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Date: _____

Answer Key: Stoic Logic and Epicurean Atoms: 7th Grade Philosophy Adventure

Synthesize the competing theories of Zeno, Epicurus, and Diogenes through 10 analytical questions on logic, physics, and ethics.

1. Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, argued that the universe is governed by a rational principle called 'Logos.' If a citizen's house burns down, how would a Stoic most likely respond based on this principle?

Answer: B) By accepting it as part of a natural, rational order beyond their control.

Stoics believed that since the universe is ordered by Logos, one should remain tranquil and accept external events that are outside of one's personal control.

2. Epicurus proposed that everything, including the human soul, is made of tiny, indivisible particles called ___, suggesting that we should not fear death because we simply cease to feel.

Answer: C) atoms

Epicurus adopted and refined the 'atomist' theory of Democritus, using it to argue that since we are composed of atoms that disperse at death, there is no afterlife to fear.

3. The Cynic philosopher Diogenes of Sinope believed that true happiness comes from following societal conventions, such as wearing expensive clothes and living in a large house.

Answer: B) False

Cynics like Diogenes rejected social status and material possessions, famously living in a large ceramic jar to demonstrate that virtue is the only thing needed for happiness.

4. Pythagoras is often remembered for math, but he also led a philosophical community. Which of these unusual beliefs did his followers practice because they believed in the transmigration of souls?

Answer: A) Refusing to eat beans or meat

Pythagoreans believed in reincarnation (metempsychosis), leading them to avoid eating animals (and notoriously, beans) because they might contain the souls of the deceased.

5. Heraclitus famously stated that 'No man ever steps in the same ___ twice,' illustrating his philosophy that the universe is in a constant state of flux or change.

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Answer: B) river

The river metaphor is Heraclitus's most famous paradox, emphasizing that because both the water and the person change, the moment is never the same.

6. In the philosophy of Epicureanism, the ultimate goal of life is 'ataraxia,' which refers to a state of being free from mental fear and bodily pain.

Answer: A) True

Epicurus taught that by limiting our desires and understanding the natural world, we can reach 'ataraxia'—peace of mind and absence of distress.

7. Parmenides argued that 'change' is actually an illusion and that reality is one, unchanging, and eternal. How does this conflict with the views of Heraclitus?

Answer: C) Heraclitus believed change was the only constant, while Parmenides denied it exists.

This is the classic debate of Ancient Greek metaphysics: Heraclitus saw a world of constant motion (flux), while Parmenides argued that true Being is static.

8. The philosopher ___ of Miletus is often called the first Western philosopher because he looked for natural explanations for the world, such as claiming that 'water' was the primary substance of all matter.

Answer: B) Thales

Thales is credited with shifting focus from mythology to 'arche' (the first principle), selecting water as the fundamental element of nature.

9. If you were a student of the Sophists, who were known for teaching rhetoric, what would be your primary goal during a debate?

Answer: C) To use persuasive speech to win an argument, regardless of the truth.

Sophists were professional teachers who focused on rhetoric (the art of persuasion) and often argued that truth is relative to the person speaking.

10. Empedocles proposed a theory that the universe is made of four 'roots' (elements)—earth, air, fire, and water—which are moved by the two forces of Love and Strife.

Answer: A) True

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Empedocles synthesized previous ideas into the four-element theory, suggesting that Love brings elements together and Strife pulls them apart.