I. Introduction (#1-8, pp. 19-66)

A. The Question of Being

1. On the very first page of *BT* (19), Heidegger announces that instead of beginning with an investigation into the question of the meaning of Being, which will be his principle concern in this work, he must begin with a question concerning the meaning of *this question*, a query concerning what it is to question after the meaning of Being? Why?

2. Heidegger takes his clues for investigating what it is to question after the meaning of Being from the “formal structure” of what it is to question after anything at all.
   a. “Every inquiry is a seeking. Every seeking gets guided beforehand by what is sought” (24) In what way does this imply that “the meaning of Being must already be available to us in some way”? (25) What does he mean when he speaks of a “vague average understanding of Being” (25) and why is it important to clarify it?
   b. Every question must also be guided by “what is asked about” in the question (25) which, in this case, is Being, specifically, the Being of entities. In particular, Heidegger proposes that we investigate the Being of one specific entity - “ourselves”, “the inquirer”. Why?

3. What does Heidegger mean when he defines human being or “Dasein”, as he likes to put it, in terms of an “understanding of Being” (#4)

B. What does Heidegger mean when he writes, “Historicality is a determining characterization for Dasein in the very basis of its Being.” (42) (#5-6)

C. Heidegger says his investigation into Dasein will be phenomenological. What does he mean when he defines phenomenology as a way of letting “that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself” (58) (#7)

II. Being-in-the-world in General (#9, 12-13; pp. 67-71, 78-90)

A. Opening Themes of # 9

1. What does Heidegger mean when he claims that “The essence of Dasein lies in its existence.” (42) As we shall see, “existence” will take on a special significance for him. Rocks don’t “exist” in the way he will speak of “existence”. They only are “present-at-hand”. Only human beings, Dasein, “exists”.

2. Why is Dasein “in each case mine”? (42)

3. What does Heidegger mean when he speaks of authentic and inauthentic modes in which Dasein may exist? (43)

1. Entities which are ‘present-at-hand’ in the world can be ‘in’ one another as a bug can be ‘in’ a box. But Dasein, Heidegger insists, is not ‘in’ the world in that way. In what way is Dasein ‘in’ the world, then?

2. Heidegger says that Dasein is ‘in’ the world only as a way of being concerned with it. (83) What does he mean by this? How is our concern with things in the world a way of being in the world that is fundamentally different from the way a bug is ‘in’ a box?

3. How is our knowledge of the world a form of being in the world? Why does Heidegger believe our knowledge of the world is founded on and a modification of our original concern with the world? Why does he claim “the perceiving of what is known is not a process of returning with one’s booty to the ‘cabinet’ of consciousness after one has gone out and grasped it ...”? (89)

III. The Worldhood of the World (#14-16, 18, 22; pp. 91-107, 114-122, 135-138)

A. The Ready-to-hand (#14-16)

1. What does Heidegger mean by contrasting the world insofar as it is ready-to-hand from the world insofar as it is present-at-hand?

2. How does Heidegger argue that the world is most primordially there for us as ready-to-hand rather than present-at-hand?

B. The Significance of the World (#18)

1. How does the world in its readiness-to-hand ultimately refer to Dasein itself as “the sole authentic ‘for-the-sake-of-which’”? (117)

2. How does the structure of the world in its readiness-to-hand constitute the significance of the world? How, without such a structure, would the world be bereft of meaning?

C. How does Heidegger distinguish the spatiality of the world in its readiness-to-hand from a “three-dimensional multiplicity of possible positions which gets filled up with Things present-at-hand”? (136)

IV. Being-with-others and being-one’s-self (#26-27, pp. 153-168)

A. How does our concerned involvement with the world in its readiness-to-hand place me with other persons? (#26)

B. How is our being-with-others based “upon what is a matter of common concern”? (159) (#26)

C. How does one come to be oneself, to have an identity, in terms of one’s involvement in the world in its readiness-to-hand? (#27)

D. How is this sense of who one is that one acquires through one’s involvement in the world in its readiness-to-hand possess an anonymous character that permits Heidegger to describe it as “the they”?

V. Being-in as such (#28-35 & 38; pp. 169-214 & 219-224)

A. What is Heidegger getting at when he says that Dasein “is itself in every case its ‘there’” and “is its
disclosedness”? (#28)

B. Being-there as State-of-Mind (#29-30)

1. How do our moods constitute a way “Dasein is disclosed to itself prior to all cognition and volition”? (175) (#29)

2. How do our moods disclose the world to us insofar as it matters to us? (See p. 177)

3. How do moods disclose the way in which I find myself “thrown” into the world and in this way disclose what Heidegger characterizes as my “facticity”? (#29)

4. How does fear illustrate Heidegger’s analysis of moods as a way of being-in-the-world? (#30)

C. Being-there and Understanding (#31)

1. How do we gain a kind of understanding of our Being-in-the-world through our “potentiality-for-Being”? 

2. How does this sense of understanding constitute a disclosure of the world to me?

3. How is our understanding in this sense a form of what Heidegger calls “projection”?

4. How is my state of mind wrapped up with my understanding and vice-versa? In what way are they essentially interconnected?

D. Understanding, Interpretation and Discourse (#32-34)

1. How does the interpretation of something as something constitute a “development of the understanding”? How is understanding, as Heidegger understands (no pun intended) it, itself an interpretation of the world? (#32)

2. How does the assertion of a statement or judgement depend on what he calls “circumspective interpretation”? (#33)

3. How does our capacity to speak intelligibly of things, our capacity for language, depend on our understanding interpretation of the world? (#34)

E. Dasein in its Everydayness - Falling (#35 &38)

1. What does Heidegger mean in speaking of “idle talk”? (#35)

2. How is Dasein “as factual Being-in-the-world ... something from which it has already fallen away”? (220) How does my concerned absorption in the world constitute a falling away from myself as a unique existence? (#38)

VI. Care as the Being of Dasein (#40, 41, 43c, 44c; pp. 228-241, 254-256, 269-270)

A. In what way does “anxiety”, as Heidegger analyzes it, bring us face to face with the “uncanniness” (234) of our existence and “individualizes” (233) us? (#40)

B. How is Dasein “ahead-of-itself”? (#41)
C. Why does Heidegger characterize the Being of Dasein as “care” and what does he mean by this? (#41)

D. What does Heidegger mean when he claims “only as long as Dasein is ... ‘is there’ Being”? (255) Does this mean that things don’t exist apart from our human involvement with things (a seemingly silly idea) or what? (#43c)

E. What does Heidegger mean when he claims that “Before Newton’s laws were discovered they were not ‘true’; it does not follow that they were false ... Through Newton the laws became true ...”? (269) What is the relationship between Dasein and the possibility of truth? (#44c)

Division Two


A. What are the problems that Heidegger sees in grasping Dasein “as a whole”? (#46)

B. Why does Heidegger believe that we do not authentically experience death in our experience of the death of the other person? Why does he claim that “death is in every case mine ...”? (284) (#47)

C. Death as my “ownmost” possibility (#50)

1. In what way is death my “ownmost” possibility?

2. What does Heidegger mean in discussing death as “the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein” (294)?

3. How is my being-towards-death disclosed in anxiety?

D. Everyday Being-Towards-Death (#51-52)

1. “One of these days one will die too ... but right now it has nothing to do with us.” (297) How does this phrase capture our everyday being-towards-death as a way of recognizing the fact of death while also denying it as one’s ownmost possibility? (#51)

2. How does Heidegger distinguish the kind of certainty we have of death as an actual event that will befall us from the kind of certainty we have of death as a possibility that could strike us at any moment? (#52)

3. How does our anticipation of death as our ownmost possibility make possible a form of authenticity for us in which “one becomes free for one’s own death”? (308) (#53)

VIII. Conscience, Guilt, Resoluteness (#54, 56-58, 60; pp. 312-315, 317-335, 341-348)

A. How does Heidegger analyze the “voice of conscience” as a call to an authentic appropriation of our possibilities for Being? (#54, 56-57)

B. Guilt (#58)

1. What are the formal characteristics of our experience of guilt, for Heidegger?

2. In what way does Dasein find itself the ‘basis of a nullity’ and how does this entail that Dasein is guilty in its very Being in a way which enables us to make sense how our
experience of guilt is an experience of more than just wrong-doing and regret but an experience of a constitutive dimension of human existence?

3. What is Heidegger getting at when he writes: “The Self, which as such has to lay the basis for itself, can never get that basis into its power; and yet, as existing, it must take over Being-a-basis.”? (330)

C. What does Heidegger mean by “resoluteness” and how does resoluteness answer the call of conscience to assume authentic responsibility for ourselves? (#60)

IX. Anticipatory Resoluteness and Temporality (#62 & 65; pp. 352-358 & 370-380)

A. What is the “joy” that Heidegger speaks of as parallel with the anxiety of authenticity when he writes: “Along with the sober anxiety which brings us face to face with our individualized potentiality-for-Being, there goes an unshakable joy in this possibility.” (358)

B. Temporality (#63)

1. In what way is “care”, understood as the Being of Dasein, simply time itself as it is originally lived by Dasein as a matter of being present to the world in terms of its projection of itself into the future of its concerns on the basis of the situation in which it finds itself thrown (its past)?

2. What does Heidegger mean when he claims, “Temporality ‘is’ not an entity at all.... Temporality is the primordial ‘outside-of-itself’ in and for itself.”? (377)