

Being able to answer or explain what is asked for in these questions/items will help you be ready to answer the mini-exam essay questions. I will usually not ask these exact questions, but I will expect you to use some of the ideas here (not all!) on the exam.

I. The *Apology*.

1. What is the meaning of the word “apology” as it is used in this text? (The *Greek* meaning).
 - a. What kind of style of speaking does Socrates say he intends to use, and how does this differ from what the prosecution has led people to believe? (22-23)
 - b. What does Socrates say should be the basis of any court verdict? (23)
2. Be able to identify the two sets of accusers that Socrates talks about and the specific accusations they “make” (23-4).
 - a. How are these accusations related?
 - b. Which accusations does he think are more serious? Why?
3. The story of the Delphic Oracle: Know the basic story Socrates tells (25-27).
 - a. Socrates says that “for a long time I was at a loss as to [the oracle’s] meaning” (26). What is significant about this statement?
 - b. “Reputation,” “thinking oneself,” “opinion,” “seeming,” “appearing”: what do these words have to do with each other and to what are they contrasted by Socrates? What do they have to do with the Delphic oracle story?
 - c. What is Socrates’ conclusion about his peculiar kind of “wisdom”? (27)
 - d. How is the Delphic oracle story help explain the first accusations against Socrates?
 - e. Socrates explains that the youth who follow him imitate him and question others, exposing their pretense of knowledge. These people feel offended and then “so as not to appear at a loss” (28) say that Socrates has corrupted these youth. What is significant about this reaction?
4. How does Socrates deal with Meletus’ accusations? How does Socrates’ defense make Meletus like the politicians, poets, and craftsmen of the oracle story? (28-32)
5. Socrates further defense addresses several topics:
 - a. Socrates describes why he doesn’t think he should change his ways just because he’s threatened with death (32-3). Explain his reasoning and say why it’s consistent with both the oracle story and his questioning of Meletus.
 - b. Socrates suggests that he will not agree if the Athenians were to say that he should just give up doing philosophy and they will acquit him (34-5). What does Socrates’ practice of philosophy consist in and why won’t he give it up? Explain.
 - i. How is his activity in “doing philosophy” faithful to the lesson of the Delphic ordacle?
 - ii. On p. 35, Socrates says some things that are likely to anger some of the jury. Explain.
 - c. Why does Socrates not plead for “the mercy of the court”? Why would doing so be wrong both for him and for the jury, according to Socrates? (38-9)
6. Socrates’ first penalty proposal is that he should get “free meals in the Prytaneum” (40).
 - a. Why does he say this? How does his reasoning refer back to his defense?
 - b. Socrates’ second proposal is a fine, but first he explains why he won’t accept exile and why not simply stop examining people (41). Why not?
7. Socrates’ first reaction, after he is condemned, is to rebuke and warn the Athenians. How (42)?
 - a. Socrates returns to the topic of death (42-4). What does he imagine the two possibilities for death to be like? Explain how his view of death relates to his refusal to fear death.
 - b. At the end, Socrates asks the Athenians to do something for his sons (44). What? How is this consistent with his “practice of philosophy”?

II. The *Meno*.

1. The *Meno* starts out with a direct question from Meno to Socrates (59). Is this question straightforward and sincere? Explain what might make you think it's not?
 - a. Socrates claims that he does not know what virtue is, while Meno claims that Gorgias knows and so does he himself (60). What is significant about these claims in view of Socrates' ideas about how philosophical inquiry should take place?
 - b. What's wrong with Meno's first attempts to define virtue (60-63)?
 - i. Socrates tells Meno that all of the virtues should "have one and the same *form* which makes them virtues" (61). Why?
 - ii. Meno likes the definition of color better than the definition of shape. According to Socrates, why does he prefer it? How is this related to our suspicions of Meno (66)?
 - c. Meno's second definition says that virtue is "to desire beautiful things and have the power to acquire them" (66-69). (You need to know only the basics on the following questions).
 - i. How does Socrates challenge the first part of this definition?
 - ii. According to the discussion, what's wrong with the second part of Meno's definition?
2. Meno accuses Socrates of stinging him, like a broad torpedo fish (69-70). What does he mean, and how does Socrates respond?
 - a. What does this reaction have to do with how one searches for truth (i.e., does philosophy)?
 - b. Meno mentions he had previously given many "very good" speeches about virtue "before large audiences on a thousand occasions" (80b, p. 70). What does this tell us about Meno? About his motives? About how he's different from Socrates?
 - c. Terms to know and be able to explain: "perplexity," being "at a loss."
 - d. On pp. 64-5 Socrates contrasts debate and discussion. What's his point in bringing this up? How is this related to the discussion he's having with Meno?
3. Meno asserts that we can't search for what we do not know, and this leads Socrates to an examination of one of Meno's slaves (72-8).
 - a. What is the reason Socrates launches into the geometry example? That is, what is he trying to demonstrate?
 - b. Describe the process Socrates goes through with the slave boy and say what is important about this as a process. Identify various phases or steps of the process.
 - c. Look at the culminating statement of this episode at 86d on p. 78. Why does Socrates make this point about being "better men" by searching for what we don't know? (Note this is the passage Elizabeth referred to in *Who's To Say?*; see also 81d on p. 71.)
 - d. What is significant about the placement of the slave-boy episode in the dialogue? It seems that this interlude is only about recollection and unrelated to the rest of the dialogue, which is about virtue. Is this true? Explain.
4. After the slave boy episode, Socrates suggests to Meno that they "try to find out together what virtue is" (86c, p. 78). Why don't they do this? What does this reveal about what Meno has learned from the slave boy episode?
 - a. What is Anytus' reaction to Socrates questioning him about whether there are teachers of virtue in Athens (82-7)?
 - b. What clues about his own motives and agenda does Meno reveal when he discusses Anytus' reactions with Socrates (95c, p. 87)?
 - c. How does this exchange with Meno help us understand their lack of success in the discussion about virtue?
 - d. Don't worry about the distinction between "correct opinion" and knowledge (89-91).