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Answer Key: Conquer the Giants: 11th Grade Ancient Philosophy Challenge

Synthesize the metaphysical and ethical frameworks of Hellenic thought through complex scenarios and rigorous dialectic analysis.

1. In the context of Pre-Socratic thought, how does Heraclitus's concept of 'Panta Rhei' (everything flows) fundamentally conflict with the Eleatic school's view of Parmenides?

Answer: A) Heraclitus argued for constant change, while Parmenides insisted that true Being is static and unchanging.

Heraclitus emphasized the flux of the universe, whereas Parmenides and the Eleatics argued that change is an illusion and true reality is singular and permanent.

2. Unlike the absolute idealism of his teacher, the Cynic philosopher _____ purposefully lived in a storage jar and rejected social conventions to demonstrate that virtue is practiced through action, not abstract theory.

Answer: B) Diogenes of Sinope

Diogenes of Sinope was the most famous Cynic, known for his radical rejection of societal norms and his focus on 'askēsis' or practical training in virtue.

3. The Stoic philosopher Epictetus argued that an individual's 'prohairesis' (moral character) is the only thing truly within their control, rendering external events indifferent.

Answer: A) True

Epictetus's Enchiridion focuses on the dichotomy of control, emphasizing that our internal judgments and will are where our freedom resides.

4. In her refusal to accept the separation of the physical and divine, the Neoplatonist Hypatia of Alexandria synthesized mathematics and philosophy to argue that:

Answer: B) The geometric laws of the universe are the visible manifestations of the One.

Hypatia followed the Neoplatonic tradition which suggested that the study of mathematics was a ladder leading the mind toward the ultimate reality or 'The One'.

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5. Epicurus's school of thought, often misunderstood as pursuit of luxury, actually defined 'ataraxia' as the _____.

Answer: B) Freedom from fear and bodily pain

Ataraxia refers to a state of serene calmness; for Epicureans, this was achieved by minimizing desires and removing the fear of death or gods.

6. Anaximander's concept of the 'Apeiron' was a significant step in metaphysical evolution because it suggested that:

Answer: C) The source of all things must be an undefined, boundless substance unlike any specific element.

Anaximander moved beyond Thales's 'water' to argue for an abstract principle called the Apeiron (unlimited/indefinite) to explain the origin of opposites.

7. The Sophist Protagoras famously claimed 'Man is the measure of all things,' which served as a foundational defense for moral absolutism.

Answer: B) False

Protagoras's statement is actually the foundation of relativism, suggesting that truth is subjective to the individual or culture rather than absolute.

8. Which ancient school of thought would most likely advise a student to remain indifferent to the outcome of a college application, focusing only on the effort put into the essay?

Answer: B) Stoicism

Stoicism teaches that since we cannot control external outcomes (the admission decision), we should find peace in our internal intentions and actions (the writing).

9. In his 'Organon,' _____ established the rules of the syllogism, a form of deductive reasoning that remains the basis of formal logic today.

Answer: B) Aristotle

Aristotle's 'Organon' is his collection of works on logic, where he detailed the structure of the syllogism (e.g., All men are mortal; Socrates is a man...).

10. Thucydides, while a historian, applied philosophical realism to international relations in the 'Messian Dialogue' by arguing that:

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Answer: A) Justice only exists between equals in power; otherwise, the strong do what they can.

The Melian Dialogue is a classic study in political realism, where the Athenians argue that might often dictates 'right' in Geopolitics.