UNIT-10 GETTIER'S PROBLEM

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives

10.2 Introduction

10.3 The standard analysis of Knowledge (JTB)

10.4 The "Knowing That" and "Knowing How": Distinction

10.5 Belief

- 10.5.1 Belief as a necessary condition for knowledge
- 10.5.2 The analysis of Beliefs

10.6 TruthNecessary condition for knowledge

- 10.6.1No Magical Connection between knowledge and truth
- 10.6.2 Alleged Counterexamples to the Necessary of Condition (ii) i.e. truth

10.7 Justification: justification as a Necessary Condition for Knowledge

- 10.7.1 Why Justification Is Necessary for Knowledge
- 10.7.2 The Nature of Justification

10.8 Knowledge and Its Conditions

10.9 Gettier Counter Examples

10.10 Let Us Sum Up

10.11 Further Readings

10.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

10.13 Model Questions

10.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to know:

- Describe the general meaning of knowledge and what is Gettier's Problem
- explain the standard analysis of Knowledge
- explain and analysis what is belief
- explain the difference between " knowing that" and " knowing how"
- describe belief as a Necessary Condition for Knowledge
- describe what is connection between knowledge and Truth

- explain what is justification
- explain why Justification is necessary for Truth
- describe the nature of Justification
- discuss Knowledge and its Truth
- explain Gettier counter examples
- explain conditions in the concept of knowledge

10.2. INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce to you about the Gettier's Problem and how it is related to knowledge. The concept of knowledge is a perfect candidate for philosophical analysis. In the first place, it is not a strange or technical term, all of us can, and do, use the noun knowledge and various forms of the verb to know quite frequently and quite correctly. In the course of ordinary life, we often reject, often with good reasons, various people's claims to know this or that.

Fortunately, philosophers have developed widely accepted analysis of the concept of knowledge.According to this standard account, knowledge is justified true belief i.e. JTB.

Gettier problems or cases are named in honour of the American philosopher Edmund Gettier. This problem, in the field of epistemology, is a landmark philosophical problem concerning of understanding of knowledge. Attributed to American philosopher Edmund Gettier, Gettier type counterexamples which is also called Gettier cases challenge, the long held justified true belief i.e, JTB account of knowledge.



LET US KNOW

Gettier, Edmund (1927-): American philosopher, who's Is Justified True Belief Knowledge? (1963), offers counter-examples to show that even justified true belief may not be genuine knowledge in cases where that which justifies one's belief happens not to be related directly to the truth of what one believes.

10.3. THE STANDARD ANALYSIS OF KNOWLEDGE (JTB)

JTB can be expressed, in explicit analytical form, as follows:

X knows that P IFF

i) X believes that P;
ii) It is true that p;and
iii) X justified in believing that p (if X does)

I know that 2+ 2=4, for example, just in case (or just when) I believe that 2+2=4; is true that 2+2=4;and I am justified in believing that 2+2=4. Similarly, you know that the dog is in the backyard just in case you believe that the dog is in the backyard, that's where the dog is, and you are justified in your belief.

According to the standard analysis, then there are three necessary conditions for knowledge;

1) The belief condition
2) The truth condition and
3) The justification condition

No one who fails to satisfy one or more of these conditions can possibly know that p. The standard analysis of knowledge also claims that these three conditions are together sufficient-that is, there is no other requirement that needs to be met in order to have knowledge.



ACTIVITY: 10.1

- Give two examples from day to day life where JTB can be understood very clearly.

Ans:- .....

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q,1 What is Knowledge?

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Q 2. What is the full form of JTB?

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Q 3. Who is the author of Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?

……

10.4. THE "KNOWING THAT"/ "KNOWING HOW": DISTINCTION

The standard analysis of knowledge is an analysis of: knowing that". However, "knowing that" must be carefully distinguished from "knowing how". We know that how to ride a bicycle, bake a pineapple upside-down cake, or do a handstand, this is common know-how, or knowledge-as-ability. Ordinarily, we cannot fully verbalize knowledge and ability: such knowledge is taught more by showing than by saying.

Knowledge in the "knowing that" sense is called propositional knowledge. Indeed, the "p" in both "believing that p" and "knowing that p" is called a propositional variable. It is generally assumed that propositional knowledge, unlike know-how, can be fully verbalized,



ACTIVITY:10.2

Give an example of the differences between "Knowing that" and " Knowing how"

Ans:- .....

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4. What are the differences between "knowing that" and "knowing how" ?

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10.5. BELIEF

10.5.1. Belief as a necessary condition for knowledge

Condition (i) i.e. belief in the standard analysis of knowledge tells us that we cannot know that which we do not believe. In other words, we cannot have knowledge without belief (although we can certainly have beliefs that do not amount to knowledge). It is preciselythat subset of our beliefs that are both true and justified that constitute knowledge. Although this is a quite natural way of looking at knowledge, it has sometimes been challenged.



ACTIVITY: 10. 3

Try to give one example of belief which is related to knowledge.

Ans:- ……

……



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: What is the 1st condition of Knowledge?

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Q 6: What is belief?

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10.5.2. The analysis of Beliefs

Although everyone, we are, of course,generalizing about adult speakers of English has the word belief in his or her vocabulary, the associated concept is very difficult to analyze. One initial clarification is easy to make: we should distinguish belief as a propositional attitude-that is, believing that"-from belief as confidence -that is "believing in". In this present discussion, we are not concerned with the concept involved in believing in, such as believing in democracy, the American way of life, votes for seventeen year olds, Senator X, or whatever.

One analysis of belief that reads as follows:

X beliefs that p IFF
X thinks p is true,

Any counter example to the necessity of condition (i) for knowledge would require us to accept a situation in which a person could consistently say "I know that p, but I don't think it is true that p." If someone were to say something like "I know that I went to the movies last night, but I don't think I did." We would not, I think, credit that person with an unusual-but possible-state ofmind; we would, instead, suppose that the person was using the word know or the word think correctly. It is the job of Psychology to describe peculiar, including very confused, states of mind; philosophy, based on its analyses of concepts, can say that no state of mind, or psychological condition, could possibly be correctly described as a state, or condition, of "belief less knowledge." is a phrase that has as much chance of describing anything as "four sided triangle" or "square circle".



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Belief: Affirmation of, or conviction regarding, the truth of a proposition, especially when one is not (yet) in possession of evidence adequate to justify a claim that the proposition is known with certainty.

10.6. TRUTH: NECESSARY CONDITION FOR KNOWLEDGE

Condition (ii) i.e. truth in the standard analysis of knowledge tells us that we cannot know that which is not true though certainly many things may be true we don't know. There may indeed be things that are true that no one knows.

Condition (ii) is a necessary condition for knowledge because a commitment to its necessary is built into our use of the term knowledge, as well as into our thinking about knowledge. The necessity of condition (ii) regulates our use of knowledge and related terms. Even if we are not fully aware of this. Once again, conceptual analysis makes explicit something implicit in our actual, often quite unreflective, practice.

People, of course, quite often think they know something they don't know. But the correct way of describing this is never to say they know various things falsely. About the people in the Middle Ages who said "we know the earth is flat." the correct thing to say is that they were making two necessarily interlocking mistakes. Their first mistakeswas about the shape of the earth: they thought it was flat, but it wasn't and isn't. Their second mistake was about their inventory of knowledge; they thought it contained an item about the shape of the earth, but it didn't.

This is always the situation when people think they know what cannot know because it is false, If X says "I know that p, " but p is in fact false, necessarily X makes two mistakes. The first, about himself and what he knows (he overestimates his supply of knowledge by one unit), and second, about p. Imagine a not very clever child, just learning arithmetic, who is delighted that he now " knows" that 2+2=5. Necessarily the child makes two mistakes: a mistake about what he knows (less than he thinks) and a mistake about what 2+2 equals.



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TRUTH: the conformity of a proposition to the way things are. Precise analysis of the nature of truth is the subject of the correspondence, coherence, pragmatic, redundancy and semantic theories of truth.



ACTIVITY:10. 3

- Do you find any relationship between truth and knowledge?

Ans:- .....

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- Do you accept thattruth is a main criterion of knowledge?

Ans:- .....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: Fill up the blanks:

a. People, of course, quite often think they know something they _____ _____.

b. Condition (ii) is a necessary condition for _____ because a commitment to its necessary is built into our use of the term _____, as well as into our thinking about knowledge.

10.6.1 NO MAGICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND TRUTH

When people first hear the principle, if you know something, it has to be true, they something imagine they are being given a magical guarantee that reliably concretes their saying "I know that p" (or their sincerely believing

that they know that p) with p's being true. This gets the real connection between knowledge and truth background, however; it works only the other way around. If p turns out to be false, you turn out not to know that p, whatever you may or believe.

10.6.2. ALLEGED COUNTEREXAMPLES TO THE NECESSARY OF CONDITION (II)

Proposed counterexamples to the necessity of condition (ii) for knowledge (the truth condition) all turn out to be counterexamples to such principles as "If X says he knows that p, then p" or "If X believes he knows that p, then p." These are false principles, and are of course open to counterexamplification.

There is no genuine counterexamples to "If X knows that p, then p." This should not be puzzling. We simply refuse to count anything as knowledge that is not true. This is why it is so often difficult to acquire knowledge, and why its acquisition counts as an accomplishment. It also explains why claims to know can be and often is incorrect.

It is sometimes maintained, despite the considerations above, that people in the Middle Ages really did know the earth was flat, it seemed flat to ordinary people, respected experts held that it was flat, belief in the earth's flatness was traditional. All of this may be true, but it is irrelevant. It may have been reasonable for people, in the middle Ages, to believe that the earth was flat, but reasonable belief is not the same as knowledge.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 8 (a) There is no genuine counterexamples to "If X knows that p, then p." (T/F)

(b) It also explains why claims to know can be and often is correct. (T/F)

10.7. JUSTIFICATION: JUSTIFICATION AS A NECESSARY CONDITION FOR KNOWLEDGE

Condition (iii) i.e, justification in the standard analysis of knowledge tells us that cannot know what we believe without justification. The first thing that has to be made clear is that the justification condition is separate from the truth condition. You can satisfy condition (ii) and not satisfy condition (iii) in other words, you can believe something that is true and still not be justified in your belief, Similarly, you can satisfy condition (iii) and not satisfy condition (ii) in other words, you can be justified in believing something which is false, Of course it veryoften happens that you believe something that is true, ad are justified in your belief . (or believe something that is false, and fail to be justified in your belief). These are the most obvious possibilities, but instances where truth and justification go their separate ways are also possible.

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Judgement: The mental act of affirming a proposition or the capacity for distinguishing truth from falsity.

Justification: justification is offered as grounds for believing an assertion? Hence, also an explanation of the legitimacy of each step in the formal proof of the validity of a deductive argument.

ACTIVITY:10.4



Give one example from day to day life showing that justification is related to knowledge

Ans: .....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9: What is Justification? Answer in about 20 words)

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10.7.1 WHY JUSTIFICATION IS NECESSARY FOR KNOWLEDGE

Why isn't true belief enough for knowledge? The simplest answer is that justification is built into the concept of knowledge that we, as a matter of fact, employ. This is a correct answer as far as it goes. But there is an explanation of why we have the concept we have with just those necessarily conditions we take to define it. The point of calling something knowledge is to indicate that we can rely on it, that we can be very, if not perfectly, certain that it is correct. Once something is classified as knowledge, we want to be able to use it, with as much security as possible, as the basis for plans and actions.

Although beliefs that are the products of lucky guesses or prejudices or otherwise arrived at irrationally, and which fail to be supported by relevant evidence, may occasionally be true, we can never be confident that they will be true. True beliefs that are true "by chance" do not provide the maximal certainty that it is the point of knowledge to provide.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10: Why Justification Is Necessary for Knowledge?

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10.7.2. THE NATURE OF JUSTIFICATION

We are here talking about justification only in connection with beliefs-what is often called doxastic justification. Decisions, Actions, plans, rules and possibly feelings can also be justified (or fail to be justified), but whatit means to speak of justification in each of these cases is not the same as what it means to speak of the justification of belief. An analysis of belief, or doxastic, justification builds on the ordinary idea that a person is justified in believing something just in case he has "good reasons" for his belief. Although the word reason sometimes means cause (as in the sentence, "The reason my car dint start was that it was out of gas") reason here does not mean cause. A hypnotist might cause me to believe that Mickey Mouse is president of the United States but, although the causal story provides me with an excuse for believing something so absurd, it does not give me good reasons for my belief. Reasons that have justification force are, at least for most beliefs, to be understood in terms of the possession of adequate evidence.

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Doxa (Greek) Greek term for opinion, belief or judgement, as opposed to systematic knowledge, frequently contrasted with real knowledge in classical philosophy. According to Plato, this limited awareness of the sensible world encompasses the lower portion of the divided line. In Aristotle's works on logic, the same terms are used to distinguish contingent from necessary truths about the world. Doxastic: It simply means "concerning beliefs." Doxastic Logic: The logic of belief.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 11: what is often called doxastic justification?

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10.8. KNOWLEDGE AND ITS CONDITIONS

We have seen that conditions (i), (ii) and (iii) in the standard analysis of knowledge all have to be satisfied for a person to have knowledge. This happens only when a person believes something that is true and is also justified in his or her belief. When a person believes something that is false and also lacks justification, that person (very obviously) does not have knowledge. When a person believes something that is true but lacks justification, that person also does not have knowledge.

Finally, when a person believes something that is false, but nevertheless has justification, he still fails to have knowledge. There are cases like too, cases where there are "good reasons" for believing something that is in fact false. So we might judge that people in the Middle Ages, given the evidence then available, were justified in believing that the earth is flat.



ACTIVITY-10. 5

What are the three conditions of Knowledge? Discuss.

Ans:……..……

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10.9. GETTIER COUNTER EXAMPLES

Thereare general agreements that each of the three conditions for knowledge discussed in this chapter is necessary. This leaves open the question of whether the three conditions are jointly sufficientor sufficient a "package." Could someone satisfy the three conditions and still the American philosopher Edmund Gettier (b. 1927) has proposed counterexamples to the joint sufficiently of the three conditions constituting the standard analysis of knowledge. His counterexamples (and similar examples) have come to be known as Gettier Counterexamples.

Let us consider one such example. Suppose I took out the window of my apartment , see what any reasonable person would take to be rain failing, and come to be believe that it is indeed raining. In fact, though what I am seeing is not real rain, but the special-effects rain produced by movie crew. The "fake rain" is coming from sprinklers below a temporary roof. However, at the same time, it really is raining, and -if the temporary roof were not in place-real rain would be failing in place of the movie rain that I see. I believe that it is raining, it is true that it is raining, and I am justified; yet it seems odd to say that I know that it is raining. That my belief is true in the special circumstances of the Gettier counterexample seems a matter of pure coincidence. In any case, my evidence seems somehow defective. I have come to believe that it is raining via false belief that the stuff failing outside my window is real rain.

There is no general agreement, among philosophers, on just how to handle Gettier counterexamples. Does the possibility of constructing such examples mean that the standard analysis is incomplete? Not necessarily. We might take Gettier counterexamples to show that judgements are, like most other judgements, fallible (fallible= "possibly mistaken") or corrigible (corrigible= "subject to correction"). In the circumstances just described, a person who judges that it is raining arrives at that belief by a reasonable route. If it turns out that his actual process of belief formation, though of a generally reliable sort, relies on a false assumption ("That's real rain out there") then it turns that he is not justified. He does, after all, fail to satisfy condition (iii), so it is not surprising that he does not know that it is raining.



ACTIVITY-10.5

Try to give one Gettier's Counterexample from day to day life

Ans:……...

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 12: What is Gettier Counterexamples? Give examples.

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Q 13. What is corrigible?

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Q 14: What is No-Theory of truth?

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Q 15: What is correspondence theory of truth?

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Q 16. What is coherence theory of truth?

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Q 17: What is pragmatic theory of truth?

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The No-Theory of Truth: This theory is meant as a philosophical theory of truth and its basic claim is that 'p' is true just means that p

This theory is also sometimes called the disappearance theory of truth.

Correspondence Theory of Truth: belief that a proposition is true when it conforms with some fact or state of affairs. While this theory properly emphasizes the notion that propositions are true when they correspond to reality, its propositions often have difficulty explaining what facts are and how propositions are related to them.

Coherence Theory of Truth: belief that a proposition is true to the extent that it agrees with other true propositions. In contrast with the correspondence theory's emphasis on an independent reality, this view supposes that reliable beliefs constitute an inter-related system, each element of which entails every other. Thus, such idealists as Bradley, Bosanquate and Blanshard, all defended versions of the coherence theory.

Pragmatic Theory of Truth: belief that a proposition is true when acting upon it yields satisfactory practical results. As formulated by William James, the pragmatic theory promises (in the long term) a convergence of human opinions upon a stable body of scientific propositions,that have been shown, in experience, to be successful principles for human action.

Bradley, Frencies Herbert (1846-1924): English philosopher and absolute idealist. His Ethical Studies (1876) criticized Mill's utilitarianism and defended an ethics of self-realisation, understood as the conquest of the bad self by the good. Bradley's metaphysical views, akin to those of Hegel, with a special emphasis on the internal relations of the Absolute, are developed at length in Appearance and Reality (1893) and defended in Essays on Truth and Reality (1914). Bradliian metaphysics became the primary target for the anti-idealistic polemics of Moore and Russell.

Bosanquate, Bernard(1848-1923): British philosopher who defended a modified version of Hegel's absolute idealism in Logic, or the Morphology of Knowledge (1888). The Principle of Individuality and Value (1912) and The Value and Destiny of Individual (1914). According to Bosanquet, all contradictions are merely apparent and are wholly harmonized as part of the Absolute, a process said to account for the possibility of judgements about beauty in his History of Aesthestics (1892). Bosanquet further argued in The Philosophical Theory of the State (1899) that individual human beings are properly understood only in terms of their social and cultural efforts at transcendence.

Blanshard, Brand (1892-1987): American philosopher and long-time professor at Yale University. In The Nature of Thought (1939), Blanshard defended absolute idealism and argued that causal necessity is a genuine features of the natural world. According to Blanshard's Reason and Analysis, the philosophical methods of Anglo-American philosophers during the twentieth century were fundamentally misguided. He also rejected the prevalent non-cognitivism of twentieth-century ethicists, by defending a thoroughly naturalistic moral theory in Reason and Goodness(1962).



10.10. LET US SUM UP

- The single concept of knowledge fuses together three quite different considerations. One consideration concerns the knower and what he believes. Another considerations concern what is actually true, which has absolutely nothing to do with what the knower (or would- be knower) believes to be true. And the last consideration concerns the knower (or would-be knower) and his reasons-good or bad, adequate or inadequate-for belief, but has nothing to do with his views about the quality of his reason for belief.

- The concept of knowledge can be analysed in terms of belief, truth and justification. Each of these is a necessary condition for knowledge, and despite Gettier counterexamples should probably be regarded as jointly sufficient.

- The kind of belief that is involved in the analysis of knowledge is "belief that" (belief as a propositional attitude) rather than "belief in" (belief as confidence). Believing that p involves "thinking that p is true." This leads us to an account of the concept of truth.

- The relevant sense of 'truth' is that of propositional truth. Eachof the main theories of truth-the No-theory theory, the correspondence theory, the coherent theory, the pragmatic theory and the assertibility theory-adds something to our understanding of the concept of truth.

- Finally, to be justified in believing something is to have good reasons for one's belief. For most beliefs, this means having enough of the right kind of evidence. For all beliefs, it means arriving at one's belief in a way that is not open to criticism.



10.11. FURTHER READINGS

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10.12. ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No. 1: Knowledge is justified true belief

Answer to Q No. 2: Justified True Belief

Answer tto Q No. 3: Gettier

Answer to Q No. 4:

Answer to Q No. 5: Belief

Answer to Q No. 6: Belief is an affirmation of, or conviction regarding, the truth of a proposition, especially when one is not (yet) in possession of evidence adequate to justify a claim that the proposition is known with certainty.

Answer to Q No. 7(a): Don't know

Answer to Q No. 7(b): knowledge, knowledge

Answer to Q No.8 (a): T

Answer to QNo.8 (b): F

Answer to Q No. 9: justification is offered as grounds for believing an assertion? Hence, also an explanation of the legitimacy of each step in the formal proof of the validity of a deductive argument.

Answer to Q No. 10: justification is built into the concept of knowledge that we, as a matter of fact, employ.

Answer to Q No.11: Concerning beliefs

Answer to Q No 12: The American philosopher Edmund Gettier (b. 1927) has proposed counterexamples to the joint sufficiently of the three conditions i.e. Belief, Truth and justification constituting the standard analysis of Answer
Answer to Q No. 13: Corrigible means correction.

Answer to Q.No.14: No theory is meant as a philosophical theory of truth and its basic claim is that

'p' is true just means that p

This theory is also sometimes called the disappearance theory of truth.

Answer to Q.No. 15: In correspondence theory ,belief that a proposition is true when it conforms with some fact or state of affairs,. While this theory properly emphasizes the notion that propositions are true when they correspond to reality, its propositions often have difficulty explaining what facts are and how propositions are related to them.

Answer to Q.No.16: In Coherence Theory of Truth**,** belief that a proposition is true to the extent that it agrees with other true propositions. In contrast with the correspondence theory's emphasis on an independent reality, this view supposes that reliable beliefs constitute an inter-related system, each element of which entails every other. Thus, such idealists as Bradley, Bosanquate and Blanshard, all defended versions of the coherence theory.

Answer to Q.No.17: In Pragmatic Theory of Truth, belief that a proposition is true when acting upon it yields satisfactory practical results. As formulated by William James, the pragmatic theory promises (in the long term) a convergence of human opinions upon a stable body of scientific propositions,that have been shown, in experience, to be successful principles for human action.

10.13. MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short Questions

Q 1: What is knowledge?

Q 2. What is JTB?

Q 3. What is belief?

Q 4. What is truth?

Q 5. What is Justification?

Q 6. Who is Blanshard, Brand?

B) Short Questions (Answer each Questions in about 150 words)

Q 1: Briefly explain the nature of Knowledge.

Q 2: What are the three main conditions of Knowledge?

C) Write Short Notes (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Correspondence Theory of Truth

Q 2: Coherence Theory of Truth

Q 3: Pragmatic Theory of Truth

D) Distinguish between (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Correspondence and Coherence

Q 2: Belief and Truth

E) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500words)

Q 1: Briefly explain what is Gettier's Problem?

Q 2. Discuss theories of truth.

Q 3. Briefly Discuss about Gettier and his counter examples?

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