

Quiz 4

Descartes, "*Meditations on First Philosophy*"

1. In Meditation 1, Descartes reasons that if a belief is false, then anything that rests on it is:

- a. false.
- b. improbable.
- c. doubtful.
- d. implausible.

2. In the last stage of Descartes' methodical skepticism he _____ that there is an evil demon intent on deceiving him.

- a. supposes
- b. argues
- c. believes
- d. doubts

3. In Meditations 2 and 6, Descartes argues that he:

- a. necessarily exists.
- b. is essentially a mind.
- c. is essentially a body.
- d. is essentially both mind and body.

4. Descartes argues that we are capable of error, even if God exists, because:

- a. God is not all powerful.
- b. our understanding can extend further than our will.
- c. God can deceive.
- d. our will can extend further than our understanding.

5. For Descartes, what is crucial about "I am I exist" is that it:

- a. is certainly true whenever I think it.
- b. follows from God's not being a deceiver.
- c. must always be true.
- d. is inferred from the premise that "I think."

6. In Meditation 3, a key premise in Descartes' proof of God's existence is:

- a. God is no deceiver.
- b. the cause must have at least as much reality as the effect.
- c. If something can be doubted, then it should not be believed.
- d. If there is an evil demon, there must be a God.

7. At the start of the Meditations, Descartes puts forth the general criterion to guide his search for a foundation for knowledge that he should not assent to a statement if that statement is:

- a. false.
- b. obviously false.
- c. wholly dubious.
- d. at all dubious.

8. In Meditation 1, Descartes initially takes the argument that we cannot rely on our senses to require only that he show that they:

- a. sometimes mislead.
- b. often mislead.
- c. always mislead.
- d. almost always mislead.

9. Among the beliefs that might still be certain even if I am dreaming is that:

- a. I am sitting in my chair.
- b. the sum of the angles of a triangle is 180 degrees.
- c. the earth moves.
- d. Paris is the capital of France.

10. The high standards of Descartes' criterion for assent are meant to apply:

- a. practically to action as well to as theoretically to knowledge.
- b. practically to action but not theoretically to knowledge.
- c. neither practically to action nor theoretically to knowledge.
- d. not practically to action, but only theoretically to knowledge.

11. The evil demon cannot deceive Descartes that he exists when he thinks that he does because deception:

- a. would be blocked by an all-good, all-powerful God.
- b. requires knowledge.
- c. requires thought.
- d. is subject to doubt.

12. Descartes introduces the argument of the wax (Meditation 2) to show that:

- a. external objects are known through the senses.
- b. the mind is better known than the body.
- c. the senses do not really perceive the wax.
- d. he can be deceived into thinking there is wax in his hands, when there isn't any.

13. Descartes' crucial observation about the wax is that:

- a. it melts when heated.
- b. its shape and texture can be altered.
- c. what I believe about it is due to what I perceive in it.
- d. I continue to know it, despite numerous external changes.

[Answers 1. C 2. A 3. B 4. D 5. A 6. B 7. D 8. A 9. B 10. D 11. C 12. B 13. D]