*AS Philosophy – Epistemology*

Personal Learning Checklist

**Student Name:**

**CLASS:**

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| **Subject Name:****AQA Philosophy** | **Unit Name:****Epistemology** |
| *Minimum Target Grade:* | *Aspirational Target Grade:* |

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| **Knowledge/Specification**  | **Not Yet** | **Not Sure** | **Yes** | **To address this before the exam I will:-** |
| **THEME 1 – PERCEPTION: WHAT ARE THE IMMEDIATE OBJECTS OF PERCEPTION?** |
| **Key Concepts:**Direct realismIndirect realismBerkeley’s Idealism |  |  |  |  |
| **1.1 Direct realism: the immediate objects of perception are mind-independent objects and their properties.** |  |  |  |  |
| Issues with direct realism, including:* The argument from illusion
* The argument from perceptual variation (Russell's table example)
* The argument from hallucination (the possibility of experiences that are subjectively indistinguishable from veridical perception)
* The time-lag argument.
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| **Knowledge/Specification**  | **Not Yet** | **Not Sure** | **Yes** | **To address this before the exam I will:-** |
| **1.2 Indirect realism: the immediate objects of perception are mind-dependent objects that are caused by and represent mind independent objects.** |  |  |  |  |
| Issues with indirect realism, including:* It leads to scepticism about the 'existence' of the external world (attacking 'realism')
* Responses to that issue:
	+ External world is the 'best hypothesis' (Russell);
	+ Coherence of the various senses and lack of choice over our experiences (Locke)
* It leads to scepticism about the 'nature' of the external world (attacking 'representative')
* Responses to that issue:
	+ Sense data tell us of 'relations' between objects (Russell;
	+ The distinction between primary and secondary qualities (Locke)
* Problems arising from the view that mind-dependent objects represent mind-independent objects and are caused by mind-independent objects.
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| **Knowledge/Specification**  | **Not Yet** | **Not Sure** | **Yes** | **To address this before the exam I will:-** |
| **1.3 3. Berkeley’s idealism: the immediate objects of perception (ie ordinary objects such as tables, chairs, etc) are mind-dependent objects.** |  |  |  |  |
| Berkeley’s attack on the primary/secondary property distinction and his ‘master’ argument.Issues with Berkeley’s idealism, including:* It leads to solipsism
* It does not give an adequate account of illusions and hallucinations
* It cannot secure objective space and time
* Whether God can be used to play the role He does.
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| **THEME 2 – THE DEFINITION OF KNOWLEDGE: WHAT IS PROPOSITIONAL KNOWLEDGE?** |
| **Key Concepts:**Acquaintance knowledge – ‘knowing of’Ability knowledge – ‘knowing how’Propositional knowledge – ‘knowing that’Tripartite definition of knowledge |  |  |  |  |
| **2.1 Distinction between: acquaintance knowledge, ability knowledge and propositional knowledge (knowing ‘of’, knowing ‘how’ and knowing ‘that’).** |  |  |  |  |
| **2.2 The tripartite view: justified true belief is necessary and sufficient for propositional knowledge (S knows that p only if S is justified in believing that p, p is true and S believes that p) (necessary and sufficient conditions).** |  |  |  |  |
| **Knowledge/Specification**  | **Not Yet** | **Not Sure** | **Yes** | **To address this before the exam I will:-** |
| Issues with the tripartite view: 1. The conditions are not individually necessary:
2. Justification is not a necessary condition of knowledge
3. Truth is not a necessary condition of knowledge
4. Belief is not a necessary condition of knowledge.
5. Cases of lucky true beliefs show that the justification condition should be either strengthened, added to or replaced (ie Gettier-style problems).
* Responses to issues with the tripartite view, including:
* Strengthen the justification condition: Infallibilism and the requirement for an impossibility of doubt (Descartes)
* Add a 'no false lemmas' condition (J+T+B+N)
* Replace 'justified' with 'reliably formed' (R+T+B) (reliabilism)
* Replace 'justified' with an account of epistemic virtue (V+T+B).
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| **Knowledge/Specification**  | **Not Yet** | **Not Sure** | **Yes** | **To address this before the exam I will:-** |
| **THEME 3 – THE ORIGIN OF CONCEPTS AND THE NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE: WHERE DO IDEAS/CONCEPTS AND KNOWLEDGE COME FROM?** |
| **Key Concepts:**Concept empiricismKnowledge empiricismRationalismInnatism |  |  |  |  |
| **3.1 Concept empiricism: all concepts are derived from experience (tabula rasa, impressions and ideas, simple and complex concepts).** |  |  |  |  |
| Issues with concept empiricism, including:* Concept innatism (rationalism): there are at least some innate concepts (Descartes’ ‘trademark’ argument, and other proposed examples such as universals, causation, infinity, numbers, etc.)
* Concept empiricist arguments against concept innatism:
* Alternative explanations (no such concept or concept re-defined as based on experiences)
* Locke’s arguments against innatism;
* Its reliance on the non-natural.
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| **Knowledge/Specification**  | **Not Yet** | **Not Sure** | **Yes** | **To address this before the exam I will:-** |
| **3.2 Knowledge empiricism: all synthetic knowledge is a posteriori (Hume’s ‘fork’); all a priori knowledge is (merely) analytic.** |  |  |  |  |
| Issues with knowledge empiricism, including:1. Knowledge innatism (rationalism): there is at least some innate a priori knowledge (arguments from Plato and Leibniz)
* Knowledge empiricist arguments against knowledge innatism:
1. alternative explanations (no such knowledge, in fact based on experiences or merely analytic);
2. Locke’s arguments against innatism;
3. its reliance on the non-natural
4. Intuition and deduction thesis (rationalism): we can gain synthetic a priori knowledge through intuition and deduction (Descartes on the existence of self, God and the external world)
* Knowledge empiricist arguments against intuition and deduction:
1. the failure of the deductions or the analytically true (tautological) nature of the conclusions
2. Arguments against knowledge empiricism: the limits of empirical knowledge (Descartes’ sceptical arguments).
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| **REVISION****Use the information on this checklist to make revision cards and notes** |

**Grade tracking:**

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*Note: You should discuss this checklist regularly with your subject teacher/mentor*