

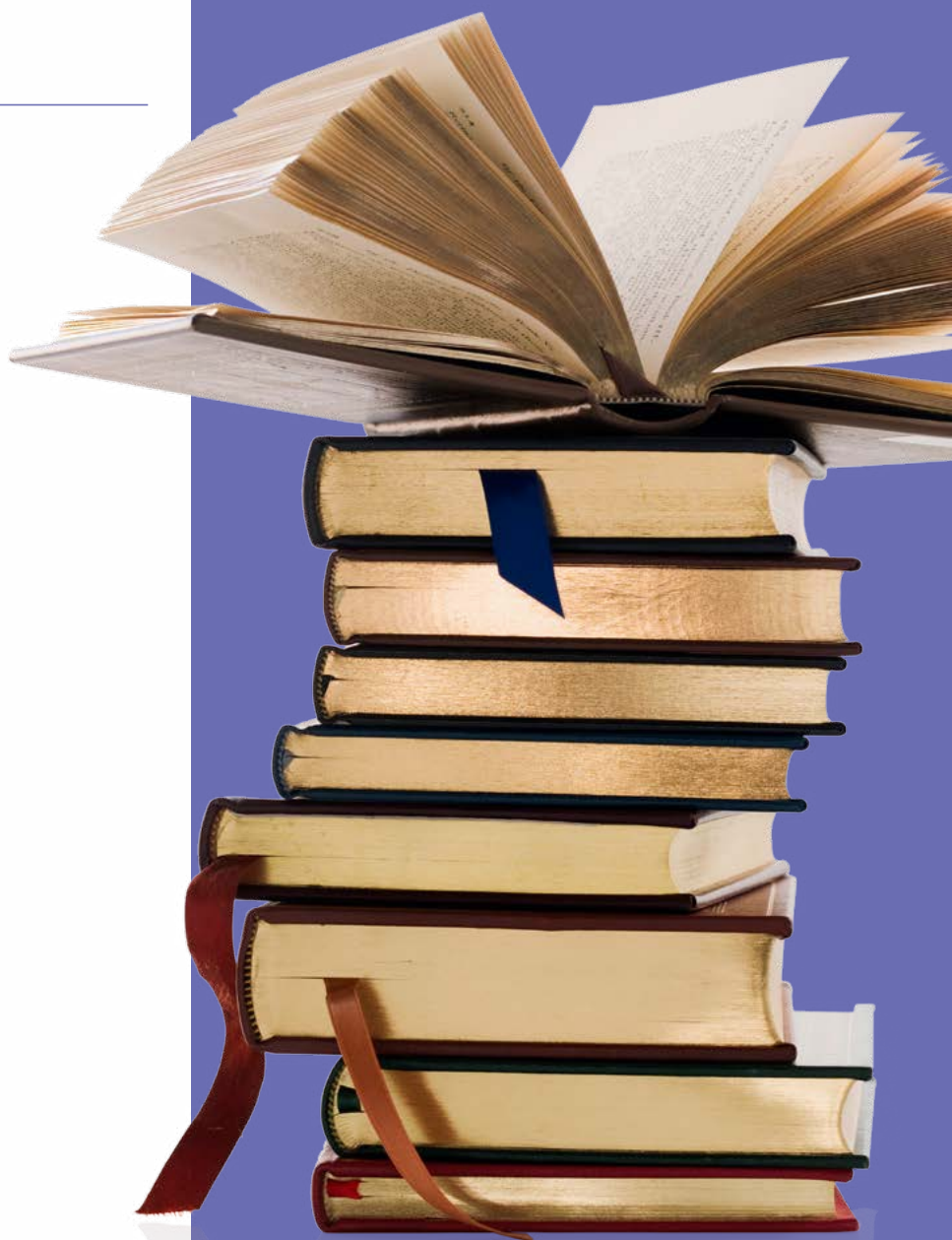
AS PHILOSOPHY

7171

See a range of responses and how different levels are achieved and understand how to interpret the mark scheme.

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EXAMPLE RESPONSES



Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written and have not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

Specimen Paper 1

Question 3

Explain how **one** of Gettier's original counter examples attacks the tripartite view of knowledge.

[9 marks]

Mark scheme

AO1 = 9

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
7-9	<p>The answer is set out in a clear, integrated and logical form. The content of the answer is correct. The material is clearly relevant and points are made clearly and precisely.</p> <p>There may be some redundancy or lack of clarity in particular points, but not sufficient to detract from the answer.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.</p>
4-6	<p>The answer is clear and set out in a coherent form, with logical/causal links identified.</p> <p>The content of the answer is largely correct, though not necessarily well integrated. Some points are made clearly, but relevance is not always sustained.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used, though not always consistently or appropriately.</p>
1-3	<p>Some relevant points are made, but no integration.</p> <p>There is a lack of precision – with possibly insufficient material that is relevant or too much that is irrelevant.</p> <p>There may be some attempt at using philosophical language.</p>
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students can use either of Gettier's cases (as set out below for ease of reference). The focus is on showing how the Gettier-case attacks the tripartite definition of knowledge. Students do not have to be able to give every detail of the case they select, but should identify the relevant aspects.

The tripartite view defines knowledge as justified true belief. Each condition (justification, truth, belief) is said to be necessary for S to know that p and taken together they are said to be sufficient for S to know that p.

Gettier-cases challenge the sufficiency of the tripartite definition by showing how it is possible for someone to have a justified true belief, but not knowledge.

This is usually because of some lucky/coincidental situation.

The key points in a Gettier-case are:

- Smith justifiably believes that p
- p is false
- Smith correctly deduces that, if p is true, then q is true
- so Smith believes q justifiably
- q is true, but not because of p
- so Smith has a justified true belief that q
- but we would not want to claim that Smith knows that q.

Gettier-cases demonstrate that his belief is only accidentally true. What makes the person's belief true is not related to what justifies it.

Extracts from Gettier's 'Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?' are set out below:

Gettier-case 1

Smith and Jones have applied for a job. Smith has strong evidence for the following proposition:

(d) Jones will get the job, and Jones has ten coins in his pocket.

Smith's evidence for (d) is that the president of the company assured him that Jones would get the job and Smith had counted the coins in Jones's pocket ten minutes ago.

Proposition (d) entails:

(e) The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket.

Smith sees the entailment from (d) to (e), and accepts (e) on the grounds of (d), for which he has strong evidence.

But unknown to Smith, he himself, not Jones, will get the job. And, also, unknown to Smith, he himself has ten coins in his pocket.

Proposition (e) is then true, though proposition (d), from which Smith inferred (e), is false.

So:

- (e) is true – because the man who gets the job (Smith) does have ten coins in his pocket
- Smith believes that (e) is true, and
- Smith is justified in believing that (e) is true – because he has inferred it deductively from justified beliefs.

Smith has a justified true belief that (e). But it is clear that Smith does not know that (e) is true; for (e) is true in virtue of the number of coins in Smith's pocket, while Smith does not know how many coins are in Smith's pocket, and bases his belief in (e) on a count of the coins in Jones's pocket, whom he falsely believes to be the man who will get the job. So justified true belief cannot be knowledge.

Gettier-case 2

Smith has strong evidence for the following proposition:

(f) Jones owns a Ford.

Smith's evidence is that Jones has always owned a Ford and has just offered Smith a lift, whilst driving a Ford.

Smith has another friend, Brown, but does not know where he is. Smith randomly elects three place names and constructs the following three propositions:

(g) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Boston.

(h) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Barcelona.

(i) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Brest-Litovsk.

Each of these propositions is entailed by (f).

Smith realises the entailment of each of these propositions he has constructed and accepts (g), (h), and (i) on the basis of (f). Smith has correctly inferred (g), (h), and (i) from a proposition for which he has strong evidence. Smith is therefore completely justified in believing each of these three propositions.

Smith actually has no idea where Brown is.

But two further conditions hold.

First, Jones does not own a Ford, but is driving a rented car. Second, by coincidence and unknown to Smith, Brown is actually in Barcelona.

In this example, Smith does not know that (h) is true, even though:

- (h) is true,
- Smith believes that (h) is true, and
- Smith is justified in believing that (h) is true.

Note: This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.

Student responses

Student response 1

The ‘tripartite’ view of knowledge can be traced back to Plato and is the view that knowledge is defined in terms of three individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions. It is the view that, for S (any person) to know that p (any proposition):

- a) p must be true
- b) S must believe p
- c) S must be justified in believing p

For example, I know that today is cloudy because (a) it is cloudy, (b) I believe it is cloudy and (c) I am justified in holding this belief, e.g. I can see it is cloudy out of the window. Individually each of the conditions are necessary for knowledge to occur – i.e. it is impossible for someone to have knowledge and not have each of the conditions. Further, taken together they are sufficient – i.e. if one has a justified true belief one must have knowledge – nothing else is needed.

Some philosophers argue that the tripartite view is incorrect. Edmund Gettier attacked it by arguing that it was possible to satisfy all three conditions without having knowledge, i.e. the tripartite view is not a sufficient account of what knowledge is. Gettier gave examples to show how this is possible. One of these involved two men, Smith and Jones.

Smith and Jones have both applied for the same job. Smith has strong evidence for the following proposition:

- (i) Jones will get the job, and Jones has ten coins in his pocket

Smith’s evidence for (i) is that the boss told him that Jones would get the job, and Smith counted the coins in Jones’ pocket ten minutes ago. If (i) is true, then Smith thinks the following proposition (ii) is true:

- (ii) The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket.

Smith knows that if (i) is true then (ii) is true, and so believes (ii) on the basis of (i).

However, much to his surprise it is Smith who gets the job, not Jones. And also, without knowing it, Smith has ten coins in his pocket. So, (ii) is true, but Smith inferred it from (i), which is false. So Smith has a belief that is true and is justified (it is inferred from justified beliefs). However, Smith does not know (ii) because it is only true coincidentally – Smith ‘got lucky’. What makes his belief true is not related to what justifies it. Therefore, Gettier argues, the tripartite view fails to give a sufficient account of knowledge.

This is the type of question that students tend to break down into component parts, though other approaches are possible. This answer is set out in a clear, logical form: first giving a clear, correct and precise account of the tripartite view; then applying one of Gettier’s two original examples and giving a very precise account of it. Philosophical language is used correctly throughout. The response goes into greater detail than is strictly necessary on the tripartite view itself, but it is all relevant and the redundant example does not detract from the answer. Full marks. 9/9

Student response 2

One of Gettier’s counter-examples involves two men who went for the same job interview – Smith and Jones. The boss tells Smith that Jones is going to get the job and Smith sees Jones counting ten coins from his pocket. Smith concludes ‘the man who will get the job will have ten coins in his pocket’. However, the Boss got it wrong and Smith in fact gets the job and, without knowing it,

Smith also has ten coins in his pocket. So, when Smith says ‘the man who will get the job will have ten coins in his pocket’ he is saying something that is true because a man with that number of coins in his pocket really does get the job. It is also something that he believes. Finally, it is something for which he has justification – the initial information from the Boss. However, despite having a justified, true belief, Smith does not know that ‘the man who will get the job will have ten coins in his pocket’ because his belief is true by luck – it just so happened that he also had ten coins in his pocket. Therefore, the tripartite view of knowledge, argues Gettier, is undermined.

In terms of the example selected and explained, this response functions almost as well as the first one. The understanding of the tripartite view is correct, although implicit throughout the example rather than stated in any detail (which is a perfectly acceptable way to respond, so long as the integration between the two is still achieved). What the answer lacks is more specific philosophical language, and with this a more precise demonstration of knowledge and understanding: for example, use of the terms ‘necessary’ and ‘sufficient’ would have helped to explain more precisely how the example attacks the tripartite view (ie by attacking the sufficiency, not the necessity). A greater awareness of the concepts of ‘inference’ or ‘entailment’ would have made for a more precise focus on the issue Gettier raised with the justification condition: that what actually makes a person’s belief true may be unrelated to what justifies it. The account is not fully integrated either, as the final explanation of the presence of justification mentions the ‘initial information from the boss’, but there is no reference back to the role played by the ten coins in formation of the relevant proposition. Given the clarity and logical form of the explanation, however, it is still on the borderline of the top band.

6/9

Student response 3

The tripartite view says that knowledge is a justified true belief. That means that, for someone to know something, they must believe it, it must be true and they must have some sort of reason for believing it (it can’t just be a guess).

Gettier attacked this view with his famous Smith and Jones example:

Smith and Jones go for the same job and Smith thinks that Jones is going to get the job, because the boss told him. He also sees Jones count ten coins into his pocket and so thinks that the successful candidate has ten coins in his pocket. However, Smith actually gets the job and also has ten coins in his pocket (he didn’t realise!). So, when Smith believes that the successful person has ten coins in his pocket, his belief is true, and is justified – it is based on seeing that Jones has ten coins in his pocket. However, Smith doesn’t know it, because he is just lucky.

This shows that the tripartite view is wrong. The different parts of the definition (true, belief, justified) are not together necessary – something more is needed.

This response is set out in a coherent form (giving the definition first, then the criticism), with some logical links identified (eg in the example), and there is some evidence of integration, although when explaining the presence of justification, the ‘the ten coins’ are mentioned but not the (erroneous) claims of the boss. The content of the answer is largely correct, but it isn’t a precise rendering of the example (for example, in the original version by Gettier Smith holds to a conjunctive proposition: ‘Jones is the man who will get the job, and Jones has ten coins in his pocket’). The response confuses ‘necessary’ and ‘sufficient’ at the end, and is otherwise limited in the use of philosophical language. It is a lower middle scoring band response. 4/9

Question 6

According to Hare's prescriptivism, what does 'x is morally right' mean?

[2 marks]

Mark scheme

AO1 = 2

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
2	A clear and correct answer, with no significant redundancy.
1	A partial answer, possibly in the form of fragmented points. Imprecise and/or significant redundancy.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

For 'x is morally right':

- 'do x' (students might phrase this in terms of its being an imperative)...
- the commitment that everyone in the same (/sufficiently similar) situation should do x (universality).

Note: This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.

Student responses

Student response 1

Hare believed that 'x is morally right' meant 'do x' (i.e. it was primarily a prescription) and that this applied to everyone in the same (or similar) situation.

This answer is clear and correct. 2 marks

Student response 1

According to Hare, moral claims are imperatives of the form 'do/don't do x', and have a universal application. They are non-cognitive (they do not express facts).

Although the last sentence is redundant, it is brief and accurate; it certainly does not compromise the first sentence, which is clear and correct. 2 marks

Student response 3

Prescriptivism denies that moral claims (like 'x is morally wrong') refer to objective moral properties. They are recommendations, e.g. 'x is morally right' means 'do x' in this case.

The first sentence is accurate but redundant: it tells us what 'x is morally wrong' does NOT mean. This would not in itself constitute 'significant' redundancy, however. This is worth one mark rather than two because it is partial/imprecise: it captures something of the prescriptive element but not the universal. 1 mark

Student response 4

According to Hare's view, 'x is morally right' means that 'x is always the correct thing to do'.

This answer captures something of the universal element, but it does not really bring out the prescriptive. 1 mark

Student response 5

Hare's theory is cognitive and states that a moral claim merely expresses the emotions of the speaker.

This answer is confused throughout and not worthy of any credit. 0 mark

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