**WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?**

**By Will Durant**

Human conduct and belief are now undergoing transformations profounder and more disturbing than any since the appearance of wealth and philosophy put an end to the traditional religion of the Greeks.

It is the age of Socrates again: our moral life is threatened, and our intellectual life is quickened and enlarged by the disintegration of ancient customs and beliefs. Everything is new and experimental in our ideas and our actions; nothing is established or certain any more. The rate, complexity, and variety of change in our time are without precedent, even in Periclean days; all forms about us are altered, from the tools that complicate our toil, and the wheels that whirl us restlessly about the earth and the hard disillusionment of our souls.

The passage from agriculture to industry, from the village to the town, and from the town to the city has elevated science, debased art, liberated thought, ended monarchy and aristocracy, generated democracy and socialism, emancipated woman, disrupted marriage, broken down the old moral code, destroyed asceticism with luxuries, replaced Puritanism with Epicureanism, exalted excitement above content, made war less frequent and more terrible, taken from us many of our most cherished religious beliefs and given us a mechanical and fatalistic philosophy of life. All things *flow*, and we seek some mooring and stability in the flux.

In every developing civilization, a period comes when old instincts and habits prove inadequate to altered stimuli, and ancient institutions and moralities crack like hampering shells under the obstinate growth of life. In one sphere after another, now that we have left the farm and the home for the factory, the office and the world, spontaneous and "natural" modes of order and response break down, and intellect chaotically experiments to replace with conscious guidance the ancestral readiness and simplicity of impulse and wonted ways. Everything must be thought out, from the artificial "formula" with which we feed our children, and the "calories" and "vitamins" of our muddled dietitians, to the bewildered efforts of a revolutionary government to direct and coordinate all the haphazard processes of trade. We are like a man who cannot walk without thinking of his legs, or like a player who must analyze every move and stroke as he plays. The happy unity of instinct is gone from us, and we flounder in a sea of doubt; amidst unprecedented knowledge and power we are uncertain of our purposes, values and goals.

From this confusion the one escape worthy of a mature mind is to rise out of the moment and the part and contemplate the whole. What we have lost above all is total perspective. Life seems too intricate and mobile for us to grasp its unity and significance; we cease to be citizens and become only individuals; we have no purposes that look beyond our death; we are fragments of men, and nothing more. No one (except Spengler) dares today to survey life in its entirety; analysis leaps and synthesis lags; we fear the experts in every field and keep ourselves, for safety's sake, lashed to our narrow specialties. Everyone knows his part, but is ignorant of its meaning in the play. Life itself grows meaningless and becomes empty just when it seemed most full.

Let us put aside our fear of inevitable error, and survey all those problems of our state, trying to see each part and puzzle in the light of the whole. We shall define philosophy as "total perspective," as mind overspreading life and forging chaos into unity.

Perhaps philosophy will give us, if we are faithful to it, a healing unity of soul. We are so slovenly and self-contradictory in our thinking; it may be that we shall clarify ourselves and pull our selves together into consistency and be ashamed to harbor contradictory desires or beliefs. And through this unity of mind may come that unity of purpose and character which makes a personality and lends some order and dignity to our existence. Philosophy is harmonized knowledge making a harmonious life; it is the self-discipline which lifts us to security and freedom. Knowledge is power, but only wisdom is liberty.

Our culture is superficial today, and our knowledge dangerous, because we are rich in mechanisms and poor in purposes. The balance of mind which once came of a warm religious faith is gone; science has taken from us the supernatural bases of our morality and all the world seems consumed in a disorderly individualism that reflects the chaotic fragmentation of our character.

We move about the earth with unprecedented speed, but we do not know, and have not thought, where we are going, or whether we shall find any happiness there for our harassed souls. We are being destroyed by our knowledge, which has made us drunk with our power. And we shall not be saved without wisdom.

**TASK**

1. **Analyze the given text by using the following checklist.**
2. Total number of words
3. Total number of clauses
4. Independent
5. Dependent
6. FANBOYS (conjunction only)
7. Correlating conjunctions
8. Total number of prepositional phrases
9. Total number of transitional words/conjunctive adverbs
10. Rhetorical Questions (if any)
11. **While analyzing, use the suggested colors (only) for the elements you identify. Also, write the total number of every element that you find by writing 5 short descriptive lines for 5 given categories. For example,**
12. The passage has -------- words
13. There are --------- clauses
14. There are --------- independent clauses…..and so on.
15. **Write a short paragraph as a response to the passage and talk about the formality/informality it has. Moreover, comment on the sentence types (Simple, Compound, Complex, Compound Complex) that you see and how do the choice of sentences make it less/more readable.**

***FAQs***

1. It has 15 weightage.
2. It is due on December 17, 2020 (4 pm).
3. It is to be done in groups (preferably 5 people).
4. Only one student (group leader) should submit it on behalf of the group.
5. You will have to submit the highlighted text along with the paragraphs.