

## 57a -59c

1. What is the dialogue's opening question? In your translation (which mirrors the original Greek text) what are the opening word(s)? What themes are announced by this opening?
2. Why would the question of how Socrates "met his end" be of particular interest?
3. Although factually correct, what mythic background for the dialogue does the account of the delay in Socrates' execution serve to introduce? If the dialogue were read in terms of this mythic background: why might Phaedo have named 14 people whom he remembers were present with Socrates at his death; what role analogous to the myth might Socrates play; what role might Phaedo play; what in the dialogue would be analogous to the labyrinth and the two-horned Minotaur? Is there an escape?
4. What is Phaedo's "absurd feeling" (*atopon pathos*) in being present at Socrates' death?

## 59d-69e

5. Had Socrates comforted his wife and son, instead of sending them away, would he have been a better philosopher?
6. Why might pleasure and pain go together? Could there be conceivably a life of pleasure only, or pain only, that could be recognised as such?
7. What is Socrates' recurring dream? How does he interpret it?
8. Why might Socrates think of philosophy as the "greatest music" (*megistes mousikes*)? What difference does Socrates insinuate between the poet and the philosopher?
9. In what is Socrates suggesting that Evenus, "if he is sound-minded," follow him "as quickly as possible"? Why?

10. What is Socrates' argument against suicide? How does Cebes relate this argument to philosophers and Socrates' claim that "philosophers would be ready and willing to die"?
11. What is the specific thesis with respect to which Socrates is called to defend himself? Why does Socrates claim that the philosopher will not make a fuss about death?
12. What does Socrates say that those who devote themselves to philosophy in the right way devote themselves to? Why might his claim seem laughable, as Simmias suggests?
13. What do they say that death consists in? Why is it conceived of as a liberation and a purification? Does this seem like a reasonable view?
14. What is the relation that Socrates claims to hold between the act of reasoning, the body, and knowledge of truth and 'what *is*'?
15. Can being and truth be known through the bodily senses?
16. What is the relation that Socrates claims to hold between leisure, the body, and philosophy? In what sense is leisure needed for philosophy?
17. How do they come to the conclusion that "those who philosophize rightly make dying their care"? In this regard, what distinguishes the philosopher as the lover of wisdom from those who make a fuss about death?
18. How is it that the many are said to be courageous by fearing and by fear? How is the philosopher different? By what is the philosopher mastered?

70 a – 72e

19. What is Cebes' concern with respect to Socrates' entire argument about the philosopher and death? What must Socrates' prove in order to assuage this concern? For whom does Cebes speak in raising this concern?
20. In response to Cebes' concern Socrates proposes "to tell a more thorough story" (*diamuthologeîn*). Why does he propose to do this rather than simply providing arguments?

21. What is Socrates' first argument/story in defence of the existence of the soul separate from the body? How does this 'argument' relate to Socrates' earlier remarks about pleasure and pain? Is his view about opposites plausible?
22. What is Cebes' response to this first account? Why might he frame his agreement with a double negative—that "we're *not deceived* in agreeing"?

72e – 77a

23. Who introduces the idea of recollection as providing a means of proving immortality? How does the 'argument' in this regard compare with the 'argument' in response to the paradox of the search for knowledge in the *Meno*?
24. What is ironic in Simmias' request for a demonstration (*apodeixis*—a 'showing forth') of the thesis about recollection and learning?
25. What is the point of Cebes reference to mathematical diagrams?
26. What is Cebes' argument regarding recollection? What image of recollection does this argument involve?
27. How does Socrates develop the argument he takes over from Cebes? What role does the reference to the two equal logs play in this argument?
28. How is the thesis that we might have innate knowledge rebutted?
29. How is the theory of ideas and the immortality of the soul connected?

77a – 78b

30. What is missing from the argument so far?
31. How does Socrates address the shortcoming, i.e. to show that the 'argument' holds both for the antecedent existence of the soul before birth and the subsequent existence of the soul after death?
32. In offering these arguments is Socrates to be regarded as a "singer of incantations"? What would that mean for how we read these arguments?

78b – 80 c

33. How does Socrates respond to Cebes concern that the soul might be dispersed at death?
34. How does Socrates relate the nature of the soul to the forms themselves? Is this argument persuasive?
35. Why might Socrates qualify the conclusion that the “soul is altogether indissoluble” by saying “or something close to this”?

80c-82d

36. What purpose does Socrates analogy of the soul with the bones serve?
37. How does Socrates compare the fate of the philosopher with respect to death and future incarnations with that of ordinary folk? What, supposedly, determines future incarnations?

82d – 88b

38. What is the greatest evil of the soul’s attachment to the body?
39. Once deliverance form the ‘prison’ of the body begins, what prevents the ‘lover of wisdom’ from slipping back?
40. What is the significance of the “long silence” after Socrates lays out these matters? What is his view about the swan-song?
41. What doubts do Simmias and Cebes express about Socrates view?
42. What role does the analogy of the weaver play in the argument?

88c – 91c

43. How does the issue of “haters of argument” arise? How do haters of argument become haters of human beings. In what sense does this ‘interlude’ serve as a purification of the interlocutors?

91c – 99d

44. What are the three arguments that Socrates mounts against the theory advanced by Simmias.
45. In recapitulating Cebes' view, what issue does Socrates say to which the discussion has led and needs to be considered? What proposal does he make that Cebes accepts?
46. What point does Socrates' narration of his own early education serve? Is the reference to his own procedure as a "second sailing" meant to be ironic?

99d – 107b

47. How in general does Socrates describe his second best method?
48. How is this method exemplified?
49. How is this discussion relevant to the issue raised at 95e?
50. What is the point of the discussion of the exclusion of opposites? How does it serve the argument regarding the immortality of the soul?
51. What two characteristics does Socrates conclude are properties of the soul? What is his argument?
52. What is Simmias' lingering doubt? How does Socrates address it?
53. How does establishing the immortality of the soul bear upon practical life.
54. What is the myth with which Socrates end the discussion? What are we to make of its truth and value?
55. What is the significance of Socrates' last words—"we owe a cock to Asclepius ..."