

309a-310a

1. What is the dialogue's opening question? What might be the *philosophical* significance of asking this question?
2. What quality attracts Socrates to both Alcibiades and Protagoras?
3. Why for Socrates might conversation with Protagoras be preferable to the company of Alcibiades? Are physical and mental beauty comparable? Is there even such a thing as mental beauty?

310a-311a

4. What is Hippocrates complaint against Protagoras? What does it tell us about Hippocrates' conception of wisdom that he frames it in terms of Protagoras having a "monopoly" on wisdom, the purchase of a share of which from Protagoras which would leave Hippocrates "bankrupt"?

311a-312b

5. What does Socrates wish to know from and about Hippocrates?
6. Why might Socrates ask Hippocrates what he thinks he will get from Protagoras for his money, and proceed then with a series of analogies, rather than asking Hippocrates directly what he is buying, i.e., in what does Hippocrates think Protagoras' wisdom consists that makes him want to buy-in?
7. To what conclusion is Hippocrates led? Could he have avoided the conclusion? Why does he blush at this result?

312b-313a

8. How does Hippocrates first define a sophist?
9. How does Socrates proceed to question this response?
10. To what definition of the sophist does Socrates' line of questioning lead Hippocrates?
11. What relationship does his line of questioning suggest exists between being wise and having expert knowledge *about* something in particular?

313a-314c

12. If Protagoras is a sophist in the way the sophist has been characterised at this point, why might Hippocrates' soul be put in danger by entrusting himself to Protagoras' instruction?
13. What has Socrates to learn about Protagoras in order to insure that the "provisions" for the soul that he "peddles" are safe?

314d-316d

14. To what philosophical end might Plato bother to describe the scene in Callias' house, before beginning the discussion between Socrates and Protagoras?
15. What is the issue Socrates puts before Protagoras? Rather than asking if Protagoras can make Hippocrates wise, Socrates seems to proceed in a round about way, and asks if associating with Protagoras can make Hippocrates a "man of respect in the city." Are we to assume that being "a man of respect in the city" and being "wise" are one and the same? Can association with someone in itself make one wise?
16. Protagoras thanks Socrates (316c) for being discrete on his behalf. In what way is Socrates being discrete?
17. What does Protagoras mean by the ancient "sophist's art"? Does Protagoras deny that sophists engage in any of the sorts of activities that have made them suspect?

18. Why might Protagoras be happy to have Prodicus, Hippias and their companions join the discussion and have it made a “general session”?

317e-319a

19. What does Socrates ask of Protagoras on Hippocrates behalf?
20. How does Protagoras initially respond?
21. What does Protagoras claim to teach? Does Socrates’ summary characterisation of it as “the art of citizenship” [*politike technē*] accurately represent what Protagoras has said?
22. Is Protagoras correct to claim that “the art of citizenship” makes one a “good citizen” [*agathos polites*]?

319a-329b

23. What does Socrates argue concerning the relation of “the art of citizenship” [*politike technē*] and teachability? If a form of knowing is not teachable can it truly be a *technē*? Is all wisdom, *technikos*?
24. In deciding the issue of whether, publicly, the art of citizenship, or, privately, the virtues one possesses are teachable, what weight does the evidence of Athenian practice (e.g., that of Pericles) have?
25. In explaining how virtue is teachable, why might Protagoras distinguish between “explain[ing] by telling a story” (*muthon legon epidexon*) or developing an argument (*logo diexeltho*), and is the criterion of being ‘pleasant’ (*chariesteron*) sufficient grounds for preferring the story?
26. What explanatory value does the myth of Prometheus and Epimetheus have for Protagoras?
27. Why does Hermes (322c) distribute shame and justice to humans? How might shame (*aidos*) and justice (*dike*) be related?
28. On what issue does Protagoras abandon story for argument? Why?

29. Protagoras claims (325 a-b) that justice, temperance and piety are necessary conditions of the *polis*, and these collectively are “the virtue of a man” (*andros areten* as opposed to *anthropos areten*) and yet this virtue is something in which “everyone must share” (*pantas metechlein*). Are these claims consistent?
30. What is Protagoras’ evidence that these virtues can be taught?
31. If virtue is teachable, how does Protagoras explain the fact that so many of the sons of good fathers amount to nothing? What role does the analogy of flute playing serve in the argument?

329b-332a

32. What is the “one little thing” that Socrates needs Protagoras to explain? Does he really think it is “little”?
33. In Protagoras’ view virtue is “a single entity” (*hoti enos ontos*) and yet it has “parts” (*moria*). How does the discussion of the parts and wholes of virtue lead Protagoras into trouble?
34. Is it obviously true that justice is just, piety is pious, temperance is temperate, wisdom is wise?
35. Can the parts of virtue both be parts of virtue and yet one part in no way resembles any other part?
36. Why might Socrates be prepared to let the issue of the similarity of justice and piety drop (332a)?

332a- 333c

37. What role does the discussion of opposites serve in the debate and to what contradiction does it lead? Is it true that each thing has only one opposite (*enantios* ~ literally ‘being - opposed)?

333d-335b

38. Why would Protagoras be willing to grant that one can be 'sensible' in acting unjustly?
39. How does Socrates challenge this view?
40. How does Protagoras respond to the challenge? Is his speech to the point.
41. Why does Socrates think he is done talking with Protagoras? What is the result of the discussion?

335c-342a

42. What is the point of the interchange as to whether Socrates and Protagoras should continue their discussion? What is the middle course upon which they resolve? Why does Socrates reject the idea of a moderator? How is the issue resolved? In what sense might this discussion and resolution be a metaphor for justice in the polis? Is Protagoras insisting that he get to give long questioning speeches and to be answered briefly an instance of justice?
43. What point is served by Protagoras' appeal to the authority of poetry in discussing virtue, and then by the suggestion that Simonides contradicts himself? Is Socrates' defence of the reading that there is no contradiction persuasive?
44. What is Protagoras' objection to Socrates' rehabilitation of Simonides?
45. What point is served by the discussion of the meaning of "terrible" and "hard"?

342a-349b

46. From 342a-347b Socrates offers a long speech in interpretation of Simonides poem. Given Socrates' previous objection to long speeches, what are we to make of the fact that he indulges in this one? What is the gist of

his interpretation? Is interpreting a poem the same as describing “what goes through” the poet’s “mind in composing an ode”?

47. What is Socrates’ judgement on discussing poetry? When Protagoras agrees to continue the discussion, why would Socrates begin immediately by invoking Homer?

349c-357e

48. How does Socrates summarise the previous discussion with Protagoras? Is it a fair summation?
49. Among the virtues, what makes courage seem different?
50. What if anything is wrong with Protagoras’ claim that the courageous are confident but not all the confident are courageous? How does he support that claim?
51. Why (351b) does Socrates shift the discussion to “living well” (*eu*)?
52. In suggesting that to live well means to live life to the end pleasantly, why does Protagoras need to qualify the definition to say that one must take pleasure in honourable (*kalos*) things?
53. Why does Socrates think it necessary to investigate the opinions of ordinary people.?
54. How does Socrates establish that pleasure qua pleasure is good?
55. What is the argument offered against the view that people know what is best to do but do not do it because they are “overcome by pleasure”?
56. What is the argument against the claim that one can knowingly do what is bad? Is the argument convincing?
57. How does living well depend on the art of measurement (*metretiken*)? The roots of this word are *metreo* ~ to measure and *techne* ~ art/skill. Does living well reduce to a particular *techne*?

58. How at 357 c-e does Socrates summarise the preceding argument? What does the argument reveal about those cases where one seems to be overcome by pleasure not to pursue what is good?

358a-362

59. How do they arrive at the conclusion that no one willingly goes toward what is bad or what he or she believes to be bad? Are you persuaded that this is true?

60. What conclusion is then drawn about the distinctiveness of courage among the virtues.

61. How in the end do they consider courage / cowardice and knowledge to be related?

62. With what conclusion about the teachability of virtue are we left?