

# Essay 1: PHIL 2120 Topics in Analytic Philosophy

Due: 5pm Thursday 15 November (Hand in to Philosophy Office)

Length: 2000 words

Q1) Evaluate Descartes argument from skepticism about the external world and Moore's response to this argument

Relevant readings: i) Soames, Ch2; ii) Moore, 'Proof of the external world'; iii) Moore, *Main problems in philosophy*, Ch 5-6

Q2) Describe and evaluate Moore's sense-data theory of perception

Relevant readings: i) Soames, Ch 2; ii) Moore, 'Sense-data'

Q3) Discuss Russell's paradox concerning negative existentials. Discuss one or more possible solution to this paradox.

Relevant readings: i) Soames, Ch 5; ii) Russell, 'On denoting'; iii) Maria Reicher, 'Non-existent objects' (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Q4) Evaluate Russell's solution to the puzzle about George IV and the author of Waverly. Is Soames right that there is a clash between Russell's theory of descriptions and his epistemology?

Suggested readings: i) Soames, Ch 5; ii) Russell, 'On denoting'; iii) Russell, 'Knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description'

Q5) Are material objects logical constructions out of sense-data?

Suggested reading: i) Soames, Ch 7; ii) Russell, *Our knowledge of the external world*, Ch3

See Soames for additional suggested readings.