

© International Baccalaureate Organization 2025

All rights reserved. No part of this product may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without the prior written permission from the IB. Additionally, the license tied with this product prohibits use of any selected files or extracts from this product. Use by third parties, including but not limited to publishers, private teachers, tutoring or study services, preparatory schools, vendors operating curriculum mapping services or teacher resource digital platforms and app developers, whether fee-covered or not, is prohibited and is a criminal offense.

More information on how to request written permission in the form of a license can be obtained from <https://ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/ib-publishing/licensing/applying-for-a-license/>.

© Organisation du Baccalauréat International 2025

Tous droits réservés. Aucune partie de ce produit ne peut être reproduite sous quelque forme ni par quelque moyen que ce soit, électronique ou mécanique, y compris des systèmes de stockage et de récupération d'informations, sans l'autorisation écrite préalable de l'IB. De plus, la licence associée à ce produit interdit toute utilisation de tout fichier ou extrait sélectionné dans ce produit. L'utilisation par des tiers, y compris, sans toutefois s'y limiter, des éditeurs, des professeurs particuliers, des services de tutorat ou d'aide aux études, des établissements de préparation à l'enseignement supérieur, des fournisseurs de services de planification des programmes d'études, des gestionnaires de plateformes pédagogiques en ligne, et des développeurs d'applications, moyennant paiement ou non, est interdite et constitue une infraction pénale.

Pour plus d'informations sur la procédure à suivre pour obtenir une autorisation écrite sous la forme d'une licence, rendez-vous à l'adresse <https://ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/ib-publishing/licensing/applying-for-a-license/>.

© Organización del Bachillerato Internacional, 2025

Todos los derechos reservados. No se podrá reproducir ninguna parte de este producto de ninguna forma ni por ningún medio electrónico o mecánico, incluidos los sistemas de almacenamiento y recuperación de información, sin la previa autorización por escrito del IB. Además, la licencia vinculada a este producto prohíbe el uso de todo archivo o fragmento seleccionado de este producto. El uso por parte de terceros —lo que incluye, a título enunciativo, editoriales, profesores particulares, servicios de apoyo académico o ayuda para el estudio, colegios preparatorios, desarrolladores de aplicaciones y entidades que presten servicios de planificación curricular u ofrezcan recursos para docentes mediante plataformas digitales—, ya sea incluido en tasas o no, está prohibido y constituye un delito.

En este enlace encontrará más información sobre cómo solicitar una autorización por escrito en forma de licencia: <https://ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/ib-publishing/licensing/applying-for-a-license/>.

Philosophy

Higher level

Paper 3

12 May 2025

Zone A morning | **Zone B** morning | **Zone C** morning

1 hour 15 minutes

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Read the text and write a response.
- Answer both parts of the question.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[25 marks]**.

Unseen text – philosophy and contemporary issues

Read the following extract and answer **both** parts (a) and (b) of the question.

People are investing more time and money in personal technology, such as smart speakers, smart watches, and virtual reality headsets. There has been an acceleration of new technology and an increased reliance on it for social connection, entertainment, and educational experiences. As we spend more time at home, many of us are turning to technology to alter our reality.

5 As wearable technology becomes commonplace in our daily lives, there's an even closer connection on the horizon with the rise of the brain-computer interface (BCI).

BCIs can connect to a human's brain either internally or externally. They read the brain activity and process the activity into information and can also communicate information back to the brain. BCIs have the potential to amplify human intelligence to superhuman levels, which

10 is exciting for technologists and entrepreneurs, but begs the question: Are we, our businesses, and our technological systems ready for this change?

There are two ways of activating BCIs: either implanting them into the brain or attaching external electrodes. AI is used to isolate the brain signals that the BCI devices capture, as well as to send signals back into the brain.

15 BCIs have brought about incredible advancements in the medical field. Many companies are rapidly moving toward widely available devices and less-invasive BCI methods. These companies are working to measure and assess brain activity for a variety of uses, from playing games and stress reduction to typing out words by thinking them.

In the distant future, if BCIs are successful at reading and writing information to the brain, and if humans adapt to the technology, we could experience for example telepathic conversations with loved ones, instantaneous access to superhuman computational power, playing back memories and dreams, or immersing yourself and every sense you possess into a virtual entertainment experience. Susan Schneider imagines a brain chip allowing you to experience the innermost thoughts of your loved ones. Brian Roemmele suggests that a 'holographic crystal

20 memory' will increase brain capacity and amplify one's intelligence, making us all smarter.

There are many outstanding questions: Who will own the data generated by our brains? Will brain data be bought and sold by data brokers like other personal information today? Will people be forced to use certain BCIs that survey their brain activity (for example, to make sure you're paying attention at work and school)? Will BCIs put people's brains at risk of being

30 hacked? As with all new technology, more of these philosophical questions will need to be investigated and answered before there is widespread adoption and use of BCIs in the future.

It's impossible to predict what will happen in the future. As is the case today with modern technology, we can be sure we'll continue to ask philosophical questions as BCIs and humanity evolve. Those currently working in this area are already having discussions about BCIs' impact and how they can help and hinder humans. The more intimate the technology becomes, the

35 more magnified unresolved issues like privacy, security, and closed ecosystems become.

We are on the precipice of major societal changes. Many people are looking to technology as a beacon of hope in these uncertain times.

- (a) With reference to the text and your own knowledge, explain how new technologies could affect how human brains function and how accessing information may change. [10]
- (b) With reference to the text and your own experience of doing philosophy, discuss the claim that philosophy is interested in the development of humanity. [15]
-

Disclaimer:

Content used in IB assessments is taken from authentic, third-party sources. The views expressed within them belong to their individual authors and/or publishers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the IB.

References:

Golembiewski, L., 2020. Are you ready for tech that connects to your brain? *Harvard Business Review*, [online] 28 September. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2020/09/are-you-ready-for-tech-that-connects-to-your-brain> [Accessed 16 April 2024]. Source adapted.