

Existentialism started as a philosophical movement or tendency, emphasizing individual existence, freedom, and choice, that influenced many diverse writers in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Because of the diversity of positions associated with existentialism, the term is impossible to label precisely. Certain themes common to virtually all existentialist writers can, however, be identified. The term itself suggests one major theme: the stress on concrete individual existence and, consequently, on subjectivity, individual freedom, and choice. Most philosophers since Plato have held that the highest ethical good is the same for everyone insofar as one approaches moral perfection, one resembles other morally perfect individuals. The 19<sup>th</sup> century Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, the first writer to call himself existential, reacted against this tradition by insisting that the highest good for the individual is to find his or her own unique career. Other existentialist writers have echoed Kierkegaard's belief that one must choose one's own way without the aid of universal, objective standards. Against the traditional view that moral choice involves an objective judgment of right and wrong, existentialists have argued that no objective, rational basis can be found for moral decisions. All existentialists have followed Kierkegaard in stressing the importance of passionate individual action in deciding questions of both morality and truth. They have insisted, accordingly, that personal experience and acting on one's own convictions are essential in arriving at the truth. Thus, the understanding of a situation by someone involved in that situation is superior to that of a detached, objective observer. This emphasis on the perspective of the individual agent has also made existentialists suspicious of systematic reasoning.

1. It is clearly stated in the passage that the main concern of Existentialists is to ----.

- A) prove that there can be no standardization of truth
- B) influence the philosophers and the writers of the era so that they could convey their ideas
- C) emphasize individual freedom and choice
- D) conceal the real purpose of existentialism
- E) compare and contrast the subjective and objective agents

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**2. Why did Kierkegaard oppose to the traditional view about ethical good?**

- A) His understanding of ethics was much more innovative than his contemporaries.
- B) For him, everyone should be seeking their own truths, their unique beliefs.
- C) He believed that one's perspective on ethical good should be purely objective unlike what Plato had proposed many years ago.
- D) He wanted to bring a totally new and unique perspective to how existentialism should further evolve and flourish.
- E) He knew that it was already proved that there was no objective basis to decide on what is right or wrong for each individual.

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**3. The truth, according to Existentialists, ----.**

- A) can be reached only by personal experience and subjective convictions
- B) does not exist on a subjective level
- C) is a concept well-defined by the old philosophers such as Plato
- D) will not change no matter what personal experiences contribute to the concept
- E) can never be reached unless objective and subjective agents compromise

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**4. It can be inferred from the passage that ----.**

- A) existentialism finally has a clear and comprehensive definition to be understood by everyone
- B) there are many opposing and contradicting definitions of existentialism and they have caused total confusion for the followers
- C) Plato has been considered the father of existentialism by many philosophers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century
- D) due to the importance attached to the subjectivity – the perspective of the individual agent, existentialists has questioned the systematic reasoning
- E) Kierkegaard has been the only reliable philosopher who generated valid and reasonable suggestions regarding the concept of existentialism

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**5-8: Answer these questions according to the passage below.**

Dreaming, a form of mental activity, different from waking thought, occurs during sleep. The nature of dream activity has been characterized by many clinical and laboratory studies. These studies show that dreams are more perceptual than conceptual: things are seen and heard rather than being subjected to thought. In terms of the senses, visual experience is present in almost all dreams; auditory experience in 40 to 50%; and touch, taste, smell, and pain in a relatively small percentage. A considerable amount of emotion is commonly present, usually a single, stark emotion such as fear, anger, or joy rather than the **modulated** emotions that occur in the waking state due to external factors. Most dreams are in the form of interrupted stories, made up partly of memories, with frequent shifts of scene. This broad characterization includes a great variety of dream experiences. Many dreams collected in sleep laboratories are rather ordinary, but most people have at least some bizarre dreams. At the start of the 20th century, Sigmund Freud proposed that a mental process quite different from that is used in the waking state dominates the dreaming mind. He described this "primary process" as characterized by more primitive mechanisms, by rapid shifts in energy and emotions, and by a good deal of sexual and aggressive content derived from childhood which means we carry traces of our childhood with us.

**5. Dreams' being perceptual means that ----.**

- A) we think more than we feel in our dreams
- B) our senses are more alert than our thoughts
- C) dreams are only visual experiences that we have
- D) dreams mean auditory experiences that we have
- E) thoughts seem more realistic in dreams

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#### 6. According to Freud, ----.

- A) all dreams need to be considered as strange experiences
- B) dreams are dull instants that occur during the state of sleep
- C) dreams are dominated only by our sexual drives and desires
- D) dreams are formed as stories, which involve our memories
- E) dreaming is a mental process which controls the mind during sleep

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### 7. What is the purpose of this passage?

- A) To show that dreams have meanings that need a detailed examination.
- B) To provide the reader with a general idea about the nature of sleep and dreaming.
- C) To discuss whether humans and animals differ in terms of the interpretation of their dreams.
- D) To suggest that dreams have no concrete meanings.
- E) To prove that Freud was totally right about his suggestions regarding dreams.

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8. Which of the following can replace the underlined verb 'modulated' in the passage?

- A) required
- B) supplied
- C) stimulated
- D) attempted
- E) derived



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|----|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|
| 1. | C | 2. | B | 3. | A | 4. | D |
| 5. | B | 6. | E | 7. | A | 8. | C |

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