

1. What is the principal question with which Plato's *Apology of Socrates* deals? What does the word "apology" (*apologia*) in the title mean?
2. What are the two forms in which Socrates makes his defence (see e.g., Plato, *Apology*, 32a; cf. Xenophon, *Apology* 3)

17a-19a

3. What effect does Socrates' claim the speeches of his accusers have had on him? Why is it important that he begin by making this point?
4. How does Socrates refer to the assembled court (e.g., 17a, 24a)? How does Meletus refer to them (e.g., 24e)? What is significant about the difference?
5. In contrast to what he calls the persuasive, clever (*deinos*) and beautiful speeches of his accusers, how does Socrates claim that he will speak? Are we to accept this juxtaposition of the persuasive, clever and beautiful to the true? Can true speech of the whole be other than beautiful?
6. Can one speak the truth while dissembling it?
7. As a defensive, litigatory strategy what is peculiar about Socrates' account of the accusations brought against him? Who does Socrates suggest are his most dangerous accusers and why?

19a-d

8. What are the first false accusations brought against Socrates, and who are their sources? Which of these is the source of the principal accusations? How does Socrates proceed to 'refute' these accusations?
9. Compare Socrates' 'refutation' of the charge that he "investigates things beneath the earth and in the heavens" (19b) with the final speech of the *Phaedo* (95e-102a). Is there a contradiction here that suggests that Socrates is

lying to the court. What difference in the nature of Socrates' speech might there be between addressing the "men of Athens" at a trial and speaking with his intimates in private just before death?

19d-21a

10. What are the second and third false accusations Socrates suggests have been brought against him? How does he 'refute' these accusations. How does Socrates' 'refutations' turn on the relation of appearance and reality?

21a-24b

11. What does the Oracle at Delphi pronounce about Socrates? (cf. *Course Pack*, frag. 93. p. 14 for Heracleitus' view about the oracle). How does Socrates respond to what the Oracle 'indicates' and how does this response constitute a philosophical practice?
12. Is Socrates' questioning response to the oracle impious? Alternatively, does piety truly lie in just such a questioning response that seeks wisdom in determining the truth of what the oracle says and so constitutes a genuine religious practice?

24b-28e

13. What shift in perspective is implied by Socrates' move from the "first false accusations" made against him to the actual charges that have been laid?
14. What are the actual charges that have been laid against Socrates at the trial? How does Socrates begin to confront these charges? How does his response put him at odds with the polis?
15. How and why does Socrates introduce the idea of heroes?
16. What in Socrates view is more important (for him) to consider than the danger of death.

29a-35d

17. How does Socrates present his “station” in relation to the god and to the men of Athens?
18. How does Socrates reverse the charges against him, demonstrating that his practice is both pious and salutary to the youth?
19. Insofar as the kind of questioning Socrates practices puts in doubt the basic mores, norms and conventions in terms of which Athenian society functioned at the time, and insofar as Socrates engaged the youth of Athens in this very same kind of questioning, then would the charge of corrupting the youth not be a valid charge; for the youth who engaged in this way of questioning would as a consequence no longer be fit for the society in which they actually lived and would become to it at best useless strangers or worse troublesome impediments?
20. What is Socrates’ account of why he lives in the polis as a private citizen (*idiotēuein*) and not a public person (*demosiēuein*)? What does this account say about the general heroic view that to be truly human is speak great words and do great deeds in the public realm?
21. Why does Socrates not bring his sons to court to beg the court to acquit him?
22. What in Socrates’ judgement is the best way to relate to the judges? What does he mean by ‘best’ here and what does he mean by ‘judge’?

35e-38b

23. When the majority of the court votes Socrates guilty, Meletus proposes the death penalty. What is Socrates’ counter-proposal?
24. What rhetorical force does the counter-proposal have? What is its philosophical significance?
25. What other penalties does Socrates consider and reject? On what grounds does he reject them?
26. Twice in the *Apology* (19a, 37b) Socrates remarks on the lack of time for quiet persuasion, involving the leisure and intimacy for philosophical

discussion. Does this impediment to philosophy in the courtroom also constitute an impediment to philosophy in the university classroom?

27. Before the vote on his punishment Socrates offers to pay a fine of one minae of silver, which then Plato, Crito and other of Socrates' friends raise to 30 minae. What significance does Socrates offer to pay a fine as penalty have? Why might Plato have introduced his own voice at this point in this *Apology of Socrates*? Does it matter that Plato and the others offer to increase the amount?

38c-42a

28. What is Socrates closing 'prophecy' (39c)?
29. What is the final possibility Socrates asks the court to entertain (40c)?
30. What is Socrates' last request to the men of Athens?