Exercise walk-through

1.3
Arguments and the core essay

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Philosophy · HL

Freedom

- The **free will** problem: if every event has a cause, can any choice be free?
- *The three positions answer two different questions: is determinism true, and could **free will** exist if it were?*
- Harry Frankfurt's "unwilling addict" helps the compatibilist: the addict takes the drug, but wishes he did not want it.
- He is unfree not because his act was caused, but because he acts on a desire he rejects.

Answering a Section A question

- Issue: does **personal identity** depend on **psychological continuity**?
- Positions: the **body theory** (same person, same body); Parfit's psychological continuity (identity weakens as character changes).
- Objections: the body theory ignores what we care about in a person; Parfit's view makes identity vague.
- Conclusion: the case supports Parfit; the person is partly, not wholly, the same, and we should judge their new behaviour with care.

Sources for this lesson

- International Baccalaureate, *__Philosophy__ guide* (first assessment 2024) and subject brief.
- J. M. Harlow, "Recovery from the passage of an iron bar through the head", *Publications of the Massachusetts Medical Society* (1868).
- J. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (2nd edition, 1694), book II, chapter 27; T. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785).

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Distinguish a **valid** argument from a **sound** argument. [2]

2.2 Look at this argument: “Robots will never think. My uncle, who builds robots, says so, and he is an expert.” Name the weakness in the argument, and rewrite it as a stronger argument. [3]

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2.1

valid: if the premises are true, the conclusion must be true (the form is correct); sound: valid and all the premises are actually true

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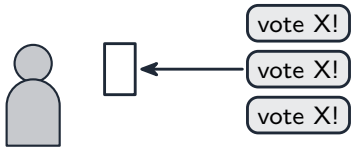
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2.2

it is an appeal to authority: one expert’s opinion, with no reasons; and it ignores other experts who disagree; a stronger version gives a reason, e.g. “Thinking needs understanding; robots only follow rules (Searle’s Chinese Room); so robots do not think”

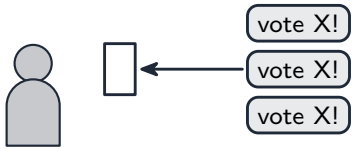
Exercise 2.3

2.3 Identify a **philosophical issue** raised by this stimulus: *a cartoon of a person in a voting booth who sees three advertisements on their phone, all telling them how to vote.* Explain why it is philosophical and which part of the core theme it links to. [4]



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an issue, e.g. are our choices free if they are shaped by others?; philosophical: it is a conceptual question about freedom, not only a factual question about advertising; link to freedom in the core theme: free will and influence on desires; reference to a view, e.g. compatibilism: free if acting on one's own desires; but are these desires one's own?

Exercise 2.4

2.4 Plan a core essay on the stimulus in 2.3. Include the issue, a thesis, two arguments with philosophers, a counter-argument and a conclusion. [6]

Exercise 2.4

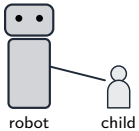
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2.4

issue and question clearly stated; thesis that answers the question; first argument with a philosopher, e.g. hard determinism: the choice is caused by influences; second argument, e.g. compatibilism: still free if the person reflects and endorses the choice; counter-argument with a reply; a conclusion with a judgement and its limits

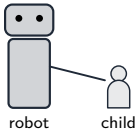
Exercise 3.1

3.1 *(Core theme style.)* Stimulus: *a photograph of a humanoid robot holding a child's hand in a hospital.* With explicit reference to the stimulus, discuss a philosophical issue about **being human** that it raises. [15]



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Mark with the markbands: [13-15] clearly focused on the question, clear explanation of the philosophical issue, relevant philosophers and arguments used accurately, counter-arguments evaluated, well-developed critical analysis, different perspectives evaluated, a reasoned conclusion; [10-12] focused, mostly accurate knowledge, analysis with some evaluation; [7-9] some focus, relevant knowledge, mostly narrative or description with limited analysis; [4-6] little focus, limited knowledge, mostly narrative; [1-3] little understanding of the question. Points that may be included: identifies a clear issue from the stimulus, e.g. can a machine care? what makes us human?; explicit reference to details of the stimulus; clear thesis; argument from personhood criteria (self-awareness, moral agency); argument from functionalism: if it does what caring does, it may care; counter-argument: Searle's Chinese Room or qualia: no inner experience; human relationships and recognition: the child may treat it as a person; ethical implications, e.g. trust and responsibility in care; evaluation of the strongest view; a reasoned conclusion