



UNIT 3 PHILOSOPHY WILLIAMSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL



NICHOMACHEAN ETHICS WORKSHEET – Class Work

BOOK ONE

Chapter One

1. What does every activity, regardless of the type, have as its aim?
2. What does Aristotle mean by 'subordinate aims'; and why does he think we pursue them?

BOOK ONE

Chapter Two

1. Why, according to Aristotle, do we need to have knowledge of what 'the good' is? What quote, involving marksmanship, best sums up this thought?
2. According to Aristotle, is the good of an individual or the good of a community more important? Does he give reasons for his view?

BOOK ONE

Chapter Three

1. How exact does Aristotle think a discussion of the good should be? What reasons does he give for his answer? (Hint: it may help to think of how he contrasts ethical discussions with mathematical ones).
2. What does Aristotle really mean when he says that 'political science is not a proper study for the young'? (Hint: he is not being agest!)

BOOK ONE

Chapter Four

1. Aristotle states that there is general agreement that the supreme good (ultimate aim) of our actions is 'happiness', but how does he think this is *generally* meant?

BOOK ONE

Chapter Five

1. What three types of life does Aristotle mention?
2. What does Aristotle mean when he compares people to cows?
3. Why does Aristotle reject the lives of honour and of wealth as being paths to happiness?

BOOK ONE

Chapter Seven

1. What does Aristotle say is the 'good' for medicine, for military science, for architecture?
2. What does Aristotle mean when he says that wealth is not the final end? (Hint: he says it is a 'means' – what is he talking about?)
3. What does Aristotle mean when he uses the term 'self-sufficient'? (Hint: he believes an end that is 'self-sufficient' has two criteria – what are they?)
4. What does Aristotle mean by a 'function'? (You may like to relate this to a specific occupation, such as a sculptor.)
5. Why does Aristotle discard 'the mere act of living' as a definition of man's function?
6. Why does Aristotle discard 'the life of experiencing sensations' as a definition of man's function?
7. What does Aristotle claim to be the function of man? What, therefore, is the 'good' of man?
8. How long does Aristotle believe it takes to achieve 'happiness'; and what quote best sums up his belief?
9. What does Aristotle mean by 'first principles'?



**UNIT 3 PHILOSOPHY
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NICHOMACHEAN ETHICS WORKSHEET – Class Work (continued)

BOOK ONE

Chapter Eight

1. According to Aristotle, what does it mean for 'a thing to be true'?
2. What three types of 'goods' does Aristotle identify; and of these, which does he believe is the best?
3. How does Aristotle explain that everyone would agree with his definition of happiness (i.e. that it would have popular appeal as a 'first principle')?
4. Aristotle believes that the *possession* of virtue in itself is not enough to live a good life. Why not?
5. What role does Aristotle believe pleasure plays in the good life?
6. What does Aristotle mean when he states that 'happiness seems to require a modicum of external prosperity'?

BOOK ONE

Chapter Nine

1. What reasons does Aristotle give for believing that happiness comes to us through our own efforts rather than as a gift from the gods or as a result of caprice? (Hint: 'caprice' is merely a fancy word for 'chance' or 'luck').
2. Aristotle believes that neither animals nor children can be said to be truly 'happy'. What reasons does he give for this belief?

BOOK TEN

Chapter Six

1. This chapter seeks to recapitulate (or go over) what Aristotle has previously stated. Summarise his definition of happiness and the criteria it demands.
2. What reasons does Aristotle give for believing that we should not identify (or equate) happiness with 'amusement' or 'enjoying ourselves'? (Hint: It may help to discuss specific examples he gives, such as the lives of children or those with 'low morals' or slaves as opposed to Socrates.)
3. If 'amusement' is not a final end and it is not 'happiness'; then why, according to Aristotle, is it still useful?

BOOK TEN

Chapter Seven

1. What does Aristotle claim to be the 'highest form of activity'?
2. According to Aristotle, does the 'wise man' need other people? Why/Why not?
3. What is it that Aristotle believes is the 'something divine within us'; and how does this relate to his definition of the good life?