

Philosophy Summation

Background for 12AP Summer

Reading

Objectivism

Existentialism

Metaphysics

Answers not found through scientific investigation

1. existence exists
2. truth exists; truth is a singularity
3. truth may be derived by our senses and discerned through reason
4. truth is attainable, and is necessary for the survival and advancement of humanity

1. existence is the result of the random and absurd
2. knowledge and truth are unattainable due to this random and absurd nature
3. attempts to attain knowledge are futile
4. reality is determined by the perspective of the individual, an act necessary for making existence tolerable
5. there are multiple layers/versions of truth

Ethics

The determination of what is good or bad

1. morality is based on the individual's right to exist
2. every individual has the right to exist for him-/herself and no one else
3. what is considered a moral act is determined by how it improves one's existence without immorally or irrationally impeding another's

1. morals, like any other standard or generalization, are illusory
2. morals do not exist in an absurd universe and so must be invented and agreed upon

Aesthetics

Art, what Ayn Rand calls the selective recreation of reality

- "Romanticism" - the portrayal of a hero who:
1. has well-defined moral values
 2. takes purposeful action to live by and defend those values
 3. acts in his/her own interests
 4. is portrayed as successful

- "Existentialism" - the "accurate" representation of humanity in a "natural" state:
1. suffering, fearful, feckless
 2. a victim of an indifferent and unpredictable universe on the road to inevitable destruction

note: the object is to portray humanity in a positive light, to show us at our best, to inspire us to reach our potential.

Example: Batman, who is human, capitalist, and acting in his own interests.

Example: Superman, a reluctant alien who must sacrifice his own happiness to help a race of weaklings who would surely perish at the whim of an unforgiving universe without him.

Politics/Economics

Issues relating to government, society, and the individual

1. individualism
2. freedom as the natural state of humanity
3. self-rule
4. capitalism as the economic expression of freedom

note: the role of government is to protect individual rights and the individuals who make up the society

1. collectivism, i.e. communism, socialism, fascism

or

2. the destruction of any hypocritical attempt at order, i.e. nihilism, anarchy

note: the role of government is to protect and preserve the society, sometimes at the expense of the individual