BRITISH COLUMBIA
Ministry of Education

BIG IDEAS

Philosophy is a discipline that examines the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence.	Philosophy provides tools for investigating meaning and fostering understanding of different ways of thinking.	Examining questions in philosophy allows people to question their assumptions and better understand their own beliefs.	While philosophical questions often examine issues with no definitive answers, logic and reasoned arguments can show which answers have more or less value.

Learning Standards

Curricular Competencies	**Content**
Students are expected to be able to do the following:	*Students are expected to know the following:*
- Use philosophical inquiry processes and reasoning skills to respond to arguments and questions related to major issues in philosophy - Assess the relevance of philosophical ideas for everyday life and current social and political issues - Analyze philosophical ideas and assess their significance (significance) - Compare the justification for different philosophical perspectives after investigating points of contention and the strengths and weaknesses of various arguments (evidence) - Compare and contrast continuity, change, and divergence of ideas, disciplines, and schools of thought (continuity and change) - Assess the development and impact of diverse ideas and systems of thought (cause and consequence) - Explain different philosophical perspectives by considering the norms, values, worldviews, and beliefs of the philosophers who developed them (perspective)	**methods of reasoning and argument in philosophy** **metaphysical theories about the nature of reality** **epistemological theories about knowledge and truth** **social and political philosophy** **theories of morality, ethics, and aesthetics**

- **methods of reasoning and argument in philosophy:**

  Sample topics:

  - logic and rational argument
  - logical fallacies
  - Socratic dialogue
  - syllogisms
  - induction and deduction
  - criticising and making closing arguments
  - rational decision making

- **metaphysical theories about the nature of reality:**

  Sample topics:

  - idealism
  - realism
  - materialism
  - personal identity
  - determinism and free will
  - theism, deism, and atheism
  - nihilism and existentialism
  - positivism
  - postmodernism

- **epistemological theories about knowledge and truth:**

  Sample topics:

  - rationalism
  - empiricism
  - pragmatism
  - skepticism
  - relativism
  - appearance and reality

- **social and political philosophy:**

  Sample topics:

  - justice (e.g., distributive, restorative, retributive)

- rights (e.g., positive/negative, individual/group)
- contractarianism
- communitarianism and individualism
- libertarianism
- feminist philosophy
- anarchism
- Marxism

- **theories of morality, ethics, and aesthetics:**

Sample topics:

- the good life
- egoism versus altruism
- deontology
- utilitarianism
- virtue ethics
- environmental ethics
- biomedical ethics
- nihilism
- the nature and value of beauty
- art and emotion
- aesthetic imagination and truth
- the role of aesthetics (e.g., elegance) in science
- objectivism and subjectivism in artistic judgments