

Your name: _____

Your section (circle):

Mon. Tues. Wed. Fri.

Metaphysics (or Epistemology) Exercise 5

Phil. 93, Winter 2007. Due Tues., Jan. 30.

1. Descartes (or his fictional representative, the Meditator) sets out to find real reasons for doubting all his previous opinions. He does this because:

- a. He wants to establish something certain in the sciences.
- b. He has discovered that some of his previous opinions were false, so he knows that the others were not achieved by a correct method and so cannot be relied on.
- c. He has discovered that some of his previous opinions were false, so he considers the others to be most probably false, as well.
- d. He thinks it is probably impossible to prove anything with certainty—doubts can always be raised.
- e. (a) and (b).
- f. (a), (b) and (c).

2. In the ninth paragraph of the *First Meditation* (middle of p. 78 in our book), Descartes (or the Meditator) mentions that he has a firmly rooted and long-standing belief in the existence of God. He says this because:

- a. Although he claims to doubt everything, he actually has a secret religious agenda: to prove the existence of God. So he begins working in statements about God once he has the reader off guard.
- b. Although he set out to doubt everything, he is too religious to notice that the existence of God should also be doubted.
- c. He is a rationalist. He doesn't really believe in irrational things such as the existence of God. However, in those days it was dangerous to say that one didn't believe in God.
- d. His firmly rooted belief in the existence of God provides a real reason for doubting some of his other beliefs.
- e. (a) and (d).
- f. None of the above.

3. Near the end of the *First Meditation*, Descartes (or the Meditator) entertains the possibility that a malicious and powerful demon is deceiving him. He does this because:

- a. This provides a real reason for doubting even the existence of God.
- b. He has concluded that there probably is such a demon.
- c. Belief in demons is irrational. He must find a reason for doubting them.

- d. Now that he has shown that God is a deceiver who has allowed him to go wrong in the past, there is no reason not to think of God himself as a “malicious demon.”
- e. (a) and (d).
- f. None of the above.