

IB Philosophy SL  
Tracy High School  
Reading list

Core theme - What is a human being?

**Introduction**

“The Value of Philosophy” - Bertrand Russell

**Unit 1 - The Mind Body Problem**

*Meditations on First Philosophy* (excerpts) - Renee Descartes

“The Qualia Problem” (excerpts) - Frank Jackson

“What is it Like to Be a Bat” (excerpts) - Thomas Nagel

“Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness” (excerpts) - David J. Chalmers

“Minds, Brains and Programs” (excerpts) - John Searle

“Daniel Dennett on the Nature of Consciousness” (excerpts) - Susan Schneider

“Daniel Dennett Explores the Problems of the Human Brain” - Daniel Dennett

“Matter and Consciousness” (excerpts) - Paul Churchland

**Unit 2 - Human Nature**

“The Allegory of the Cave” - Plato

“What is Enlightenment” (excerpts) - Immanuel Kant

Excerpts from the Christian Old and new Testaments on the Creation of Man and his nature

“The Logical Problem of Evil” (excerpts) - James R. Beebe

*Enchiridion* (excerpts) - St. Augustine

*Leviathan* (excerpts) - Thomas Hobbes

*On Human Nature* (excerpts) - E.O. Wilson

*Samyuta Nikaya (Buddhist scripture)* (excerpts)

*Tao Teh Ching* (excerpts)

*The Individual: Two Notes Concerning my Work as an Author* (excerpts) - Soren Kierkegaard

*Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (excerpts) - Soren Kierkegaard

*The Gay Science* (excerpts) - Friedrich Nietzsche

“Existentialism is a Humanism” (excerpts) - John Paul Sartre

**Unit 3 - Machine and Animal Minds**

“Animals are Machines” (excerpts) - Renee Descartes

“Computing, Machinery and Intelligence” - Alan Turing

“Brute Experience” - Peter Carruthers

“Equality for Animals” (excerpts) - Peter Singer

**Unit 4 - Freedom**

*System of Nature* (excerpts) - Paul d’Holbach

*Religion and the Modern Mind* (excerpts) - Walter T. Stace

“Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person” - Harry Frankfurt  
“The Lindley Lecture” (excerpts) - Roderick M. Chisholm  
“Free Will: Ancient Dispute, New Themes” (excerpts) - Robert Kane

### **Unit 5 - Personal Identity**

“Essay Concerning Human Understanding” (excerpts) - John Locke  
*A Treatise on Human Nature* (excerpts) - David Hume  
“Where Am I” - Daniel Dennett

## Optional Theme - Ethics

### **Unit 1 - Relativism and subjectivism**

“The Challenge of Cultural Relativism” - James Rachels

### **Unit 2 - Deontological ethics**

“Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals” (excerpts) - Immanuel Kant

### **Unit 3 - Emmanuel Levinas**

“What We Owe Each Other” Aaron James Wendland  
“Introducing Levinas to Undergraduate Philosophers” - Anthony F. Beavers

### **Unit 4 - Utilitarianism**

“The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” - Ursula Le Guin  
*Principles of Morals and Legislation* (excerpts) - Jeremy Bentham.  
*Utilitarianism* (excerpts) - John Stuart Mill

### **Unit 5 - Ethical egoism**

“Ethical Egoism” - James Rachels  
*The Virtue of Selfishness* (excerpts) - Ayn Rand

### **Unit 6 - Virtue ethics**

*Nichomachean Ethics* (excerpts) - Aristotle

### **Unit 7 - Distributional ethics**

*A Theory of Justice* (excerpts) - John Rawls  
*Anarchy, State and Utopia* (excerpts) - Robert Nozick

### **Unit 8 - Environmental ethics**

“The Case for Optimal Pollution” - William Baxter  
“The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement” (excerpts) - Arne Naess  
*A Sand County Almanac* (excerpts) - Aldo Leopold

## Prescribed text

*The Ethics of Authenticity* - Charles Taylor  
*The Second Sex* (excerpts) - Simone de Beauvoir (proposed addition)