



## Epistemology [PY 1025]

### Introductory reading

Dancy, J. *An Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology*. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985).

Lehrer, K. *Theory of Knowledge*. (London: Routledge, 1990).

### Sample examination questions

1. Does knowledge involve having good reasons for one's beliefs? What are 'good reasons'?
2. 'Knowing that P is at least a matter of having a belief that P which is both true and justified.' Is this an adequate definition of knowledge? If not, how should it be improved?
3. 'I cannot prove that I am not a brain in a vat. Therefore I do not know anything about the external world.' Discuss.
4. 'If we know that P, then we can be certain that P. But we cannot be certain of anything. Therefore we do not know anything.' Discuss.
5. Could I be in error about everything?
6. 'The sceptic's challenge comes down to saying that we can have the very best grounds for asserting P but that P could nevertheless be false.' If this is right, does it matter?
7. 'All our knowledge of the external world derives, in one way or another, from the senses.' Is this true?
8. Do we perceive material objects directly, or only indirectly (i.e. by perceiving them via some kind of intermediate object)?
9. Could it be that, though we use the same language to describe them, the things you see as red I see as green and vice versa?
10. Is there anything a blind man cannot know about colours? If so, what?
11. 'I could have an experience which is qualitatively identical to the experience I am having now, but which is nevertheless hallucinatory.' Is this true? If it is, what does it show about the nature of perception?
12. Does accepting realism about perception entail scepticism about the external world?
13. Does seeing always involve belief?
14. How can I know that I remember something?
15. Is it possible to remember something that did not happen?