1. **Who has decided the meaning of your life? What is the meaning of your life?  What is the key factor in determining the essence (your purpose and your means to your purpose) of your life, knowledge or free choice or an equal combination of knowledge and free choice.  Explain.**
2. **Please describe any anguish, any forlornness, or despair which you may have experienced in deciding the meaning of your life or any event of your life.  Of course, use Sartre's understanding of these terms from the reading.**

**Anguish, for Sartre, is the human, and the human is anguish.  “But really, one should always ask himself, ‘What would happen if everybody looked at things that way [the way I look at things and decide]?’  There is no escaping this disturbing thought, except by a kind of double-dealing.  A man who lies and makes excuses for himself by saying ‘not everybody does that,’ is someone with an uneasy conscience, because the act of lying implies a universal value is conferred upon the lie.’**

**Forlornness: “God does not exist and . . . we have to face all the consequences of this. “  There is no Plato’s heaven or realm of the Forms where the eternal truths of mathematics and of ethical ideals of justice.  “Dostoievsky said, ‘If God didn’t exist, everything would be possible.’  That is the starting point of existentialism.  Indeed, everything is permissible if God does not exist, and as a result man is forlorn, because neither within him nor without does he find anything to cling to.**

**“If existence really does precede essence, there is no explaining away things by reference to a fixed and given human nature.  In other words, there is no determinism, man is free, man is freedom.   So, in the bright realm of values, we have no excuse behind us [no fixed human nature that makes me do something] nor justification [no absolute values from God’s eternal purpose ahead of us] before us.  We are alone, with no excuses.”**

**“As for despair, the term has a very simple meaning.  It means that we shall confine ourselves to reckoning only with what depends on our will, or on the ensemble of probabilities which make our action possible. . .. .  I will always rely on fellow fighters [for example, the French Resistance] insofar as these comrades are involved with me in a common struggle, in the unity of a party or group in which I can more or less make my weight felt. . . .  but given that man is free and there is no human nature for me to depend on, I cannot count on men whom I do not know by relying on human goodness or man’s concern for the good of society”  For example, I cannot hope that Americans will finally do something about climate change.  Also, I cannot rely upon the goodness of Virginians that Medicaid will be expanded to provide several hundred thousand Virginias with health insurance.  If I have hope in these matters, this hope always has some countervailing despair present within it.**