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Answer Key: Searing Scruples: Synthesis of Sophisticated 9th Grade Ethics

Learners synthesize complex moral frameworks by analyzing the Social Contract, Peter Singer's perspectives, and the nuances of Cultural Relativism in global crises.

1. A philosopher argues that since we would save a drowning child in a shallow pond at the cost of muddying our clothes, we are morally obligated to donate to global relief funds. Which ethical perspective does this synthesis of proximity and duty represent?

Answer: B) Singer's Marginal Utility

Peter Singer's argument for global aid suggests that if we can prevent something bad without sacrificing something of comparable moral importance, we ought to do it.

2. The concept of '____' suggests that an individual's moral obligations are dependent upon an implicit agreement among the members of a society to form the community in which they live.

Answer: B) The Social Contract

The Social Contract theory, associated with thinkers like Locke and Rousseau, posits that morality consists in the set of rules governing behavior that rational people accept on the condition that others accept them as well.

3. According to the principle of Cultural Relativism, there is no objective 'universal truth' in ethics; rather, right and wrong are solely determined by the customs of a specific society.

Answer: A) True

Cultural Relativism challenges the idea of universal moral truths, arguing that different cultures have different moral codes and none is objectively superior.

4. In a scenario where a whistle-blower exposes corporate environmental crimes but violates a strictly signed non-disclosure agreement, a rule-deontologist would likely focus on which aspect?

Answer: C) The breach of a formal promise and contractual duty

Rule-deontology emphasizes following specific moral rules or duties (like keeping promises/contracts) regardless of the specific outcome in a single instance.

5. Aristotle's 'Golden Mean' identifies virtue as the desirable middle ground between two extremes, which he refers to as ____.

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Answer: A) Vices

Virtue Ethics suggests that a virtue (like courage) is the point between a deficiency (cowardice) and an excess (recklessness), both of which are considered vices.

6. The 'Original Position' and the 'Veil of Ignorance' are thought experiments designed to ensure that principles of justice are chosen without bias toward one's own social status.

Answer: A) True

Proposed by John Rawls, the Veil of Ignorance asks us to design a society without knowing what our place in it will be, ensuring fairness for all.

7. Which term describes a situation where an individual must choose between two or more actions, each having moral reasons for and against it, where choosing one results in transgressing the other?

Answer: C) Ethical Dilemma

An ethical dilemma is characterized by conflicting moral requirements where the agent cannot fulfill all systemic obligations.

8. In the context of biomedical ethics, the principle of ____ requires that healthcare providers act in the best interest of the patient to produce a positive outcome.

Answer: B) Beneficence

Beneficence is the ethical obligation to do good and maximize benefits for the patient, distinct from simply 'doing no harm'.

9. If a government decides to restrict freedom of speech during a national emergency to prevent widespread panic that could lead to thousands of deaths, they are primarily using which reasoning?

Answer: B) Act Utilitarianism

Act Utilitarianism evaluates a specific action based on its immediate consequences—in this case, prioritizing the preservation of lives over the principle of free speech.

10. Immanuel Kant argued that we should treat humanity always as an end in itself and never merely as a means to an end.

Answer: A) True

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This is a core pillar of Kant's Deontology (the Formula of Humanity), asserting that people have intrinsic value and should not be used like tools.