

Exam 2 Guide:

A. What was the new way of thinking introduced by the pre-Socratics?:

Naturalistic (versus super-naturalistic), literal (versus mythopoeic), theoretical explanation of phenomena via reduction and unification under a single principle.

B. What problems/issues did they pursue and what solutions did they provide?

1. Basic Stuff (Materialists)
2. One versus Many
3. Permanence versus Change
4. Reality versus Appearance

C. Emerging Basic Assumptions: Reality is distinct from appearance and must have the property of permanence

	Principle	Explanation of Multiplicity/Change and its relation to reality
Thales:	Water	All things derive from water
Anaximenes:	Air	All things derive from air
Anaximander:	Apeiron/Boundless	Since elements cannot derive from each other
Heraclitus:	Logos	Reality is change itself ordered by the Logos
Pythagorus:	Number	Reality is number that orders all things
Parmenides:	The One	Reality is permanent, singular, to meet the logical requirement of Being
Atomism:	Atoms	Unsplittable, irreducible, unchanging singularities that make up all things
Sophism:	Relativism (no principle)	Rejects metaphysical Principles
Plato:	The Good	Sensibles informed by intelligibles
Aristotle:	Unmoved Mover	Motion toward telos via 4 causes, actual versus potential, Substance: essential versus accidental properties

D. Problems encountered:

1. How can elements come from each other (in Thales, Anaximenes)
2. How can reality be something unbounded? It would be intangible and unthinkable, a serious problem for a materialist (Anaximander).
3. How can there be no things at all, only change and how does the Logos guide change? (Heraclitus)
4. How does number permeate all things? If reality is perfectly rational, how do we explain irrational numbers, such as the square root of 2 or Pi? (Pythagorus)
5. The cost of meeting the logical requirements of Being: change is an illusion (Parmenides)
6. Atoms cannot explain central issues of justice, virtue, or any non material meaning. Causal determinism: there could be no human freedom. Materialism in general cannot explain central meaningful notions of value. (Democritus/Leucippus)
7. How do sensibles "participate" in intelligibles? (Plato)

E. How were Plato's Theory of Forms and Aristotle's hylomorphism solutions to the problems?

Both reject materialism because it does not explain value and relativism because it makes all judgments equally valid (or invalid). Incorporates the logical requirements of being and explains change and the world of multiplicity better than previous theories.

F. How did this new way of thinking shape the course of Western thinking in science, philosophy, and religion?

Examples: All Christian doctrine has been Platonic and Aristotelian. Modern science is Greek theoretical thinking together with mathematization of space and time to form modern experimental science. The theoretical language of Aristotle was used among modern philosophers through Kant.