

Short Essay Assignment: What is Knowledge?

Draft date: October 16th, 8pm

Due date: October 23rd, 8pm

Word count: around 1000 words (typed; no other formatting requirements)

Assignment. Write a short essay about the nature of knowledge. Your essay should discuss the Gettier problem, consider one potential solution, and critically assess that solution. I will pair each one of you up with two of your classmates. On or after October 16th, you will read both your partners' drafts, and discuss with them what parts of their papers you found difficult to understand, and how you think the paper could be made clearer. A week later you'll hand in the final version.

You should hand in your work *anonymously* through *Canvas*. You should credit your partners for any ideas they contribute. Refer to them as "partner 1" and "partner 2" to preserve anonymity. If you receive help from any other classmates, you can credit them by name.

Suggested outline:

1. Introduce the JTB analysis of knowledge.
2. Introduce a Gettier-style counterexample, and explain why it is a counterexample to the JTB analysis. You can use one of Gettier's examples, or come up with your own: whichever you prefer.
3. Exhibit **one** of the other views on the nature of knowledge we have examined in this class. You can choose between Lehrer's defeaters-based analysis of knowledge, Nozick's truth-tracker analysis of knowledge, Williamson's primitivism, and Lewis's contextualism.
4. Explain how your chosen account addresses the problem posed by Gettier's counterexamples.
5. Raise one objection to the account.
6. Make a judgment about whether or not this objection can be met — and give a reason for your judgment.

Keep it simple!