

Being human

IB DP Philosophy HL core theme full package

1. The core at a glance

The core at a glance

IB Philosophy compulsory core theme: being human - what it is to be human, through identity, personhood, freedom and mind-body, with the philosophical craft (argument analysis, thought experiments) taught alongside.

Must-know: premises, conclusion, validity vs soundness; the named fallacies; the claim-reason-objection essay spine; identity three theories with Theseus, Reid's officer and the teleporter; personhood criteria and edges; the three freedom positions with Frankfurt's addict; dualism vs physicalism with Mary and the zombie.

2. The craft

The craft

Philosophy proceeds by argument: premises offered in support of a conclusion. Identify the parts; evaluate the inference (valid is form; sound adds truth); recognise deduction and induction; and name the failures - begging the question, straw man, false dilemma, appeal to authority.

Writing is the discipline visible: claim, reason, objection answered. The thought experiment is philosophy's laboratory - the ship of Theseus, the teleporter - isolating a concept by stressing it; the paper asks what the case shows and what it assumes.

3. Identity and personhood

Identity and personhood

Personal identity over time: the body theory (Theseus's parts replaced), the memory theory (Locke - broken by Reid's brave officer: memory not transitive, identity must be), psychological continuity (Parfit - overlapping chains; the teleporter shows survival without identity, so identity may not be what matters).

Personhood: a moral not biological category - rational agency, consciousness, relationships. The criteria draw edges (infant, impaired, machine) where abortion, end-of-life and animal ethics are decided: criterion proposed, counter-case found, criterion refined.

4. Freedom and the human condition

Freedom and the human condition

Free will: hard determinism (no freedom; causation universal), libertarianism (agents originate actions - how is an uncaused event theirs?), compatibilism (free acts caused the right way, by the agent's own reasons without coercion). Frankfurt's unwilling addict and the manipulation case stress each.

Mind and body: dualism against physicalism; the knowledge argument (Mary learns what it is like) and the zombie (conceivable? possible?) - each shows something only if its assumption holds, which is where the physicalist replies.

Check yourself

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Argument anatomy; validity vs soundness; the named fallacies; thought experiments as stress tests.

Identity: the three theories with Theseus, the officer, the teleporter; Parfit's claim.

Personhood criteria and edges; the moral uses of the category.

Freedom's three positions with Frankfurt and manipulation; dualism vs physicalism with Mary and the zombie; the worked suppressed premise.