knowledge?

14. What is ultimately real, according to Aristotle? Why does he claim that wood has nature but things made of wood do not? What does Aristotle mean by “having nature?”

15. Explain Aristotle's various definitions of "substance." How does he argue that substance must exist?

16. Why did Aristotle argue that Plato could not explain how things in the material world change? How does Aristotle explain change?

17. Explain Aristotle's notion of causation. How does it differ from our modern notion of "cause?" Why did Aristotle claim that to know a thing necessarily involved knowing its causes?
18. Explain why Aristotle’s teleological world view impacts his concept of substance and our knowledge of the natural world.
19. What role does Aristotle’s concept of the “prime mover” play in his metaphysics?
20. Explain the difference between what Plato meant by *Eidos* and what Aristotle meant by *eidos*. What is the relationship between form and matter for Plato? What is the relationship between form and matter for Aristotle?
21. Explain what Descartes’ goal was in his “Meditations.” Why did he start with the process of radical doubt?
22. Explain what's dual about Cartesian dualism. What reasons does Descartes give for believing that reality is made up of two sorts of things? How does Descartes define “substance?”
23. Explain why Descartes rejects the empirical method in favor of rationalism.
24. In Meditation I, Descartes discusses the problem of appearance and reality in his argument regarding the indistinguishability between the waking and dreaming states. Explain how this supports his rejection of empiricism.
25. Explain the wax metaphor in Descartes’ “Meditation II.” What conclusions did Descartes draw from the fact that all the properties of the wax were subject to alteration?
26. What argument does Descartes offer to support the indubitability of the statement, “*Cogito ergo sum?”*
27. Explain Descartes’ two criteria for truth as “clearness and distinctness.”
28. Why must the knowledge of one’s own existence be “innately born” according to Descartes? What things are we born knowing, according to Descartes?
29. Explain Descartes’ arguments in Meditation IV for the existence of God. Why does he need God to be “supremely good and the fountain of truth?” How does Descartes eliminate the possibility that all our sensory impressions of the material world could be caused by “evil demons and deceivers?”
30. Do Plato and Descartes agree about the nature of the relationship between the immaterial and the material worlds?
31. Explain the problem of circularity with Descartes’ argument.
32. Explain some of the problems with Descartes’ arguments for the existence of God.
33. Explain Empiricism and Materialism.
34. Why does Locke reject the notion of “innate ideas” and instead argue for a “*tabula rasa*” picture of the mind? Why does Locke claim that all knowledge is based in perception/sensory experience?
35. How does Locke defend induction against Descartes’ and others claims that it is unreliable?
36. How does Locke define substance? Why does he claim that ultimately, substances are unknowable?
37. How are our ideas of substances made? Explain the relationship between the object in the material world, our perception of it and the ideas we may form of it?
38. Why did Locke think it was significant that we can distinguish between primary and secondary qualities? What conclusions did he draw about the nature of the material world from this distinction?
39. What did Locke mean by “spiritual substances?” How does he argue for their necessary existence?
40. Explain Subjective Idealism. Why is Berkeley also sometimes referred to as a “Strict Empiricist?”
41. Berkeley agrees with Locke that all we’ve got is our perceptions, sensations and ideas? Where
did he disagree? Explain Berkeley’s argument rejecting Locke’s distinction between primary and secondary qualities of perception as support for the claim that material reality must exist.

42. Berkeley wrote, “...though there were external bodies, ‘tis impossible we should ever come to know it....” But, given that we do have ideas and perceptions, what must exist, according to Berkeley?

43. What is implied by Berkeley's "esse est percipi"? In other words, if a tree falls in the forest and no one is around to perceive it, did it make a noise?... Did it really fall? ... Does it really even exist?

44. Explain Berkeley's argument claiming that a thing can exist only in the mind. Does this imply that I can just think anything into existence? Why or why not?

45. How do we know that the tree in the quad doesn't disappear when no one is around? If you answered because God sees it, then what assurance do we have that God is always around according to Berkeley?

46. Explain Berkeley’s distinction between “real things” and, “ideas or images of things.”

47. Explain the key item of difference between Berkeley’s “subjective idealism” and Hume’s “skepticism.”

48. Explain "Hume's Fork." Why did he think that these were the only kinds of things we could claim to know?

49. What is Hume’s distinction between impressions and ideas?

50. Explain why Hume rejects the principle of induction. What is the general assumption behind induction that Hume argues is an unjustifiable belief.

51. Explain why Hume rejects the principle of universal causation – that every event has a cause? Explain Hume's idea of causality being merely a “constant conjunction of perceptions.” Why doesn’t this give us knowledge?

52. Explain why Hume rejects belief in the external world. Explain why we can't make a warranted distinction between how things look to us and how things really look according to Hume.

53. In class, we discussed that the logical outcome of Hume's radical skepticism was in Hume's own words "philosophical melancholy and delirium.” What does Hume imply we should do to avoid this unfortunate conclusion? Is he saying that his argument is wrong?

54. According to Grosz, why is embracing “plurality and multiplicity” not necessarily committing oneself to relativism?

55. Explain Grosz’s six general tendencies that she sees developing in feminist epistemology.

56. Explain Uma Narayan’s argument that oppressed people might have a clearer picture of reality than their oppressors. What implications does Narayan’s argument have regarding the relationship between subjective perspective and objective knowledge of the world?