

## Philosophy Interview Questions

1. Do we have free will? Does a clam have free will? Can a machine have free will?
2. How would you define 'consciousness'?
3. What are the differences between apes and humans, apart from their appearance?
4. Is ignorance really bliss?
5. Define tolerance, acceptance and indifference. Would you say that tolerance is a breed of acceptance?
6. What is the difference between truth and knowledge?
7. We would both agree that this table is green, but how do you know that the green that you are seeing is the same as the green that I am seeing?
8. What is the difference between knowledge and understanding?
9. Is it moral to hook up a psychopath (whose only pleasure is killing) to a reality-simulating machine so that he can believe he is in the real world and kill as much as he likes?
10. What is an example of an argument with false premises but a true conclusion?
11. What is the difference between science and religion?
12. What is the difference between intelligence and wisdom?
13. What does it mean to be happy?
14. Is happiness a basis for morality?
15. I have a rare disease, the treatment for which demands a lot of resources. Should you help me live or let me die?
16. How would you define forgiveness? Is it ever wrong?
17. How do we know right from wrong?
18. How would you define blackmail? Why is it wrong?
19. What is an example of an argument with false premises but a true conclusion?
20. Is the sentence 'this sentence is false' true or false?
21. If I were to remove each hair on your head, at which point do you become bald? Why are you not bald with one additional hair, at that point?
22. How would you define charity? Is it always right?
23. If a faster hare is racing a slower tortoise, and gives the tortoise a head start, by the time the hare has reached the tortoise's starting position, the tortoise has now moved further ahead. Once the hare reaches this second position, the tortoise is again further ahead. Given that this will continue to occur, how can the hare ever overtake the tortoise?
24. Are human lives worth more than those of animals? How do we know human lives are worth anything? Are any human lives worthless?
25. What is the difference between lie, deceive, and mislead?

## Politics Interview Questions

1. Why has there has not been a war between major world powers since WW2, when such wars throughout history have occurred much more frequently?
2. Why don't democracies go to war with each other?
3. What is democracy? Why do we value it?
4. Is democracy a continuum or dichotomy?
5. Why are US presidents not allowed to be elected for a third term? Should they be?
6. Who should be allowed to vote? Should prisoners be allowed to vote? Should children?
7. Is there a trade-off between liberty and security?
8. Is the obesity of a population the responsibility of the government to solve?
9. Is reducing wealth inequality always a good thing?
10. Should the majority be allowed to impose its will upon the minority in a democracy?
11. Does the welfare state trap people in poverty?
12. Should smokers have a right to smoke in public spaces?
13. What is freedom? How could you measure it?
14. If introducing the death penalty for littering meant that no littering occurred, and thus the death penalty was never used, would it be morally right?
15. Should religious requirements concerning headwear exempt someone from cycle helmet laws?
16. What does it mean to be a successful politician? Is Putin a successful politician?
17. Why do we need governments?
18. Is tactical voting to keep out extremist parties democratic?
19. If a far-left/far-right party receives 40% of the vote, can they still be called far-left/far-right?
20. Is voting a form of tacit consent to the eventual government, even if you didn't vote for them?
21. Is it more important for a successful leader to be loved or feared?
22. Do we have a right to privacy? Does this conflict with our right to security?
23. What is a right? Where does it come from?
24. Should people be free to live in any country they wish to?
25. Is it democratic for one candidate to spend ten times as much money as another candidate in an election campaign?
26. Do people vote in line with their economic interests?

## Economics Interview Questions

1. Imagine you are at a beach holiday resort and people are relaxing on the beach. Assume they are randomly distributed and the population density is equal anywhere on the beach. There are two ice-cream makers with their vans. Assuming people go to the van closest to them for ice-creams, how and where should they locate themselves to achieve the best outcome / get maximum market share? Here's a pen and a piece of paper, please draw a diagram and demonstrate.
2. Follow-up questions: If one van's location is fixed at the centre, how should the other move strategically to maximum his market share? If one's market share's more than the other, should the other move to other location to change this or stay where he is? Will both two vans be constantly on the move to compete for market share? If so, or if not, is there ever a point that the market share obtained by both ice-cream shops are equal? Now, the local authority steps in. It has the power to regulate the operation of ice-cream shops and it can fix their locations. Where should the local authority fix these two vans and why?
3. You are an economic consultant to a school. If the majority of students pass their exams, the school receives a subsidy from the government. When teachers put in effort, the chance of the majority passing is  $\frac{3}{5}$ . When teachers do not put in effort, the chance of the majority passing is  $\frac{2}{5}$ . The cost of effort in monetary terms is \$2 and if a teacher quits at the beginning of the year they can earn \$10 from their contract. What are the flaws in the practicality of this model?
4. If a petrol station, on a road, is equidistant from two towns, where should a second petrol station be built? What about a third?
5. I am going to offer you £100. You have to offer part of this £100 to someone else. If they don't accept the offer, you get nothing. How much will you offer?
6. If you had infinite money, how could you keep the price of a Big Mac from McDonald's at £1? How could you keep it at £20?
7. You have 50 red balls, 50 blue balls, and two cups. By placing each ball in one of the two cups, how could you maximise the chance that someone who picks a ball at random from one of the two cups will pick a red ball? What is the probability of them picking a red ball?
8. You have a sum of money and someone asks you to invest it in one of two banks. One bank offers rates of 3% for the first year, 4% for the second, and 5% for the third. The other bank offers rates of 5% for the first, 4% for the second, and 3% for the third. Which one do you choose?
9. A group of people are asked to guess a number between 0 and 100. The winner is the person whose guess is closest to  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the average of all guesses. What is the likely outcome?
10. Imagine a room of 100 people, where 99% are right-handed. How many right-handed people must leave for the percentage to fall to 98%?
11. Should the main objective of a business be to make money?
12. Does the welfare state trap people into poverty?
13. Are there too many people in the world?
14. Would raising the minimum wage increase unemployment? Would it be worth it anyway?
15. Why is income per head between 50 and 100 times larger in the United States than in countries such as Burundi and Malawi?
16. What is the monetary value of your desk?
17. Are large or small companies more successful?