Supported preparation: Premises and personhood

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Philosophy · HL

Scope and prerequisites

IB philosophy first assessment 2025. Core Being human; one optional theme at SL, two at HL; one school-selected prescribed text. HL extension is Philosophy and contemporary issues. No unverified prescribed text is chosen by default.

Mapped preparation outcomes: ib_philosophy_hl.1.1, ib_philosophy_hl.1.2. Read the matching native lesson first. Actual approved choices, evidence and final learner work remain separate.

Source vocabulary

premise ; **validity** .

Explanation and worked method

A premise gives a reason; a conclusion is the claim those reasons aim to support. Validity concerns whether true premises would guarantee the conclusion. Soundness also requires true premises. A definition of personhood must be argued for and tested, not assumed from everyday wording.

Original source / task evidence

Task: “All persons can communicate verbally; this individual cannot communicate verbally; therefore this individual is not a person.” Evaluate without applying a harmful label to a real person.

Separate what is stated from the interpretation.
Premises and personhood

Task: “All persons can communicate verbally; this individual cannot communicate verbally; therefore this individual is not a person.” Evaluate without applying a harmful label to a real person.

The argument has the valid denying-the-consequent form if the first premise is accepted. The premise is highly contestable: temporary inability to speak is a counterexample to using verbal performance as a necessary condition. A valid form does not establish soundness.

Independent transfer

Propose consciousness as a personhood criterion and identify a difficulty in applying it.

Attempt independently before reading the model.

Checked original model

A consciousness criterion can link personhood to experience, but its necessity, sufficiency and meaning need argument. Temporary unconsciousness challenges a momentary test, and other minds raise evidential problems. Distinguish the concept from a performance proxy and consider a defensible revision.

These are authored formative expectations, not official IB descriptors. Accept other justified arguments with evidence and material limits.

Source and task holds

This supplement teaches the method for this part of the course. The full assessment criteria and any texts your school chooses come from your teacher.