

Quick Facts about Thomas Hobbes

*Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) born in Malmesbury (in Wiltshire, England) in the year of the Spanish Armada's attempt to invade England. Hobbes dies at the age of 91, publishing *Leviathan* at what was an advanced age, (61), after recovering from serious illness 2 years prior.

*Father was a preacher but most likely not educated and ultimately left his family due to battle with alcoholism.

*Hobbes educated at a hall in Oxford (cheaper and less prestigious option) courtesy of the generosity of his uncle.

*Hobbes studied rhetoric and literature at which he excelled. He studied Latin and Greek as well as French and Italian.

TEST OUTLINE

The test will be divided into three (3) parts; the first part will be definitions taken from Book 1, Chapter 4, and Book 2, Chapters 18, 19, 20, and 21 (40 points); the second part will be short-answer taken from Book 1, Chapter 4, and Book 2, Chapters 18, 19, 20, and 21 (45 points) and the third part will be an essay (see below) on the challenges facing a democracy and why Hobbes's theory of a Sovereign, invested with the right to pursue peace at home and security from abroad, could be one way to avoid political strife. (15 points).

Definitions

1. What is an error?
2. Identify four (4) of the seven (7) types of speech mentioned in Chapter 4 of Book 1 of the *Leviathan*.
3. What is understanding, as defined by Hobbes in Book 1, Chapter 4?
4. What is the Latin term for reckoning? What is the Greek term?
5. What is a syllogism?
6. What is a Commonwealth?
7. How does Hobbes define "Monarchy"? (See Book 2, Chapter 19, Section 96)
6. What is Democracy? (See Book 2, Chapter 19, Section 98)

Short-Answer Questions

Please answer the following question based on your reading of Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*.

1. Why is the Sovereign bound to honor his Covenant with his subjects? See Book 2, Chapter 18, section 89, (2.18.89).
2. What happens to the man who defies the will of the people and refuses to honor the decrees of the Covenant agreed to by the People and the Sovereign? (see 2.18.90)
3. What must the Sovereign achieve and maintain both at home and abroad? (2.18.91)
4. Hobbes states in Book 2, Chapter 18, Section 93 why England fell into Civil War. What three bodies of government in England led the government to descend into war? What is Hobbes's remedy for this situation? See 2.18.93.
5. How do men signify their willingness to surrender their right to self-preservation to the sovereign?
6. What are the expectations that can be made upon both parties who enter into a contract?
7. If a man and a woman, monarchs of two different kingdoms, have a child and establish a contract which determines to which Sovereign the child will be subject, Hobbes states that both parents must abide by the terms of the contract. In the event that there is no contract but the man and woman live in a society in which there is a Sovereign, the child becomes subject to the Sovereign of the country in which he or she was born. In the case of a child who is born in the condition of "meer Nature" (2.20.103), to whom does the child belong, the mother or the father?
8. In Book 2, Chapter 21, Section 112, Hobbes writes: "When therefore our refusal to obey, frustrates the End for which the Sovereignty was ordained, then there is no Liberty to refuse. *otherwise there is.*" What does Hobbes mean?
9. According to Hobbes's theory of political rights under the Sovereign, can a Subject ever be put to death unjustly? (2.21.109)

Essay Question

Excerpt from an essay by Obbie Todd, "Thomas Hobbes and Social Contract Theory", published in *Vernacular*, an online journal, February 14, 2017

"In chapter 19 of Leviathan, Hobbes writes: ". . . that where the public and private interest are most closely united, there the public is most advanced." In today's American society it is not possible to bring private interest into agreement with the common good. Many Americans share a difference of opinions in a vast majority of topics. For us, as a nation, to come up with a common solution on issues that affect our country would seem ideal. However, that is not the case. Topics from guns violence, abortion, immigration split our country. The inability to reach a common sense solution that would benefit the common good of our nation is appalling.

Democracy presents a great potential to our nation. This in turn, makes us the most advanced. There is a beauty behind the madness. Even if we as a people can't reach a solution on a particular issue, we do have a voice. Our voice allows us to express our thoughts and opinions of what is currently affecting our country today. Whether a citizen is democrat, republican, or independent they form opinions based on what that they believe will benefit our country the most."

Question: Do you think that Thomas Hobbes would agree with Todd's statement that there is a "beauty behind the madness"? For Hobbes, what is likely to occur to the security of the State when each man or woman speaks freely? Can you think of a situation in which Hobbes's theory of government a Sovereign would be advantageous?